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الجمعية الإسرائيلية لدراسة اليابان
Israeli Association for Japanese Studies

The Seventh Biennial International Conference of the Israeli Association for Japanese Studies

5-6 March 2025
Jerusalem, Israel

Hosted by:
Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design Jerusalem

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Jerusalem לאמנות ועיצוב ירושלים
SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

The Seventh Biennial International Conference of the Israeli Association for Japanese Studies

5-6 March 2025
Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design Jerusalem
Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Campus, 1 Zmora Street, Jerusalem

Wednesday, 5 March

PROGRAM DAY 1

Venues: **Idan and Batia Ofer Arts Wing, Department of Photography, Room 314**
Russell Berrie Auditorium

8:45-9:30 **Gathering and Registration**
Idan and Batia Ofer Arts Wing, Department of Photography, Room 314

9:30-10:00 **Greetings, Opening**
- **Erez Golani Solomon** Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design Jerusalem. IAJS Chair
- **Els Verbakel** Head of the School of Architecture. Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design Jerusalem
- **Arie Kutz** Nir-Kutz Architects. IAJS President

10:00-11.30 **Panel 1** (In English)
REPRESENTATIONS AND PRACTICES OF GENDER
Chair & Discussant: **Tsipy Ivry** University of Haifa

- **Saki Mizoroki** The University of Tokyo
Good to be a Mom? A Cross-national Analysis of the Values Expressed by Mom Vloggers and Their Audiences

- **Sinai Harel** Hebrew University of Jerusalem
"We haven't opened that door": Exploring the limits of educational and media discourses on gender and sexuality in Japan

- **Adlai Stock** Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design Jerusalem
The Image of the Modern Japanese Women

11:30-12:00 **Coffee break**

12:00-12:30 **SANAA's Bezalel New Campus: A Building Tour**
Arie Kutz and **Erez Golani Solomon**

12:30-13:30 **Lunch break**

13:30-15:00 **Panel 2** (In English)
GENERATION OF MEANING IN WORDS AND SOUNDS
Chair: **Shira Taube Dayan** The Academic College of Tel Aviv Yaffo

- **Irit Weinberg** Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Personal is Political: New Political Writing in Japan

- **Nimrod Chiat** University of Haifa
Speaking in Tongues: On the use of Nonsensical Syllables in Anime and Video Game Soundtracks

- **Michal Daliot-Bul** University of Haifa
What can we learn from the 1887 political scientific novel: "The Civilized World: Vine-like Traces of a Rudder in Space"

15:00-15:30 **Coffee break**

15:30-17:00 **Panel 3** (In Hebrew)
JAPAN AT WAR: VIOLENCE, BANDITIZATION, AND LEGALITY
Chair: **Dan Sherer** Hebrew University of Jerusalem

- **Ziv Bohrer** Bar-Ilan University
Atrocity and Reciprocity during the Boxer War (1900-01): Japanese Treatment of Captured Enemy Fighters and of Local Civilians, Compered to their Allies Conduct, during the Boxer War

- **Danny Orbach** Hebrew University of Jerusalem
The Banditization of Warfare: Japanese Treatment of Chinese POWs and the Nanjing Massacre, 1937

- **Rotem Kowner** University of Haifa
How Violent Was Japan? Japanese Military Conduct in the Long Asia-Pacific War, 1937—1945: A Comparative Perspective

17:00-17:15 **Break**

Russell Berrie Auditorium

17:15-18:15 **Film Screening**
ButoHouse by **Ila Beka** and **Louise Lemoine**
Introduction: **Oren Eldar** Negev School of Architecture

The Seventh Biennial International Conference of the Israeli Association for Japanese Studies

5-6 March 2025
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Thursday, 6 March

PROGRAM DAY 2

Venues: **Nathan Drahi Research and Innovation Center, Room 365**
Clore Arts & Design Gallery

9:00-9:30 **Gathering**
Nathan Drahi Research and Innovation Center, Room 365

9:30-11:00 **Panel 4** (In Hebrew)
A RANGE OF (UN)CERTAINTIES
Chair: **Ofra Goldstein-Gidoni** Tel Aviv University

- **Avital Baikovich** Ruppin Academic Center / Tel Aviv University, **Rick Delbridge** Cardiff University
On being 'culturally free': Cultural value discretion and the limits of contemporary normative control in an intercultural organization

- **Irith Freedman** Technion — Israel Institute of Technology / Yezreel Valley College
Reflections on Uncertainty and Lack of Control in Japanese Aesthetics

- **Dov Ganchrow** Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design Jerusalem
A Punching Bag with Computer Vision Leverages Motion for Creative Output: an Interdisciplinary Team's Interactive Installation

11:00-11:30 **Coffee break**

11:30-12:30 **Panel 5** (In English)
NEAR AND FAR EAST
Chair: **Hellena Grinshpun** Hebrew University of Jerusalem

- **Elad Ben David** Ben Gurion University of the Negev
The Land of the Rising Islam: Is Islam on the Rise in Japan?

- **Federica Broilo** W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research
Global Visions, Local Encounters: Middle East Imagery in Japan's Theme Parks

Go to Clore Arts & Design Gallery

12:40-13:00 **Introducing the exhibition 'The Japanese House Question'**
David Adika Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design Jerusalem, **Erez Golani Solomon** Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design Jerusalem

13:00-14:00 **Lunch break**

14:00-14:15 **Greetings**
Ambassador of Japan to Israel, **Mr. Yusuke Arai**

14:15-15:45 **Panel 6** (In English)
PERIPHERAL ART EVENTS: TOURISM, ARCHITECTURE AND ART
Chair: **Erez Golani Solomon** Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design Jerusalem
Discussant: **Ayelet Zohar** Tel Aviv University

- **Arie Kutz** Nir-Kutz Architects
Art and Museums as a Tool for the Rehabilitation of the Japanese Periphery: The Case of the Naoshima and Other Observations

- **Michal Ben Ari Babayof** Tel Aviv University
Between the White Cube and the Akiya: Chiharu Shiota's Installation Art in Institutional and Rural Contexts

- **Galia Dor** Tel Aviv University
"The School Will Never Become Empty (...and Japan?)": Reflections on an Installation at the Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale

15:45-16:15 **Coffee break**

16:15-17:45 **Panel 7** (In English)
INSTALLATION ART AS A MEDIUM: BETWEEN OBJECTS, PERFORMANCE AND SPACE
Chair & discussant: **Helena Capkova** Ritsumeikan University

- **Kazuko Kameda-Madar** Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Installing Yoko Ono's Ode, Legacy, and Peace in the Tearoom: A Celebratory and Interpretive Tea Ceremony Composed by Akiko Ono Riley

- **Oshrat Dotan** Independent scholar
Suga Kishio: Making Space Visible

- **Ayelet Zohar** Tel Aviv University
The Sound of Silence: Mohri Yuko's Sound Installations

17:45-18:00 **Epilogue, Closing**
Dan Sherer Hebrew University of Jerusalem, IAJS Head of Academic Committee

Organized by:
Israeli Association for Japanese Studies

Conference steering committee:
Irith Freedman, Erez Golani Solomon, Dan Sherer, Shira Taube Dayan

Generously supported by:
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Venue:
Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design Jerusalem
Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Campus
1 Zmora Street, Jerusalem, 9515701

ABSTRACTS

Panel 1 (DAY 1)

REPRESENTATIONS AND PRACTICES OF GENDER

Chair & Discussant: **Tsipy Ivry** University of Haifa

Saki Mizoroki The University of Tokyo

Good to be a Mom? A Cross-national Analysis of the Values Expressed by Mom Vloggers and Their Audiences

Since the rise of social media, mothers across the globe have publicly shared their experiences, shaping broader notions of what motherhood is and should be. While scholars have documented this phenomenon's importance, we know little about the values this content expresses or how these vary across cultures. Addressing this gap, we compared the values moms from five countries invoked in morning routine videos on YouTube. Using a novel codebook for value analysis, we analyzed 100 videos from the United States, Japan, Germany, South Korea, and Italy and 1,000 associated comments. We found that mom vlogs amalgamate values from three primary domains: platform vernaculars (aesthetics, authenticity, and affiliation), motherhood ideals (highlighting both traditional care and neoliberal rationality), and local cultures (with distinct value emphases). Together, these domains construct and celebrate two models of motherhood: the entrepreneurial neoliberal mom who monetizes productive multi-tasking and the publicized traditional mom that makes care work visible.

Sinai Harel Hebrew University of Jerusalem

"We haven't opened that door": Exploring the limits of educational and media discourses on gender and sexuality in Japan

In 2024, Black Box Diaries, a documentary by Shiori Ito—the face of Japan's #MeToo movement—was released internationally but not in Japan. "We haven't opened that door," Ito remarked in a recent interview . While awareness of gender inequality has grown, driven by global agendas and media, significant barriers remain in addressing these issues. Ito's documentary, and the decision to withhold it, highlight how formal institutions, as gatekeepers of public discourse, continue to shape the conversation.

This presentation examines constraints on gender and sexuality discourse in Japan's education system, focusing on how issues like sexual and gender-based violence are addressed or overlooked. These limitations, encapsulated in the idiom "neta ko wo okosuna" (do not wake sleeping children), reflect a conservative tendency, shared by Japan and other cultures like the US, to shield children from sexuality in the name of innocence.

This study uses UNESCO's Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) framework to analyze Japan's national curriculum, regional programs from Tokyo and Kochi prefectures, and NHK's #BeyondGender series, including its "Let's Think About Sexual Violence" content. NHK's unique role as a public broadcaster with ties to the state makes its content particularly relevant for understanding the negotiation of public discourse. Through qualitative content analysis, this research aims to clarify the diverse narratives shaping gender and sexuality education in Japan. By highlighting how educational and media discourses negotiate these dynamics, this talk contributes to understanding both the potential and constraints of gender and sexuality as an educational discourse and its implications for advancing equality.

Adlai Stock Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design Jerusalem

The Image of the Modern Japanese Women

How has the image of the modern Japanese woman evolved from the late 19th century to the present day? Which traditional Japanese values from the Edo period are preserved to this day? What was the impact of the encounter with the West? How do independent Japanese women today influence the perception of femininity and beauty? How are gender boundaries crossed in theatrical representations and entertainment worlds?

This lecture addresses these questions through representations of femininity in advertising, art, fashion and pop culture. We will elaborate on the role of Shiseido from the Meiji period to today in shaping the ideal female image, as well as the way it served as a bridge to the West for Japanese women. We will present several contemporary women artists such as Mariko Mori, Miwa Yanagi, and Mari Katayama, who challenge Japanese femininity conventions and the role of women in society. We will conclude with figures from popular culture like Ayumi Hamasaki, Naomi Watanabe, and Kyary Pamyu Pamyu, who serve as role models and sources of admiration for millions of Japanese women today.

Panel 2 (DAY 1)

GENERATION OF MEANING IN WORDS AND SOUNDS

Chair: **Shira Taube Dayan** The Academic College of Tel Aviv Yaffo

Irit Weinberg Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Personal is Political: New Political Writing in Japan

The Japanese political novel is often associated with Meiji-period writings and the political imagination of the 1960s. Nobel laureate Ōe Kenzaburō famously criticized the decline of political engagement in literature from the 1970s onward, singling out writers like Murakami Haruki for their perceived disengagement. However, in the past decade, a renewed interest in political discourse has emerged among prominent Japanese authors, especially women writers, who critically engage with policies of the ruling party and socio-political discourses. This resurgence blends personal narrative with political polemic, offering new forms of literary expression.

This paper focuses on Li Kotomi's Kotodama no Sakiwau Kuni de (In the Land Blessed by the Spirit of Words), published in June 2024. Li, the first Taiwanese national to win the Akutagawa Prize, uses this third-person narrative to chronicle the experiences of her fictional alter ego, Li Chisato, from her prize acceptance in June 2021 to late 2022. The novel intertwines Li's personal struggles, including attacks on her identity as a foreigner and LGBT individual, with broader socio-political developments in Japan, Taiwan, and beyond. Interspersed with essays Li published over the years, the novel demonstrates the healing and politically transformative power of words.

This paper examines how Li's work exemplifies a new type of political narrative, raising questions about the role and effectiveness of political expression in contemporary art, highlighting the challenges and possibilities of blending personal storytelling with activism in today's globalized literary landscape.

Nimrod Chiat University of Haifa

Speaking in Tongues: On the use of Nonsensical Syllables in Anime and Video Game Soundtracks

The use of nonsensical syllables has a long history in various musical traditions. Therefore, the presentation shall begin with a general presentation of the phenomenon and its various manifestations (glossolalia, idiolect, scat, vocables). It will then proceed to a presentation of three test cases from three soundtracks created by three different composers (Kanno Yoko (b. 1963), Kajiura Yuki (b. 1965), and Shikata Akiko (b. 1989)), with the first two created for anime soundtracks, and the third for a series of video games. More specifically, we are concerned with the soundtrack composed for the anime Macross Plus in 1994, the soundtrack composed for the anime Fate/Zero in 2011, and the soundtrack composed for the video game Ar Tonelico III: Surī Sekai Shūen no Hikigane wa Shōjo no Uta ga Hiku in 2010). Among other things, we will examine why each composer elected to use this device, and how the manner in which each composer used it is affected by and effects the narrative and visual aspects of the work it appears in, as well as how said use is affected by each composer's personal and musical background alongside wider cultural contexts (socio-cultural, linguistic, psychological, neuropsychological, etc.).

Michal Daliot-Bul University of Haifa

What can we learn from the 1887 political scientific novel: "The Civilized World: Vine-like Traces of a Rudder in Space"

The science fiction-style political novels from the late nineteenth century in Japan offer an unusual perspective on the cultural salons of the contemporary Japanese male elite. In my talk, I will show how the novel The Civilized World: Vine-like Traces of a Rudder in Space (Bunmei sekai: Uchū no kajitsuru), published in 1887, uses a fictional speculative narrative to promote a vision of progress that flourishes among civilizations in outer space. Although the novel has been published and accepted over the years as a translation from an unknown source by former samurai Katsuoka Nobusaburō, my research suggests that it was in fact an original text authored by Katsuoka—a pseudo-translation.

Through selected examples, I will explore the relationship between Katsuoka's technological imagination and his vision of progress, which echoes dominant ideas of the time in Japan, as articulated by Fukuzawa Yūkichi and other political thinkers under the idiom "civilization and enlightenment" (bunmei kaika). Furthermore, I will demonstrate that, contrary to previous assessments, Japanese science fiction of the 1880s was not merely a mirror-replica of Euro-American science fiction that was often synonymous with technological imperialism. Instead, it was a distinct cultural development adapted to Japanese concerns, which suggested an alternative view of the function of technology and presented a different understanding of the civilizing process.

Panel 3 (DAY 1)

JAPAN AT WAR: VIOLENCE, BANDITIZATION, AND LEGALITY

Chair: **Dan Sherer** Hebrew University of Jerusalem

During 51 years of imperial wars (1894—1945), Japan expanded beyond its borders and engaged in several major conflicts. The conduct of its soldiers toward both combatants and non-combatants fluctuated between acts of exceptional chivalry and extreme violence, with atrocities escalating toward the end of this period. This panel explores various aspects of violence in Japanese wartime behavior, beginning with the Boxer Rebellion (1900), continuing through the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937—1945), and concluding with the Asia-Pacific War (1941—1945). We aim to analyze the motives and context behind these actions, offering a comparative perspective on their historical background.

Ziv Bohrer. Bar-Ilan University

Atrocity and Reciprocity during the Boxer War (1900-01): Japanese Treatment of Captured Enemy Fighters and of Local Civilians, Compared to their Allies Conduct, during the Boxer War

In recent years, a robust discussion has emerged about the effectiveness of the international laws of war in minimizing harm to legally protected groups, namely local civilians and captured enemy fighters. This presentation, which is based on research conducted with Danny Orbach, contextualizes this debate within the framework of Japanese imperial history by exploring the application of the laws of war during the Boxer Rebellion in China (1900—1901), particularly by the Japanese Army. This conflict provides a unique case study, occurring between the first and second Hague Conventions (1899 and 1907), foundational moments in the development of international humanitarian law. Focusing on Japan is especially relevant, as most states' acceptance into the international legal community came after the main body of the laws of war had already been established; Japan, during the Boxer War, was among the first non-Western nations to grapple with this challenge. The presentation examines whether Japan and its key allies in the anti-Boxer coalition (the United States, Great Britain, Imperial Germany, and Imperial Russia) considered themselves bound by the laws of war when interacting with Chinese civilians and POWs and how this commitment, or lack thereof, shaped their battlefield conduct. By analyzing Japan's actions and contrasting them with those of its allies, the presentation demonstrates that the application of the international laws of war is influenced not only by expectations among opposing belligerents but also by the relationships and rivalries within alliances, as well as by each nation's unique historical and cultural context.

Danny Orbach. Hebrew University of Jerusalem

The Banditization of Warfare: Japanese Treatment of Chinese POWs and the Nanjing Massacre, 1937

Scholarly analyses of the Nanjing Massacre, committed by Japanese forces in the then-capital of the Republic of China from December 1937 to March 1938, often focus on lurid accounts of rape, arson, looting, and the slaughter of civilians. However, most systematic academic research prioritizes exploring the massacre's impact on memory, trauma, and public consciousness in both China and Japan. It is less commonly acknowledged that the majority of the massacre's victims were not Chinese civilians but rather prisoners of war. This presentation will examine the evolving Japanese attitudes towards Chinese POWs from the Manchurian Incident in 1931 to the Nanjing Massacre. We will trace the gradual escalation of brutality, notably during the Battle of Shanghai in the summer of 1937 and the subsequent march to Nanjing in late 1937, culminating in the deliberate decision by some Imperial Army units to execute all captured Chinese soldiers. We will explore how these decisions, within the broader context of Japan's POW policies in China, precipitated the exceedingly brutal treatment of Chinese civilians as well. By understanding these patterns, we aim to elucidate the strong correlation between war crimes committed against POWs and unarmed civilians, demonstrating how these two distinct forms of wartime criminality were intricately intertwined in the Sino-Japanese context.

Rotem Kowner. University of Haifa

How Violent Was Japan? Japanese Military Conduct in the Long Asia-Pacific War, 1937—1945: A Comparative Perspective

Japanese violence during the long Asia-Pacific War is notorious. Countless books, memoirs, and films have portrayed Japanese military behavior during the Second Sino-Japanese War and the Asia-Pacific War as exceedingly violent, cruel, and bloodthirsty—so much so that some regard it as the epitome of modern barbarism. A recent book by American historian Bryan Mark Rigg, Japan's Holocaust: History of Imperial Japan's Mass Murder and Rape during World War II, reinforces this image. This presentation will challenge this lingering view. This is not to deny that Japanese forces committed numerous abominable war crimes; rather, it highlights that wartime violence and brutality is also a relative concept. It must be understood within the context of the norms of the time and the behavior of other belligerents, whether in the same theater or elsewhere. When analyzed within a comparative framework that considers the broader context of warfare, Japan does not necessarily appear exceptionally brutal, especially when compared to other fascist or totalitarian nations of the era.

Film screening (DAY ONE)

Ila Beka & Louise Lemoine

ButoHouse (2019)

Introduction: **Oren Eldar** Negev School of Architecture

ButoHouse is a brutalist portrait of Japanese architect-artist Keisuke Oka who has been building alone for the past 15 years his house in the center of Tokyo, just in front of a masterpiece by Kenzo Tange. Inspired by butoh dance, this concrete building follows the dynamic of an everyday total improvisation. (www.bekalemoine.com)

Panel 4 (DAY 2)

A RANGE OF (UN)CERTAINTIES

Chair: **Ofra Goldstein-Gidoni** Tel Aviv University

Avital Baikovich and Rick Delbridge Ruppin Academic Center / Tel Aviv University and Cardiff University

On being 'culturally free': Cultural value discretion and the limits of contemporary normative control in an intercultural organization

In Japan, where cultural values of collectivism, hierarchy, and harmony are deeply ingrained, the concept of "cultural freedom" promoted by contemporary normative control regimes poses various challenges and complexities for organizations. While organizations may seek to empower employees through self-expression and autonomy, these values can clash with traditional expectations of conformity and group cohesion. Drawing on ethnographic research in a Japanese multinational subsidiary, this paper examines how employees navigate this tension by exercising cultural value discretion. Specifically, the organization's espoused values were subject to ongoing contests and negotiation which created opportunity for employees to exercise cultural value discretion by drawing on wider, societal cultural values beyond managerial prescriptions to subvert, manipulate and redefine their work processes and outcomes. By analyzing the ways in which employees interpret and reinterpret organizational values through the lens of wider Japanese cultural norms, we explore the limits and possibilities of normative control in a Japanese context.
Employees' discretion varied according to their organizational role and work interrelations, their context-specific interpretations of management's espoused values, and the impact of their discretion on their day-to-day work, taking three forms: discretion as reappropriation, discretion as manipulation, and discretion as negotiation. We demonstrate management's control practices to variously prevent, regulate and accommodate employees' discretion resulting in different discretion-control dynamics, which we labelled: demarcation, maneuvering, and interchange.

Irith Freedman Technion — Israel Institute of Technology / Yezreel Valley College

Reflections on Uncertainty and Lack of Control in Japanese Aesthetics

Lack of control and uncertainty—feelings that have become more pronounced for many of us in recent times—have been inherent to the human experience since time immemorial. Japanese culture, in particular, has long grappled with the forces of nature, which have profoundly shaped both individual lives and collective destinies in unexpected and dramatic ways. It is therefore unsurprising that Japanese art, across various genres, often reflects a deep engagement with these themes and serves as a medium for expressing and processing such experiences. In this lecture, we will explore various ways in which uncertainty and lack of control manifest in Japanese art, addressing both technical and aesthetic implications. We will examine aesthetic concepts rooted in cultural traditions that find beauty and value in imperfection and transience. Through examples spanning painting, ceramics, and poetry from different periods and genres, we will analyze how artists intentionally incorporate elements of unpredictability into their creative process—whether by embracing negative space, allowing chance to shape the outcome, or deliberately relinquishing control over certain aspects of their work. Additionally, we will discuss how these artistic choices influence the viewer's experience and facilitate a dynamic interaction with the artwork.

Dov Ganchrow Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design Jerusalem

A Punching Bag with Computer Vision Leverages Motion for Creative Output: an Interdisciplinary Team's Interactive Installation

The following abstract outlines a design project developed by a team of interdisciplinary creatives realized as an interactive installation for the Jerusalem Design Week (2021).
Martial arts and combat sports have a rich tradition of training with apparatuses such as heavy bags and Makiwara boards for conditioning, developing striking and kicking techniques, power, and speed. Some targets are for general training, others can be very specific such as in tameshigiri—the Japanese art of sword test-cutting, where bamboo is wrapped in tatami mimicking flesh and bone. Contemporary incorporation of technological sensors in some target set-ups allows for the measurement of force, reaction time etc.
Observed from outside the field, the training in delivery of blows can be viewed as a pursuit of the destructive, while for practitioners the opposite is often true—it is a constructive undertaking, building stamina, skill, confidence and more. Nonetheless, historically the punching bag often represented an imaginary foe.
The installation leveraged participant-punching bag movement and interaction as a creative force generating nouveau bags, "snapshots" of training moments. Applying computer vision, both boxer and punching bag were transformed in real-time into two identical virtual punching bag forms. The two became equals. The computer monitored the duos "dance" and captured moments of their intersection, fusing them together, finally outputting 3D files. These trapped and transformed interactions were then realized in the physical world as a series of crafted life-size conjoined punching bags. This design process, utilizing practitioner-punching bag interaction, is in essence a form of documentation with creative outcomes taking precedence over numerical workout data.

Panel 5 (DAY 2)

NEAR AND FAR EAST

Chair: **Hellena Grinshpun** Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Elad Ben David Ben Gurion University of the Negev

The Land of the Rising Islam: Is Islam on the Rise in Japan?

The growing research interest of Islam in Japan, and its increased presence seem to have gained more visibility during the last decades. Similar to the rise of Islam in the West during the post-9/11 era, sparking global awareness and publicity for Islam, this phenomenon also took place in Japan, stimulating trends of curiosity and interest in Islam, which were mixed with the rise of Islamophobia and Da'wa activity (call to Islam) simultaneously.
Demographically, about 230,000 Muslims are living in Japan today, most of them immigrated from Southeast Asian Muslim countries, in addition to the ethnic Japanese minority who embraced Islam. However, although Islam constitutes less than one percent of the total population, there are indications reflecting the growth and visibility of the Muslim community, such as: more establishment of mosques and Islamic organizations, the spread of halal food, and growth in the academic interest in Islamic studies.
In the lecture, I will address the history of Islam in Japan, personal stories of Japanese who embraced Islam, and Islamic organizations and Japanese imams, leading Da'wa activities to present Islam as a peaceful religion. In addition, I will refer to the current unique challenges of the Japanese Muslim minority, and shed light on the phenomenon of Islamophobia, which has become more potent in Japan. This lecture opens a unique window to the phenomenon of Islam in Japan, which, despite contemporary challenges and obstacles, seems to be on the rise, and might hold a future impact on Japan's current challenges and crossroads.

Federica Broilo W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research

Global Visions, Local Encounters: Middle East Imagery in Japan's Theme Parks

This presentation explores how Japanese amusement parks represent and reinterpret the imagery of the Middle East, fitting into the broader discourse on globalisation, disneyfication, and the creation of 'non-places.' Tokyo DisneySea (東京ディズニーシー), a 176-acre theme park in the Tokyo Disney Resort and one of the most-visited theme parks worldwide, serves as a key case study, particularly its Arabian Coast area. Through an analysis of this and other 'exotic'-inspired spaces, this research applies Jean Baudrillard's theories on simulation and Claudio Minca's concept of non-places, alongside Joy Hendry's exploration of theme parks in Japan. Hendry highlights how such parks "sweeten" foreign cultures, inviting Japanese audiences to engage with representations that both affirm and challenge their cultural identity.
This multidisciplinary approach examines how the Middle East is reconstructed as a cultural simulacrum, revealing stereotypes and reflecting the tensions between localism and globalisation in Japanese cultural perception and consumption.

Panel 6 (DAY 2)

PERIPHERAL ART EVENTS: TOURISM, ARCHITECTURE AND ART

Chair: **Erez Golani Solomon** Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design Jerusalem
Discussant: **Ayelet Zohar** Tel Aviv University

Arie Kutz Nir-Kutz Architects

Art and Museums as a Tool for the Rehabilitation of the Japanese Periphery: The Case of Naoshima and Other Observations

Since the 1950s, Japan has seen a trend of constructing art museums in resort towns and tourist destinations. Hakone and Karuizawa are prime examples of museum-rich resort areas that attract large numbers of visitors, many of whom seek out art while on vacation. In the 1990s, Japanese entrepreneur Soichiro Fukutake sought to challenge this model by posing an intriguing question: if tourists visit resorts to see art, could art itself become the driving force behind tourism?
In a bold and seemingly unprecedented initiative, Fukutake purchased a large area on Naoshima Island in Kagawa Prefecture in the 1980s and began developing a unique space that combined a museum and a hotel. Designed by architect Tadao Ando, the building opened in 1992. Reflecting on the project in an interview marking its thirtieth anniversary, Ando candidly recalled warning Fukutake that the concept was unlikely to succeed. However, contrary to his concerns, the venture flourished.
Building on this success, Kagawa Prefecture was invited to participate in a broader initiative—an international art festival held every three years. Partnering with the Benesse Corporation, local authorities established a public association to manage the Setouchi Triennale, which has been held since 2010. Over time, the festival expanded to include neighboring islands as well as two major departure ports: Uno Port in Honshu and Takamatsu Port in Shikoku. Additionally, Benesse established three more museums—one on Naoshima itself and others on the nearby islands of Teshima and Inujima.
There is broad consensus that this initiative has been highly successful in revitalizing peripheral areas and contributing to the economic and social rejuvenation of the region. Tourists now visit the islands not only during Triennale years but year-round, significantly diversifying and strengthening local income sources.
The lecture will seek to derive universal principles for rehabilitating peripheral areas from the Naoshima case study.

Michal Ben Ari Babayof Tel Aviv University

Between the White Cube and the Akiya: Chiharu Shiota's Installation Art in Institutional and Rural Contexts

This paper examines the spatial and conceptual aspects of Chiharu Shiota's (b. 1972) installation works when presented in conventional museum spaces versus rural settings in Japan. Through a comparative analysis of Shiota's signature thread installations, I contrast her recent exhibition at Nakanoshima Museum of Art in her hometown of Osaka with her 2009 site-specific work House Memory at the Echigo Tsumari Art Triennale, installed in one of the area's many abandoned houses (akiya). This comparison demonstrates how institutional and environmental contexts fundamentally alter both the viewer's experience and the work's meaning. While Shiota's large-scale museum installations create spectacle, engaging viewers' experience through the environment of the white cube, her rural installations adopt a more subtle approach, reflecting on Japan's aging communities and abandoned villages. I argue that museum spaces function as a platform that intensify the psychological dimensions of Shiota's thread structures, thus enhance viewers' engagement, whereas rural settings embed her work within narratives of depopulation, memory, and decay. In addition, Shiota's use of threading as a medium, adapts to these contrasting spaces—creating environments that either defy or embrace their surroundings. Through this analysis, I address questions about site-specificity in contemporary installation art and the relationship between Japan's urban art institutions and its rural art initiatives. This discussion contributes to the discourse on how Japan confronts its post-bubble economic reality and post-growth demographic challenges through contemporary art spaces, revealing how installation art simultaneously activates neglected rural spaces and challenges traditional museum paradigms.

Galia Dor Tel Aviv University

"The School Will Never Become Empty (...and Japan?)": Reflections on an Installation at the Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale

An alarming aspect of Japan's demographic crisis is the emptying out of rural areas and the growing number of unused facilities, of which schools constitute a particular case—more than 400 schools has been closed annually since 2003 (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. 2010); among the various initiatives that aim at revitalizing such areas, it seems that site-specific art events and "art-oriented re-utilization and conversion" (AORC) hold a striking position (Thekla Boven. Et al. 2017). One of these is the Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale (ETAT) in Niigata prefecture. Upon my visit there in October 2024, I was most intrigued by Seizo Tashima's installation named "The School Will Never Become Empty" in Hachi village: here, the Sanada elementary school was transformed into a 'walking-in 3D manga' which illustrates the life of its last three students (Yuki, Yuta, and Kenta) and the monsters that co-inhabit it (e.g., Toperatoto, the laughter-eating monster). I will offer an analysis of Tashima's installation—with emphasis on the way it manifests Japanese animism, and will present ETAT and other examples as cases that illuminate the significance of art in Japan's contemporary demographic challenges. I suggest that Japanese art as a 'skill and technique' creates a life out of the immovable—precisely in places in which the local 'climate' (Katsuji's fūdo) is breaking down: such alarming state as a modern form of kegare needs the art festival as a matsuri of relational art—whose finality is human relationship.

Panel 7 (DAY 2)

INSTALLATION ART AS A MEDIUM: BETWEEN OBJECTS, PERFORMANCE AND SPACE

Chair: **Helena Capkova** Ritsumeikan University

Installation art has become a ubiquitous medium in contemporary art, where the presence of objects in space overrides their presence as singular items, their particular value or meaning. Even more so, in recent years, installation practices have developed with performance and sound art, and as a result the has become a new medium of inquiry and position.
In Japan, numerous artists have adopted the language of installation for their personal expression, opening up ubiquitous options of engagement—with audience and space. The papers presented in this panel look into options of presentation of classical objects such as tea ceremony (Kameda-Madar), the making of space visible (Dotan), and sound installations (Zohar).

Kazuko Kameda-Madar Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Installing Yoko Ono's Ode, Legacy, and Peace in the Tearoom: A Celebratory and Interpretive Tea Ceremony Composed by Akiko Ono Riley

The term installation art usually refers to mixed-media constructions that temporarily occupy a gallery space. Nevertheless, this paper considers the communicability of the Japanese tea ceremony as an installation that occupies a tearoom during the rite by examining an event composed by Akiko Ono Riley in Honolulu, Hawai'i, in 2023. The tea ceremony is one of the most intimate and experiential performing art mediums that require active and semi-scripted interactions between the host (= the artist/ the producer) and the guests (= the spectators/ the participants).
Riley is a distinguished tea practitioner who teaches practicum courses at the Jakuan teahouse at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa campus. Based on the Urasenke school tradition, she adds her own artistic creativity in order to assemble and perform her tea ceremonies. The event under consideration was presented to celebrate the 90th birthday of her aunt, Yoko Ono, in New York. At this event, Riley carefully selected the tea utensils, such as tea bowls, a tea scoop, and a freshwater container, to commemorate her aunt's achievement and, in so doing, to reconstruct her legacy and family history. Simultaneously, each chosen utensil eloquently expresses and communicates its meaning to create a unified experience that aims to promote the spectator's perception of the space and environment, which directs to the ultimate message: peace.

Oshrat Dotan Independent scholar

Suga Kishio: Making Space Visible

How can work be installed so that it doesn't draw attention to itself? How can its boundaries serve to open, rather than enclose space? And how can a simple act of placing activate a living relationship within space? Since the late 1960s, Suga Kishio (b. 1944) has been placing things in space in ways that challenge viewers to see beyond the object. Instead of creating self-sufficient objects that are cut off from their surroundings and are viewed by supposedly uninvolved spectators, he has continuously constructed a series of links, fissures, points of contact and divergence that playfully interact with the surrounding conditions. Suga's early works, in which he released things into extremely fragile "situations" (jōkyō 状況) and let them be, pointed a critical eye towards the conventions of making and viewing art in the face of Japan's rapidly growing postwar industrial society. Through them, Suga wished to shift viewers' perception away from human cognition and preconceptions of language. His later works, which may at times seem more bounded or enclosed, continue to challenge the way space itself is perceived through Suga's expanding concepts of boundaries (kyōkai 境界), expanse (hirogari 広がり) and distance (kyori 距離), that together bring to life a multitude of spaces of all shapes and sizes. Examining Suga's methods of installation throughout his artistic career, this paper shows how his works attempt to completely redefine the space around them, and the way it is experienced by viewers.

Ayelet Zohar Tel Aviv University

The Sound of Silence: Mohri Yuko's Sound Installations

Yuko Mohri (毛利悠子 b. 1980, Kanagawa) creates sound installations that give a chance to listen to silence and white noise, while watching slow movement in low pace. She invites her audience to take a pause and watch, hear and experience the environment and the relationship between objects and space, through minute movements and whispering sounds. Mohri relates to the legacy of experimental music, as well as the history installation art, time, and sounds of nature. Mohri uses everyday objects, such as brushes, buckets, water pipes, but also furniture, pianos and other musical instruments, to draw her visitors' attention to the details and fractions of time and movement. In my presentation I shall relate to her recent installation at the Gwangju Biennale (2023), where she used brushes, xylophone, and strips of fabric to activate the environment, while in her installation at the Venice Biennale (2024), she used the sound of water, and presence of fruit and furniture, in an homage to the Italian culture around her. In both cases, Mohri activates space like a magician who holds her wand to touch the objects around her, and insert life into the still environment around her.