

Call for Submissions

Anthropology of Japan in Japan (AJJ) Annual Meeting 2022

Wellbeing in Contemporary Japan: Embodying Techniques, Skills and Environments

Dec. 3rd (Sat) & Dec. 4th (Sun) 2022

VENUE: Kyoto University, Yoshida South Campus, Graduate School of Human and Environmental Studies

Organizing Committee: Andrea De Antoni (Kyoto University), Huang Xinzhe (Ritsumeikan University), Fukaya Takumi, Niwa Satoru, Romanova Tatiana, Tsuzuki Ria, Yamashita Kanako (Kyoto University)

In collaboration with the Department for Interdisciplinary Research and Education, Graduate School of Human and Environmental Studies, Kyoto University

Almost ten years have passed since anthropologist Joel Robbins (2013) advocated for an “anthropology of the good” that goes beyond mainly focusing on suffering subjects. The global pandemic has obviously not helped anthropology to move in this direction, attracting scholarly and disciplinary attention towards topics such as contagion, resistance, suffering, resilience, unsettling, etc. The anthropology of Japan has slightly diverged from this trend because, despite the doubtless centrality of topics such as precariousness, disaster, and crisis, recent research has also started investigating for instance ideas of happiness (Manzenreiter and Holtus eds. 2017), migrants looking for alternative lifestyles (Klien 2019), or ways to strategically escape the normative constraints of mainstream Japanese society while creating new spaces for self-realization or pleasure (Guarné and Hansen eds. 2019). These are only some examples of works that have challenged ideas of Japan as an ethnically and culturally homogeneous society, while broadly suggesting an interest – shared both at a societal and at a scholarly level – in the pursuit of wellbeing.

While finding a universal definition of wellbeing might be somehow problematic, ethnographic research has suggested that seeing it not as a fixed state, but as an ongoing process that goes beyond enclosed bodies, individuals and selves, involving also interactions with non-humans in the environment might be useful (Kavedžija 2021). In this Annual Meeting we would like to discuss processes of pursuing wellbeing in contemporary Japan, while addressing questions such as:

- What are the universal and contextual or socio-cultural aspects involved in the pursuit of wellbeing?
- What affective or cognitive becomings are involved?
- How have notions of wellbeing in psychology or cognitive science influenced social practices or the production of goods and material culture?
- How are techniques of the body or bodily skills trained through practice in, for instance, (leisure) activities and sports, (spiritual) healing or meditation, education, art, labour, or the production or consumption of commodities?
- What technologies are or can be employed in the pursuit of wellbeing for instance in care practices, rituals, (urban) infrastructure, policies, or architecture?
- How does the environment impact wellbeing and how have (urban) environments and spaces been changed for the sake of individual or collective wellbeing through practice of, for instance, revitalization?

Please note that proposals that fall outside of the theme are also very welcome and will be considered fully and equally. Decisions about acceptance will be based on academic merit after a thorough review process.

In principle, we would like to hold the Meeting exclusively in person. Yet, this can be subject to change according to the COVID situation and University regulations.

Submission Process

Please, send us your submission through this link:

<https://forms.gle/gH8hTbAs1A5hgmKFA>

We accept abstracts for four different kinds of submissions:

1) **Thematic Panel Abstracts**

The file needs to include the panel title, the panel abstract (max. 250 words), as well as the abstract for each presentation (max. 250 words each). Each panel will be given a 90-minute slot, regardless of the number of presenters.

2) **Individual Presentation Abstracts**

The file needs to include the presentation title and the abstract (max. 250 words). Each presentation will be given 30 minutes overall.

3) **Poster Presentations**

The file needs to include the presentation title and the abstract (max. 250 words). Posters will be kept on display throughout the Meeting.

4) **Ethnographic Films**

The file needs to include the film title, a brief synopsis (max. 250 words) and a link to the film file. Films will be screened during the Meeting in a dedicated classroom.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: 14th of October 2022

ATTENDANCE: Please, register also in case you only want to attend:

<https://forms.gle/gH8hTbAs1A5hgmKFA>

FEES: Attendance is free. We will have a dinner in the evening of the 3rd of December, and a fee will be required to take part. Information on the venue and the fees will be provided later on but, in principle, we will try to keep the dinner fee below 5000 Yen (possibly below 3500 Yen for students).

GRANTS: Thanks to the generosity of the British Association for Japanese Studies (BAJS) there will be three awards (of 25,000 JPY each) available to support the in-person attendance of PhD students and early career scholars who are travelling inside Japan. Please, indicate if you wish to be considered for one of these awards when submitting your abstract. Please, consider that you need to be a member of BAJS to receive the grant so, if you are selected and you are not a member, you will be required to become one."

DEADLINE FOR ATTENDANCE REGISTRATION: 1st of November 2022.

For any inquiries, please, contact the Organizing Committee: ajjkyoto@gmail.com