



## **Kobe University Law Department Workshop**

### **Is Japan a Viable Hard Power in the Academe? Following up the State of Japanese Studies in Europe 2013"**

Date and Time: October 10 at 13:00 pm – 17:00 pm

Organizer: Profs. Yuki Sekine and Tosh Minohara (Kobe University, Law Department)

Venue: Kobe University Brussels European Centre (KUBEC) – see below for directions

[http://www.office.kobe-u.ac.jp/ipiep/materials/flyer20131009\\_en.pdf](http://www.office.kobe-u.ac.jp/ipiep/materials/flyer20131009_en.pdf)

#### **Project objectives:**

The seeds of this workshop emerged in 2012, while taking part in a large international conference in Toronto, Canada. During numerous discussions over the state of Japanese Studies in North America, it became quite evident that the state of Japanese studies was in midst of a dire situation. The twenty years Japanese decline had contributed to a worrying trend where vast majorities of new generation of scholars of East Asia were now shifting their academic focus towards China. In our perception this has contributed to a waning of Japanese studies as field, particular in disciplines that deal with Japan as a hard power. The reduced public interest also leads to a decline in financial and institutional support and thus leads to a vicious cycle.

A strong chord was struck within the concerned circles when such words as "Where has Japan Gone?" and comments like "Japan has all but disappeared" were casually tossed around. If this is the case in North America, then what is the situation in Europe where academic research is often less "trendy" than in the United States? Is the situation not as severe and can one be a bit more optimistic? At the same time, we cannot ignore the active and expanding role played in Europe by the Chinese government sponsored Confucius Institute, as well as the closure of prominent Japanese Studies Departments in universities across Europe.

With this in mind, and after a successful workshop in KUBEC last year, we thought that it would be prudent to follow-up with another workshop this year but with a different group of participants so that we can obtain a more diverse feedback. With this in mind, the objective of this workshop will be to freely and openly discuss and assess the state of Japanese studies in Europe. By doing so, we also hope to strengthen and expand the network between Kobe University and Japan scholars in Europe.

#### **Program Schedule:**

13:00: Welcome by Tosh Minohara

13:05-13:30: Self-introduction by participants (over lunch; sandwiches will be served)

<10 min break>

13:40-15:10: Session I (moderated by Tosh Minohara)

- Linus Hagstrom (20min)
- Tomoaki Shimane (20min)
- Ryoichi Teraguchi (20min)

<10 min break>

15:20-16:50: Session II (moderated by Yuki Sekine):

On working with Japanese scholars: Challenges and Opportunities

- Yannick Vanderborght (20min)
- Sebastien Lechevalier (20min)
- Masahiko Kiya (20min)

16:50-17:00: Closing remarks by Tosh and Yuki

18:00: Conversations to be continued over dinner (courtesy of Kobe University).

Regrettably, alcoholic beverages cannot be covered. ***PLEASE RSVP to drminohara@hotmail.com***

### **Dinner Participants :**

1 Tosh MINOHARA : Professor, Grad. School of Law, Kobe University

2 Yuki SEKINE: Professor, Grad. School of Law, Kobe University

3 Dimitri VAN OVERBEKE: Professor, Faculty of Arts, Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium

4 Yannick VANDERBORGHT: Professor, University Saint-Louis Brussels and Université catholique de Louvain, Belgium

5 Sebastien LECHEVALIER: Associate Professor, EHESS, France

6 TBD: Researcher, Bruegel Institute

7 Linus Hagstrom: Senior Researcher, Swedish Institute of Int'l Affairs

8 Ryoichi Teraguchi: Bureau Chief, Brussels office, The Yomiuri Shimbun

9 Wouter VAN CLEEF: Foreign Correspondent for the Belgian and Dutch Presses

10 Masahiko KIYA: Japanese Embassy in Belgium

11 Tomoaki SHIMANE: Japanese Studies and Intellectual Exchange Department, the Japan Foundation