



# SOAS Japan Research Centre

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**"I am particularly grateful to all those who continue to generously support our activities and we continue to encourage financial support through our JRC Fuwaku fund initiative."**



**T**he summers may become hotter, but they also seem increasingly shorter. Before you can say "time off for research", another term is upon us! I want to briefly look back on the last year and to express my gratitude to all JRC members, research associates, visiting scholars and funding partners. Without your contributions, the JRC would not be able to fulfil its mission to connect Japan-related scholars from across SOAS with each other and the wider public.

With the generous support of the Meiji Jingu Intercultural Research Institute and the Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation, we are able to continue providing scholarships that empower the next generation of scholars researching various aspects of Japan. Hosting visiting scholars from Japan and other countries enables us to cultivate a dynamic multicultural academic community right in the heart of Bloomsbury. The following pages highlight the extensive range of scholarly and outreach activities we host at SOAS. The JRC remains the institutional host for the British Association for Japanese Studies and is working closely with the Japanese Embassy to organize the Japan English Teaching (JET) departure meetings, which this year were attended by the Japanese Ambassador, His Excellency Hajime Hayashi.

I would also like to express my gratitude to our main funder, Xebio Holdings. The founder of Xebio Holdings, Teizo Morohashi, built the Morohashi Museum of Modern Art in Fukushima prefecture to house his collection of surrealist and contemporary painters. Together with his son, Eiji Morohashi, the current director of the Morohashi Museum, and his daughter, Hiroko Morohashi, we hosted a wildly successful event in March to launch a summer school on art and creativity in Japanese. Talks were given by our special visiting professor, Masanao Kawakami, Hiroko

Morohashi, the curator Monika Hinkel and the artist PJ Crook.

We have, among many other seminars, put on joint events with the SOAS Library on Miyazaki's latest masterpiece "The Boy and the Heron", and a panel discussion in remembrance of Toriyama Akira, the creator of Dragon Ball, both with Satona Suzuki and Filippo Cervelli as panellists and Charles Taillandier-Ubsdell as chair.

The JRC also co-hosted with the Japan Society a talk by Prof. Timon Screech, once of SOAS, now from the Nichibunken, to celebrate the ten-year anniversary of the Circle of Japanese Art London (CJAL). Entitled "New Light on Nikkō: The Iyazu Cult in International Context", it was attended by roughly 150 participants, despite being held in the middle of August.

As chair, my work would be impossible without the support of the JRC Steering Committee: Filippo Cervelli, Alan Cummings, Lucia Dolce, Helen Macnaughtan, Barbara Pizziconi and Satona Suzuki. I thank them warmly for electing me for another three-year term. I am also indebted to our admin supremo, Charles Taillandier-Ubsdell, without whose help no JRC events would be possible. I am particularly grateful to all those who continue to generously support our activities and we continue to encourage financial support through our JRC Fuwaku fund initiative.

We look forward to seeing you in person at SOAS this year for a range of exciting and thought-provoking events. As a new initiative, we will screen a classic Japanese film once a term, with an introduction by JRC members and followed by a panel discussion. Sign-up to our regular e-bulletins to keep in touch and you won't miss any of our activities!

**Fabio Gysi**

JRCは、日本国外における日本学専門家の最大規模の組織の一つであり、会員の研究専門分野は 人類学、芸術、経済学、地理学、歴史学、文学、法学、メディア学、音楽、言語学、政治学、社会学、と多岐にわたる。

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## Dragon Ball, Japan and the world: The legacy of Akira Toriyama



Blog post written on the SOAS website by Dr Filippo Cervelli on 26 April 2024.

**Filippo CERVELLI**  
Lecturer in Modern and  
Contemporary Japanese  
Literature



Filippo presented his projects on the novelist Ōe Kenzaburō at international gatherings in front of varied audiences. He discussed his comparative study of literature and translation in Ōe and Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy* at academic conferences in November, as an invited speaker in the SOAS Centre for Translation seminar series, and in June, as part of a panel on Japan at the Conference for the British Association for Modernist Studies (BAMS) in Leeds. He adapted this project for public engagement initiatives too, including it in his talk on Dante's reception in Japan aimed at a general audience for the Club 41 organisation in Empoli, Italy, in February.

His other strand of research on the animated films of Japanese director Hosoda Mamoru was the subject of two invited talks, both focusing on magical girl anime and the film *Belle* (2021), which took place at Oxford Brookes (November) and at the University of Sheffield (June).

2024 also saw the development of new opportunities for research knowledge exchange on popular culture. He co-organised with SOAS colleagues a film discussion on Studio Ghibli's latest anime *The Boy and the Heron* (2023) in February and in May a panel discussion remembering the late manga artist Toriyama Akira, who passed away on 1 March 2024. Both events, open to the general public, were attended in person and online. Filippo's wide engagement with Toriyama's significance and legacy continued with his appearance on BBC Global News TV channel on 26 March, and with a post for SOAS Blog.

### ARTICLES

- Cervelli, F. (2024) 'Dragon Ball, Japan, and the World: The Legacy of Akira Toriyama', *SOAS Blog*, 26 April.

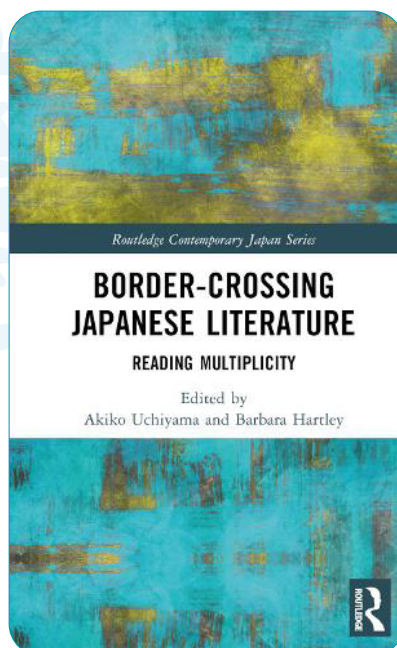
### CHAPTERS IN EDITED BOOKS

- Cervelli, F. and Dellacasa, C. (2024) 'Invisible Cities in Japan: Fluid Resonances in Architecture and Literature', in Baldi, E. and Schwartz, C. (eds.) *Circulation, Translation, and Reception Across Borders: Italo Calvino's Invisible Cities Around the World*. London: Routledge, pp. 211-227.

**Stephen DODD**  
Emeritus Research Associate



Steve is still living in Kyoto, where he continues to translate Mishima Yukio literature, and write articles. He is also growing a range of lovely plants on the balcony of his apartment. He still has a part-time position at Sugiyama Jogakuen University, Nagoya, where he teaches a range of courses. One of those courses, 'minority cultures' in Japan, touches on Okinawan culture. In connection with this, he made a research trip to Okinawa in February 2024. In March 2024, he gave a guest lecture on "Kyoto and Taisho Modernity"



at the CIEE Study Abroad Center in Kyoto.

He has various pieces in the pipeline (article, two book chapters, edited book of translations, new Mishima novel translation), which will be coming out in the following year.

### CHAPTERS IN EDITED BOOKS

- Dodd, S. (2024). 'Living on the Edge: The Negotiation of Modern Borders in Nagai Kafū's *Amerika monogatari*', in Hartley, B. and Uchiyama, A. (eds.) *Border-Crossing Japanese Literature: Reading Multiplicity*. London: Routledge, pp. 43-58.

**Akiko FURUKAWA**  
Reader in Japanese and  
Applied Linguistics



Akiko has continued to develop the Japan Year Abroad programme and has engaged in collaborative research with colleagues from Cardiff, Durham, Edinburgh, Keele, Leeds and Newcastle as the leader of the [Inter-University Support Programme](#), which was sponsored by the Embassy of Japan in the UK and the Japan Foundation London during the COVID-19 pandemic. She published a paper on the future of Study Abroad with colleagues who play leading roles in Languages at HE and the University Council for Languages as an invited contributor for Modern Languages Open. She also published a research paper on a negotiated syllabus in Japanese Language Education in Europe 27 and organised a two-day research group seminar for the CEFR-JF Standard Research Group for the British Association for Teaching Japanese as a Foreign Language with an invited speaker from the Japan Foundation London. Although she was not the winner, she was delighted to have been shortlisted for the Teacher of the Year Prize by her students for Students' Union's Teaching and Learning Awards 2023-2024.

### ARTICLES

- Furukawa, A. (2023) 'Involving Learners in Syllabus Design: Negotiated Syllabus in a Pre-advanced Course and the Teacher's Role', *Japanese Language Education in Europe*, 27, pp. 132-144.
- Illingworth, J., Furukawa, A., Gant, M. and Puzey, G. (2023) 'Year Abroad (A Dialogue)', *Modern Languages Open*. doi: [10.3828/mlo.v0i0.491](https://doi.org/10.3828/mlo.v0i0.491).

**Fabio GYGI**

Chair, Japan Research Centre /  
Senior Lecturer in  
Anthropology



Fabio Gygi had a busy year teaching, fundraising and convening the JRC Wednesday seminar series. As part of his participation in the Waste and Buddhism research network, he gave a talk at a workshop on food waste at the University of Copenhagen with Paulina Kolata in November. At the end of the year, he was invited as respondent to a book workshop at the University of Oslo with Aike Rots, Julia Frumer and Jolyon Thomas. The new year started with the good news that the Anthropology Department had been awarded a large grant to set up a centre for the anthropology of mental health research in action (CAMHRA), of which he will be a core member. In May he organised an international workshop on dolls and idols with the department of religious studies at the University of Vienna. The results will be published as a special issue of the journal *Religions* next year. Together with Iza Kavedžija (Cambridge), he has also been editing a special issue of *Contemporary Japan* called "Japan Futures" that developed out of a panel of the EAJS conference in Ghent. Fabio has been re-elected Chair of the Japan Research Centre for another term of three years in May 2024.

**ARTICLES**

- Gygi, F. (2023) *Robots in the Wild: An Ethnography of Robot-Human*

*Interactions outside the Laboratory.*  
Aubervilliers: Fondation France-  
Japan de L'EHESS.

**CHAPTERS IN EDITED BOOKS**

- Gygi, F. (2023) 'Locating Hoarding: How Spatial Concepts Shape Disorders in Japan and the Anglophone World', in Newell, S. (ed.) *Of Hoarding and Housekeeping: Material Kinship and Domestic Space in Anthropological Perspective.* Oxford: Berghahn, pp. 119-142.

**Monika HINKEL**

Lecturer in the Arts of  
Japan



Monika joined the Dulwich Picture Gallery as a Project Curator in March 2023. She curated the special exhibition titled 'Yoshida: Three Generations of Japanese Printmaking,' the first exhibition in Europe and the UK to showcase this unique family of printmakers. Monika also wrote the catalogue for the show, which ran from mid-June to early November 2024. In conjunction with the exhibition, she conducted various gallery tours, gave many talks, and was interviewed on BBC Radio London on the Robert Elms show. Additionally, she recorded a podcast for 'The Unfinished Print: A Mokuhanga Podcast' with the artist and podcaster, André Zadorozny.

In December 2023 Monika was invited

to present a lecture for the Oriental Ceramics Society at the Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, Piccadilly. The talk, titled 'Ceramics in Japanese Woodblock Prints,' focused on the depictions of ceramic wares and their settings in prints.

On 30 January 2024, she gave a preview talk about the Yoshida exhibition as part of the JRC lecture series in the Khalili Lecture Theatre.

In February 2024 Monika contributed to the BBC Radio 4 programme 'Free Thinking' with Anne McElvoy on the topic of 'Picnic'. She talked about the custom of *hanami* (Flower Viewing) during the Cherry Blossom season in Japan.

For the JRC 'Creativity through Art' event on 20 March 2024 Monika gave a speech on 'Japanese Art and Curation', highlighting the possibilities and constraints of applying generative AI in curating Japanese art.

As part of the International Art Research Centre Seminar series, Monika presented at its 132nd iteration the paper 'Contemporary Interpretations of Ukiyo-e', relating to one of her continuous research topics. The SOAS Japan Research Centre and the Art Research Centre at Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto co-hosted the online event.

On 17 July 2024, Monika was invited by the Embassy of Japan, London to give a talk about the Yoshida exhibition at the Dulwich Picture Gallery, which was introduced by Helen Hillyard, curator at the Dulwich Picture Gallery. Monika highlighted the main themes and a selection of iconic works from the special exhibition.

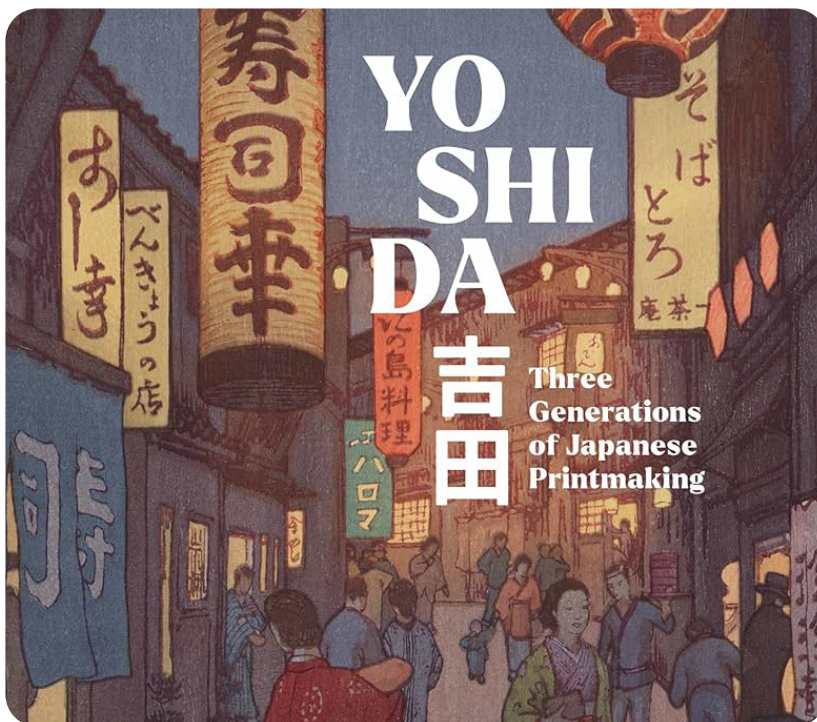
Monika was also a consultant for the children's book 'The Magnificent Book of Treasures: Japan', published by Weldon Owen in October 2024.

**PUBLICATIONS**

- Hinkel, M. (2024) *Yoshida: Three Generations of Japanese Printmaking.* London: Paul Holberton Publishing.

**ARTICLES**

- Hinkel, M. (2024) 'Ceramics in Japanese Woodblock Prints', *Transactions of The Oriental Ceramics Society*, 88, pp. 120-122.
- Hinkel, M. (2024) 'A Dynasty of Printmakers', *The British Museum Magazine*, Autumn, Issue 109, p. 18.



Exhibition poster for "Yoshida: Three Generations of Japanese Printmaking," curated by Dr Monika Hinkel.

**Yoshiko JONES**

Co-ordinator, SPPA and JLPT



The 32nd Sir Peter Parker Awards for Spoken Business Japanese was held on 7 November 2023 in collaboration with JETRO (The Japan External Trade Organisation).

Fortunately, we were supported by regular and new sponsors to be able to run the event continuously.

There were 27 applicants, and 8 finalists were selected for the final round. The final round was conducted by JRC chair Dr Fabio Gygi. Prof Nana Sato-Rossberg participated as one of the Judges.

The Awards ceremony was co-hosted by the Head of Department of East Asian Language and Culture Dr Alan Cummings on behalf of the SOAS director Prof Adam Habib and the Director General of JETRO Mr Hideo Yura.

More than 80 Japan related guests attended the event. All 8 finalists gave excellent speeches. The first prize winner, Ms Anna Papai-Vonderviszt, came from Hungary and her Japanese is almost of a native level.

Videos of all finalists' speeches can be watched on the [JRC website](#).

**Helen MACNAUGHTAN**

Senior Lecturer in International Business &amp; Management



Helen continues with her research on both women and employment in Japan and sports in Japan. Together with Verity Postlethwaite she published the *Handbook of Sport and Japan* in 2024, a culmination of the JRC Sport Symposia Series which ran 2017-2023. Helen is grateful to MHM Publishers, JRC colleagues and the Toshiba International Foundation for their support of this project in recent years.

Helen continues her role as a Trustee of the Japan Society (UK) and contributed to a panel *Women in Work: Why Does Japan Lag Behind?* in May 2024. She was also interviewed by NHK for a broadcast on the Gender Equality Story discussing Japan's progress in gender equality which was timed to coincide with the release of the World Economic Forum's *Global Gender Gap Report 2024* in June 2024.

**PUBLICATIONS**

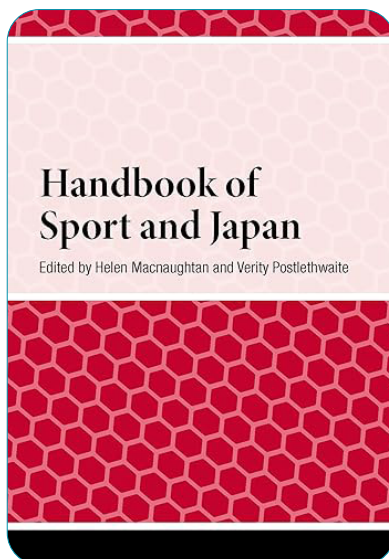
- Macnaughtan, H. and Galbraith, M. (2024) 'A Survey of Rugby in Japan: From Early Play in 1864



The 32nd Sir Peter Parker Awards for Spoken Business Japanese held in the Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre at SOAS University of London.

to Hosting the World Cup in 2019', in Macnaughtan, H. and Postlethwaite, V. (eds.) *Handbook of Sport and Japan*. Tokyo: Japan Documents, MHM Limited, pp. 16-30.

- Macnaughtan, H. and Merklejn, I. (2024) 'The Development and Popularity of Volleyball in Japan: The Impact of the Witches of the Orient', in Macnaughtan, H. and Postlethwaite, V. (eds.) *Handbook of Sport and Japan*. Tokyo: Japan Documents, MHM Limited, pp. 65-77.
- Barrass Chapman, E. and Macnaughtan, H. (2023) 'Gendering Postwar Japan', in Avenell, S. (ed.) *Reconsidering Postwar Japanese History: A Handbook*. Tokyo: Japan Documents, pp. 127-145.
- Macnaughtan, H. and Postlethwaite, V. (eds.) (2024) *Handbook of Sport and Japan*. Tokyo: Japan Documents, MHM Limited. (Japan Documents Handbooks)

**Barbara PIZZICONI**

Reader in Applied Japanese Linguistics



The year 2024 celebrated two decades from a historical symposium in Ghent, where research on Linguistic Im/Politeness was theoretically reframed. A special issue of the *Journal of Politeness Research* revisited its impact, and Barbara contributed with a critical study. This argued that the current terminology does not refer to a unitary or unambiguous phenomenon nor does it neatly define its actual domain of enquiry, and it advocates a more rigorous definition of the phenomena we investigate that enable better coordination among scholars with very different research agendas.

With the renowned feminist sociolinguist Professor Orie Endo, Barbara presented a study of the rise and fall of the Japanese term *shujin* (husband), at the Sociolinguistic Symposium 25 in Perth, Australia. This reviews print media over the last 70 years to document the varying fortunes of the term, and the ideological struggles that play out through its use. A paper is now in progress.

**ARTICLES**

- Pizziconi, B. (2024) 'Im/politeness research – what it says on the tin? (Not quite)', *Journal of Politeness Research*, 0. [doi.org/10.1515/pr-2023-0066](https://doi.org/10.1515/pr-2023-0066).

**Timon SCREECH**  
Emeritus Research Associate



Autumn 2023 saw the final instalment of Japan400, which Tim has co-chaired for a decade. The organisation was established to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the English presence in Japan, which lasted from 1613-1623. We had a grand finale at Nijō Castle, where exactly 400 years before the English audience of farewell had probably taken place. Japan400 donated four stone benches, and the British Ambassador, Consul-General and Mayor of Kyoto planted cherry trees.

Otherwise, Tim represented Nichibunken at the AAS 2024 in the USA, and participated in many events in Japan. In summer 2024, he was delighted to return to SOAS for a special talk hosted by the JRC and the Circle of Japanese Art in London, which was gratifyingly well attended. The only other matter to report is that this year he was greatly honoured to receive the Foreign Minister's Special Commendation from the Japanese Government this year. I have also published two articles, one on the deification of Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and the other on early 17th-century English sailings to the Ryukyus. His large monograph of Nikkō is now all but complete.

**ARTICLES**

- Kawamura, S. and Shimizu, Y. (eds.) (2024) 'Furanshisuko Zabieru no ressei to Toyotomi Hideyoshi no shinkakuka', in *Kirishitan 1622: Junkyō, ressei, fukyou seishō 400-nenmoku no seisatsu*. Kyōbunkan. pp. 270-287.
- Screech, T. (2023) 'Early English Contact with the Ryukyus, 1613-1629', *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, pp. 77-110.

**Satona SUZUKI**  
Senior Lecturer in Japanese  
and Modern Japanese History



In the academic year 2023-2024, Satona was actively involved in various research activities with interdisciplinary collaborations. She was invited to the law department of the Université Catholique de Lille, where she presented on "The Tokyo Trial: International Law in the Context of Imperialism" at the inauguration of the lecture-debate series "Reflections and lessons from filmed trials" in November 2023. Additionally, she delivered a lecture on "Japanese imperialism in modern times

from a global perspective" (グローバルな視点からみる近代日本帝国主義) at the Tokyo University of the Arts (東京藝術大学美術学部) in December 2023. Currently, Satona is working on the Japanese History Research Guide for the Royal Museums Greenwich as one of the primary consultants, providing historical context and commentary on the non-digitalised archive of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Satona made significant contributions to various JRC events, including the Film Discussion and Q&A: *The Boy and the Heron* (February 2024) and the Panel Discussion and Q&A: *Remembering Akira Toriyama: From Dragon Ball to Modern Manga* (May 2024). She co-organised and co-hosted the JRC event "Creativity Through Art: Creative and Critical Skills for Personal Skills" in March 2024. She found it gratifying to be involved in these events with numerous participants.

Furthermore, Satona continued participating in media consultations, interviews, and podcasts. For instance, she contributed to the BBC 2 documentary *Atomic People*, Wildbear Entertainment's project on rebuilding Japan after WWII, a BBC live interview discussing the Japanese Emperor and Empress' state visit to King Charles, and BBC Radio 4's "You are Dead to Me" in the episode of *Edo Japan*. Satona also contributed to the Amazon Prime Documentary *Vanished: The Lucy Blackman Mystery*.



Professor Timon Screech with Daisaku Kadokawa, Mayor of Kyoto, at commemorative cherry tree planting at Nijō Castle.



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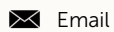
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