

Networks in Early/Modern Japan

Date: January 15, 2011
Location: Sophia University, Bldg. 10, 3 Floor, Room 301
Time: 13:30 until 17:15
Organizer: Network Study Research Group (Sophia University)
Language: English
Web: http://pweb.cc.sophia.ac.jp/bgo/net/Network_studies/home.net

13:30–14:15

Anna Beerens (Leiden, NL):

“Those who really know me...”

The things we say about ourselves are not always true. We may not be maliciously false, but we embellish, dissemble, put up a front. We even deceive ourselves. Whereas the sociologist or the psychologist can ask a person what he ‘really thinks’, the historian has to make do with ego-documents: texts through which an individual intentionally or unintentionally reveals him- or herself. These are a notoriously unreliable source. To lay bare the author’s strategies or expose instances of self-deception can be quite a challenge. One way to do this is to look at individuals in the context of their social network. Ideally, research of this kind should go beyond the biographical. A structure of interdependencies will disclose internal value systems and patterns of behavior that may present a clearer insight into a person’s course of action than this person’s own story. This talk will be a methodological exploration focusing on the social networks of eighteenth-century Japanese scholars and artists.

14:30–15:15

Shalmit Bejarano (Japan Foundation):

Between the popular and the canonic: Revisiting Tachibana Morikuni’s manuals for painters

Educated as a Kano school painter in Osaka but known primarily for his popular painting manuals, the artist Tachibana Morikuni (1679-1748) makes a fascinating case-study of art networks in eighteenth-century Japan. Morikuni’s manuals popularized canonic painting themes, which presumably led to his expulsion from the Kano school circles for his dispersing of school’s secret transmissions. My paper, however, argues that Chinese printed books and painting manuals played a more dominant role in his work than hitherto been considered. Moreover, analyzing Morikuni’s own sketchy art theories shed light on connections between early modern schools of painting.

15:30–16:15

Andrew Kamei-Dyche (USC)

Social Circles and the Intellectual Community in Late Meiji Japan: A Case Study of the Mokuyōkai

Recent years have seen increasing attention afforded modern Japanese intellectuals, both as individuals and as participants in particular debates and/or schools of thought. Far less attention, however, has been paid to the social lives of intellectuals as a group. Intellectual life was strongly based around social circles, which facilitated connections between teachers and disciples, and writers and publishers. They thus functioned as networks essential to the development of one’s career and reputation as a writer or scholar. Through a case study of Natsume Sōseki’s Mokuyōkai in the first decade of the twentieth century, this paper seeks to discuss how these circles functioned, the characteristic relationships and activities that underpinned them, and the vital role they played in the Japanese intellectual community at the time.

16:30–17:15

Juliane Schlag (Halle, Germany)

The formation of “scientific communities”–

Medical Knowledge Transfer from Germany to Japan in Meiji-Japan

Fujikawa Yū’s publication on the electrotherapy in 1904 offers the backdrop to the study of transnational scientific communities between Germany and Japan. Members of scientific communities are distinguished by different nationalities, a common occupational field, and a homogeneous code of values and standards concerning their specific field. The microanalysis of one such community demonstrates the exchange of knowledge including their shared code of writing and publishing standards in the Meiji period.

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