



***Japanese and East Asian Development in the Long 19th Century: A Critical Reappraisal*** A workshop by the Department of Japanese Studies, September 22-23 2022, AS7-01-16/17/18 at The Shaw Foundation Building, Faculty of Arts and Social Science, NUS.

**Programme on Day 1 (22<sup>nd</sup> September, Thursday)**

8.30 am to 9.30 am: Registration (Coffee & Tea available at AS7/Foyer)	
<b>WELCOME AND INTRODUCTORY REMARKS</b>	
9.30 am To 10.00 am	A/P Timothy D. Amos, Conference Organizer and Head, Department of Japanese Studies, National University of Singapore
	Dr Akiko Ishii, Conference Co-organizer and Adjunct Research Fellow, Department of Japanese Studies, National University of Singapore
<b>Session 1: Finding Alternative Visions in Tokugawa Japan</b>	
10.00 am To 11.00 am	Kumazawa Banzan and Civil Engineering Projects in 17 <sup>th</sup> Century Japan Dr Akiko Ishii (National University of Singapore)
	Japan's Water Capital: Towards a New Developmentalist History of Pre-Meiji Osaka A/P Timothy Amos (National University of Singapore)



11.00 am To 11.30 am	Morning Tea (AS7 Foyer)
----------------------------	-------------------------

<b>Session 2: Conditions for New Knowledge</b> <b>Chair: A/P Timothy Amos</b>				
11.30 am To 1.00 pm	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">           The Experience of Self-Deceit and Theories of Knowledge: Warrior Society in Tokugawa Japan            Dr Olivier Ansart (University of Sydney)         </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">           In Which Motoori Norinaga Answers "What is Poetry?"            Dr Scot Hislop (National University of Singapore)         </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">           Meiji Citizens' Pocketbooks for Social Information in the 1870s and 80s            Dr Takeshi Moriyama (Murdoch University)         </td> </tr> </table>	The Experience of Self-Deceit and Theories of Knowledge: Warrior Society in Tokugawa Japan Dr Olivier Ansart (University of Sydney)	In Which Motoori Norinaga Answers "What is Poetry?" Dr Scot Hislop (National University of Singapore)	Meiji Citizens' Pocketbooks for Social Information in the 1870s and 80s Dr Takeshi Moriyama (Murdoch University)
The Experience of Self-Deceit and Theories of Knowledge: Warrior Society in Tokugawa Japan Dr Olivier Ansart (University of Sydney)				
In Which Motoori Norinaga Answers "What is Poetry?" Dr Scot Hislop (National University of Singapore)				
Meiji Citizens' Pocketbooks for Social Information in the 1870s and 80s Dr Takeshi Moriyama (Murdoch University)				

1.00 pm To 2.00 pm	Lunch
--------------------------	-------



**Session 3: Modern Development: Prehistories and Calibrations**  
**Chair: Dr Seng Guo-Quan**

2.00 pm To 3.30 pm	Feudal Remnants?: The Modern Life of Japan's Homegrown Iron Industry Dr Joanna Linzer (Harvard University Center for the Environment)
	Tokyo's First City Parks: The Making of Public Green Spaces in the Meiji Period A/P Roderick Wilson (University of Illinois)
	Expertise that Travels: "Japanese River" in Early Modern Indo-China A/P Phan Hai Linh (VNU-USSH Hanoi)

3.30 pm	Afternoon Tea
---------	---------------



**Programme on Day 2 (23<sup>rd</sup> September, Friday)**

<b>Session 4: Development Viewed from the Periphery</b> <b>Chair: Dr Akiko Ishii</b>	
9.30 am To 10.10 am	[Online] Local Historical Reconstruction of the Changing Relationship Between Forests and People in Japan: A Case Study of Hirosaki Domain in the 19th century Dr Masahito Kayaba (Tokugawa Institute for the History of Forestry)

10.10 am To 10.40 am	Morning Tea at AS7 Foyer
----------------------------	--------------------------

<b>Session 5: Rethinking Development in East Asia</b> <b>Chair: Dr Akiko Ishii</b>	
10.40 am To 12.10 am	Waste Not: Thinking with Excrement about Nineteenth-Century Japan Prof David L. Howell (Harvard University)
	Development and Nature during the Qing Dynasty Prof Yoichi Miyazaki (Taisho University)
	Traditional Rural Landscapes on the Ryukyu Archipelago, Japan: Historical Context, Geographical Extent, and Conservation Prospects A/P Bixia Chen (University of the Ryukyus)



12.10 pm To 1.30 pm	Lunch
---------------------------	-------

<b>Roundtable: Developmental Modernization and the Construction of Asia</b> <b>Moderator: Prof David L. Howell (Harvard University)</b>	
1.30 pm To 3.00 pm	Prof Tessa Morris-Suzuki (Australia National University) A/P Rebecca Suter (University of Sydney) A/P Samson Lim (Singapore University of Technology and Design) A/P Seung-Joon Lee (National University of Singapore)

3.00 pm To 3.30 pm	Afternoon Tea
--------------------------	---------------

3.30 pm	Wrap-up Discussion
---------	--------------------



**Presentation Abstracts**  
(in the order of presentation)

**Day 1:**

**Session 1:**

**Kumazawa Banzan and Civil Engineering Projects in 17th Century Japan  
Dr Akiko Ishii (National University of Singapore)**

From the late-16th century to the mid-17th century, Japan experienced a period of “great development.” Kumazawa Banzan (1619-1691), prominent Confucian scholar, political theorist, and expert civil engineer, witnessed and reflected upon the troubling predicament facing his domain in present-day Okayama that resulted from this “great development”—bald mountains, flooding, poverty, and displaced peoples. The solution he suggested to address these local socio-economic crises had conservative—anti-developmental—tendencies, and this has resulted in scholars claiming that Banzan was an intellectual who failed to recognize the fundamental changes occurring in early Tokugawa society such as the expansion of merchant power and increase in material consumption. This paper, however, through a re-examination of his technical advisories and commentaries, as well his practical interventions regarding river improvement and afforestation projects in Okayama and elsewhere, sheds new light on the political and philosophical implications of Banzan’s work. By doing so, it further re-evaluates the legacy of Banzan’s expertise as a civil engineer and locates his array of technical suggestions and ideas as a compelling alternate vision of development that arose in response to the challenges issued by this era of “great development.”



## **Japan's Water Capital: Towards a New Developmentalist History of Pre-Meiji Osaka**

**A/P Timothy Amos (National University of Singapore)**

This paper offers a new perspective on the developmental history of pre-Meiji Osaka by focusing on the symbiotic relationship between citizens and water. Osaka was built on multiple rivers and waterways; prone to flooding and poor drainage, agricultural and urban expansion during the 17th century triggered numerous water-related problems for the city. Extensive logging and soil erosion triggered sedimentary build up in Osaka's rivers and canals, precipitating state engagement in a range of engineering and riparian works to keep the waterbed levels low and the waterways clear. 18th-century state encouragement of agricultural expansion further intensified the problems experienced by Osaka's residents and nearby villagers. Affected communities dealt with these problems in various ways, including through submission of petitions to "self-dredge" and offering innovative proposals advocating various preventative measures. As the problems became more acute, threatening Osaka's position as western Japan's water capital, Tokugawa shogunate policies collided with local demands, to sometimes intriguing effect. The "Great Dredging" of 1831, for example, is a remarkable event that is not easy to categorize within a standard developmentalist history. Osaka denizens participated in a largescale clean-up of the city's rivers and waterways, while simultaneously engaging in cultural practices that both worried the authorities and revealed a deep communal connectedness with their lived environment. This paper argues that the real significance of the stories it introduces about Osakans and water have been largely neglected due to widespread adherence to developmental modernization-style narratives. It further contends that such records collectively reveal localized ideas and practices of urban transformation that have the power to challenge commonplace assumptions about what constitutes meaningful socioeconomic change.



## Session 2:

### **The experience of Self -Deceit and Theories of Knowledge: Warrior Society in Tokugawa Japan**

**Dr Olivier Ansart (University of Sydney)**

Tokugawa period bushi were not the bushi of older times, and yet, by strenuously performing this identity, they seemed to convince themselves they still were. The evidence to the contrary, however, was so hard to dismiss that cracks in this belief were there for all to see. Indeed, Tokugawa warrior society is a textbook example of collective, massive self-deceit. Such interpretation can be useful in two respects I wish to briefly outline. The first would be to develop a better understanding of an elusive yet ever-present phenomenon, especially in the alienating conditions of huge bureaucratic organizations characteristic of modernity. Their society shows us with great clarity what are the conditions under which self-deceit can thrive and last. The second is that this feature allows us to understand the emergence, among some bushi thinkers, of a bold new view of the mind – the theory of the “partitioned mind”. We would have here another case of “elective affinities” – similarities of patterns between the realm of daily experience and that of philosophical speculation -whereby a pattern present in the field of daily experience reverberates, finds an echo, into the remote field of philosophical speculation, to make new theories conceivable.

### **In Which Motoori Norinaga Answers "What is Poetry?"**

**Dr Scot Hislop (National University of Singapore)**

The publication of Kokubungaku Dokuhon (A Reader of National Literature) in 1890 by Haga Yaichi, Tachibana Senzaburô, and Ueda Kazutoshi marked important changes in Japan's history of textual practice. Although





Kokubungaku Dokuhon clearly differs from our contemporary conceptions of literature and its compilers were somewhat uncertain about what literature actually was, the volume gathered as literature texts that had previously been read in disparate fields. Over the following decades, many of these texts were ensconced as part of Japan's national culture.

Sophisticated regimes of textual practice existed before the arrival of the concept of literature. For example, Motoori Norinaga's explorations of language resulted in, among other treatises, *Iso no Kami no Sasamegoto* (1763). Read today, its ideas challenge some of the assumptions of the academic study of national literatures in the contemporary academies, while supporting others.

### **Meiji Citizens' Pocketbooks for Social Information in the 1870s and 80s Dr Takeshi Moriyama (Murdoch University)**

Evolving from 'chōhōki' 重宝記 and a variety of guidebooks in the Tokugawa period, a genre of publications called 'jitsuyō binran' 实用便覧 appeared in the early Meiji years. They were small pocketbooks, handy desktop references or one-sheet pamphlets of social information for ordinary people's daily use. This paper will consider these publications from the perspective of Meiji popular consciousness, exploring the ways they both reflected and shaped understanding, interest, curiosity, and concern about the rapidly changing social systems within their newly emerging world. The pocketbooks clearly demonstrate that commoners' access to information rapidly expanded in the early Meiji period: people discovered how their nation functioned as a monarchy with a modern government; and detailed information became available about the imperial family, national budgets and finance, state bureaucracies and officers' ranks and salary scales. What previously was none of the commoners' business came to be within reach and portable. Furthermore, readers of such pocketbooks were able to see their country's status and data comparatively through Western measurements in diverse areas such as international politics, trade, and geography. Practical information



about newly available systems such as train, postal and telegram services also became readily available introducing a familiarity and immediacy to various newly adopted modern technologies. Pocketbooks also provided commoner readers with important information about new systems of taxes, criminal law, civil codes and military conscription which their modern state came to impose on their lives. This paper argues that commoners' knowing such information via these pocketbooks provided them with avenues for conscious or subconscious participation in Meiji Japan's nation-state building projects.

### **Session 3:**

#### **Feudal Remnants?: The Modern Life of Japan's Homegrown Iron Industry Dr Joanna Linzer (Harvard University Center for the Environment)**

This paper highlights surprising elements of continuity in Japan's iron industry from the Tokugawa period into the 20th century. Early modern ironmakers in the mountains of the Chūgoku region advanced technologies for mining local iron sand and smelting it in special furnaces known as tataru, supplying most of the iron used across Japan. In the modern period, the Meiji government strove to establish a different kind of iron industry, based around Western technology, imported iron ore, and a transition from charcoal fuel to coke. But while tataru ironmaking was not the progenitor of this new industry, nor did older practices simply disappear. Some of Chūgoku's longstanding ironmakers persisted, using local materials and combining homegrown Japanese and new hybrid technologies. Indeed, through a network of state-owned ironworks, the Meiji government actively supported their activities across three decades, with bureaucrats drawing on a logic of benevolence—long established from the Tokugawa period—to defend ironmaking as the only way locals could get by in the harsh environment of Chūgoku's mountains. Ultimately, the region's surviving ironmakers played a role especially in a sector most readily associated with Japan's modern transformations—supplying specialized metal to the military for use in modern wars of Imperial expansion.



## **Tokyo's First City Parks: The Making of Public Green Spaces in the Meiji Period**

**A/P Roderick Wilson (University of Illinois)**

In the late nineteenth century, Japanese visitors to Europe, the United States, and their colonies largely experienced “western civilization” through its cities. For many, the public park held an integral place in the formation of the “modern” cityscape. These visitors, however, appear to have been less aware that the parks they wrote about—whether Parc des Butte-Chaumont in Paris or Central Park in New York, were themselves new additions to their respective cities. That is, just as the public park was being introduced into Japan in the 1860s and 1870s, it was itself still new to European and US cities and undergoing constant redefinition as these public places became symbols of social progress, examples of government largess and responsibility, and places of political protest and cultural change.

In this paper, I begin by exploring the efforts of the Tokyo government to redefine and regulate various public places in Asakusa and elsewhere as the city's new public parks or *kōen*. Next, I trace the debates over the design of Hibiya Park, the capital city's first western-style park, within the Tokyo Municipal Reform Projects. And, in a final section, I focus on how people actually used and talked about Hibiya and the city's other parks to examine the role of class and gender in the formation of these particularly “green” public places. Throughout, I argue that Tokyo's city parks were constantly being recreated as classed and gendered places through their planning, regulation, and quotidian use by the people of modern Tokyo.

## **Expertise that Travels: “Japanese River” in Early Modern Indo-China**

**A/P Phan Hai Linh (VNU-USSH Hanoi)**

The “Japanese river” first appeared in Western maps and documents from the 17th to 19th centuries. During the middle decades of the 20th century, it was



mentioned by Japanese historians, Sugimoto Naojiro and Iwao Seiichi, in research on the expansion of Japanese settlements in Indo-China. Recently, Vietnamese researcher, Le Ngoc Quoc, studied the existence of a “Japan area” and a “Japanese river” in Southern Vietnam. All of these scholars have pointed to the obvious transformations that took place within Japanese settlements, including the development of waterlines, towns, and villages. This paper synthesizes documents related to the “Japanese river” in the Mekong River basin and suggests further research on the geographical and historical features of the “Japanese river”. Through this case study, this paper argues that the idea of “Japanese development” in early modern Indo-China was not simply the product of a modern colonial imagination.

## Day 2:

### Session 4:

#### **Local Historical Reconstruction of the Changing Relationship Between Forests and People in Japan: A Case Study of Hirosaki Domain in the 19th century Dr Masahito Kayaba (Tokugawa Institute for the History of Forestry)**

Forestry in the Edo period varied depending on the time and social context, as one can see through the following description: “destruction and regulation in the 17th century”, “forestation and cultivation in the 18th century” and “preservation and utilization in the 19th century”. Over time, officials gradually realized that forests not only functioned as spaces of timber supply, but that they also served as places that enabled water source conservation, and functioned as windbreaks that prevented strong winds, sands and seawater from damaging fields in places such as Hirosaki domain that is the focus of this paper. A growing consciousness of the need to properly preserve and control the forest clearly emerged from the 18th century among domain officials. That said, however, deforestation was caused because of repeated famines as well as local demands for forest resources, and forests became a source of conflict



between not only the domain and its people but also among domain officials themselves. This paper clarifies the changing relationship between the forest and people in Japan focusing on Hirosaki domain in the 19th century using local historical materials.

### **Session 5:**

#### **Waste Not: Thinking with Excrement about Nineteenth-Century Japan Prof David L. Howell (Harvard University)**

Excrement was a hot commodity in the cities of nineteenth-century Japan. The widespread use of night soil as an organic fertilizer meant that residents of cities such as Tokyo and Osaka could sell their waste rather than simply dispose of it. Thanks to this trade, pre-twentieth-century Japanese cities enjoy a reputation as having been remarkably green spaces in which residents lived in salubrious harmony with nature. I will argue that the night-soil economy offers a novel way to situate late Tokugawa and early Meiji Japan into the broader history of the nineteenth-century world, while at the same time challenging the tendency to essentialize the “greenness” of early modern Japanese cities. I will treat the night-soil trade as a particularly interesting example of commodity history. Rather than think of night soil in terms of a one-way commodity chain linking producers, buyers, and sellers, we should think of it as part of a resource cycle. Urban excrement fertilized truck farmers’ vegetable gardens. Those vegetables made their way back into the city for consumption by the very people who supplied the night soil. An alchemy of circulation transformed shit into vegetables, vegetables back into shit, more shit into more vegetables—endlessly back and forth in a near-perfect cycle that helps to explain why there is no euphemism for excrement corresponding to the English “waste.”



## **Development and Nature during the Qing Dynasty** **Prof Yoichi Miyazaki (Taisho University)**

China, with its vast territory and enormous population, has continued to cultivate and develop its land since the beginning of civilization. In particular, the Han played a central role by developing the barren land, clearing forests, and cultivating agriculture throughout its territories. These developments impacted the surrounding environment, and as a result, created a new environment for the people. The most extreme consequence was natural disasters. This is exemplified by the frequent floods in the lower regions of the Yellow River during the Song dynasty and the middle regions of the Yangtze during the Qing dynasty. The intellectual class analyzed the mechanisms for disaster occurrence and tried to take countermeasures, which did not work. Although the dynastic government's desire to prioritize economic interests was at play, the biggest problem was in fact the will of the people engaged in development. This paper describes the actual situation of development and nature modification in the case of the mountainous areas in Sichuan Province in the 17th and 18th centuries. At the same time, it aims to reveal the ways of thinking about development and the nature of the people who engaged in it alongside the administrative officials in those areas.

## **Traditional Rural Landscapes on the Ryukyu Archipelago, Japan: Historical Context, Geographical Extent, and Conservation Prospects** **A/P Bixia Chen (University of the Ryukyus)**

In Okinawa, there is a traditional village landscape built based on Fengshui concept in the Ryukyu Kingdom period approximately 300 years ago. The essential concept to Fengshui on the Ryukyu Islands is “hougo” (抱護), meaning “embraced protection.” In the old document, the terminology hougo refers to the configuration of close surroundings, specifically, either shaped by hills in mountainous regions or planted forests on flat and open land. On the



islands, village houses are encircled by multilayered forest belts, consisting of house-embracing trees (majority is Fukugi, *Garcinia subelliptica*), well-preserved forests in the rear hill and forest belt in the front to enclose the village, and forest belts along the coastline. Furthermore, not all village roads are straight but curving. Consequently, no intersections were perfectly right-angled. Meandering roads can channel and reduce the damage caused by strong winds coming to the village. Such a configuration, designed to protect the village from monsoonal winds and typhoons, is attributable to the severe environment in the island topographies. Even today, villages with prevalent Fukugi trees distribute widely on the Ryukyu islands south to Hateruma Island, and north to Amami Oshima. However, depopulation and a super aging society on the islands have jeopardized the sustainability of such a traditional village landscape. Exposure to typhoons and monsoon winds are among the most important natural factors that contribute to tree damage. However, human factors are also important for tree cutting or conservation. Residents' awareness of tree conservation determines whether the trees were preserved or cut down.



### **Participant's Bio** (in alphabetical order)

**Olivier Ansart** is Senior Lecturer in the School of Languages and Cultures at the University of Sydney. He carries out research on Japanese and East Asian intellectual history, focusing particularly on the political theories of Japanese Confucian thinkers of the eighteenth century.

**Bixia Chen** is an associate professor of Faculty of Agriculture, University of the Ryukyus, Japan. She is the co-editor of "Traditional Rural Landscapes in Island Topography in East Asia." She also works on the sacred forests in Okinawa and other Asian regions and coedited with Prof. Chris Coggins the book of "Sacred Forests of Asia: Spiritual Ecology and the Politics of Nature Conservation." She has published refereed articles in diverse fields of urban forestry, village landscape, eco-tourism, and even rural tourism. Her current work includes the inventory of traditional homestead windbreak trees on small islands of the Ryukyu Archipelagos, and the management and conservation strategy for traditional village landscapes and old growth trees on the islands.

**Scot Hislop** is a Senior Lecturer with the Department of Japanese Studies at the National University of Singapore. His research focuses on nineteenth-century haikai poetry and comparative East Asian literature.

**David L. Howell** is Robert K. and Dale J. Weary Professor of Japanese History at Harvard University and Editor of the Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies.





**Masahito Kayaba** is Researcher at the Tokugawa Institute for the History of Forestry, which belongs to the Tokugawa Reimeikai Public Interest Incorporated Foundation. He specializes in the history of forestry in Edo era, particularly forestry policy and forest utilization in the Northern region (the Hirosaki, Morioka, Hachinohe and other domains) and the Owari domain. His publication includes 『近世・近代の森林と地域社会』 (The Forest and Local Societies in Early-Modern and Modern. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2022), 「近世加子母村における鳥糞生産・流通と仕法形成」 (“Birdlime production and distribution in early-modern Kashimo village: The emergence of a regulatory framework”) in Kinko Sosho (金鯪叢書 vol.49, 2022), and 「弘前藩の寛政林政改革と津軽信明」 (Forestry Reforms of Hirosaki Domain in the late 18th Century and Tsugaru Nobuharu) in 浪川健治編『明君の時代—十八世紀中期～十九世紀の藩主と藩政』 (The Era of the Wise Rulers: Lords of Domains and their Policies in the mid 18-19th Century. Osaka: Seibundo Shuppansha, 2019).

**Lee Seung-joon** is a historian and associate professor at the National University of Singapore. He the author of *Gourmets in the Land of Famine* (2011) and currently finishing his second book, *Revolutions at the Canteens, Labor, Energy, and the Politics of Meal in Modern China*. He was Henry Luce Fellow at the National Humanities Center, a recipient of Jing Brand Scholarship at the Needham Research Institute, University of Cambridge, and a visiting scholar at Harvard-Yenching Institute.

**Samson Lim** is Associate Head of Cluster for the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences and Associate Professor of History at the Singapore University of Technology and Design. His research interests include history of technology and history of visual culture. He is the author of *Siam's New Detectives: The Visual Culture of Crime and Conspiracy in Modern Thailand* (University of Hawaii Press, 2016).



**Joanna Linzer** completed her PhD in History at Yale University in 2021 and is currently a postdoctoral fellow at the Harvard University Center for the Environment. She is working on a book manuscript, *Iron Archipelago: Environment and Industry in Early Modern and Modern Japan*.

**Yoichi Miyazaki** is Professor in History at Taisho University. His research focuses on the socio-economic history of the Qing Dynasty. He is the author of 『明清時代の資源開発と行政』 (Development of natural resources and administration in Ming and Qing China. 汲古書院, 2014) as well as a number of articles on resource development and environmental changes in China and how people responded to them.

**Takeshi Moriyama** is Senior Lecturer in Japanese and Fellow, Asia Research Centre at Murdoch University, Perth. He specializes in history, culture and literature of Japan in the early modern period. He is the author of two monographs, *雪国を江戸で読む：近世出版文化と『北越雪譜』* (Yukiguni o Edo de yomu: Kinsei shuppanbunka to Hokuetsu seppu; Tokyodo shuppan, 2020) and *Crossing Boundaries in Tokugawa Society: Suzuki Bokushi, a Rural Elite Commoner* (Brill, 2013) as well as a number of articles on lives and works of rural intellectuals such as Suzuki Bokushi (1770-1842) and Shibata Shuzo (1820-1859).

**Tessa Morris-Suzuki**: Is Professor Emerita of Japanese History in the College of Asia and Pacific, Australian National University, and a Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities and of the Australian Institute of International Affairs. Her current research focuses on contests over history and memory in post-war Japan and the indigenous history of the Russo-Japanese border area. Her recent publications include *On the Frontiers of History: Rethinking East Asian Borders* (ANU Press 2020) and *Japan's Living Politics: Grassroots Action and the Crises of Democracy* (Cambridge University Press, 2020), as well as two historical novels.



**Phan Hai Linh** is Associate Professor of the Department of Japan studies, Faculty of Oriental studies, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University Hanoi (VNU-USSH Hanoi). She currently serves as Chair of the Science and Education Council of the Faculty of Oriental Studies. Her research fields are medieval manors (shōen) and the history of Vietnam-Japan exchange. She had served as a visiting scholar at Osaka University, Nichibunken, as well as visiting lecturer at the Summer Institute hosted by The Japan Foundation, Vietnam Japan University. Dr Phan holds an undergraduate degree from Showa Women's University (Japan) and graduate degrees from VNU Hanoi.

**Guo-Quan Seng** is Assistant Professor of History at the National University of Singapore. He researches the history of the Chinese in Southeast Asia, with special interests in the fields of gender and sexuality, and the history of capitalism and race. His first book, *Intimate Strangers: Gender, Patriliney of the Chinese of Colonial Indonesia* has been contracted by Cornell University Press. He is now working on a second book project on Chinese transregional business networks and the emergence of development and race as “questions” and “problems” in colonial and early post-independence Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore (1870s-1970s).

**Rebecca Suter** is Associate Professor of Japanese Studies at the University of Sydney. She teaches and researches in modern and contemporary Japanese literature and popular culture, comparative literature, and Asian cultural studies, with particular focus on cross-cultural representations and negotiations. She is the author of *The Japanization of Modernity: Murakami Haruki between Japan and the United States* (2008), *Holy Ghosts: The Christian Century in Modern Japanese Fiction* (2015) and *Two-World Literature: Kazuo Ishiguro's Early Novels* (2020).



**Roderick Wilson** is an Associate Professor in the Department of History and the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of Illinois. His research focuses on the intersection of people and their local habitats in early modern and modern Japan. His first book is entitled *Turbulent Streams: An Environmental History of Japan's Rivers, 1600–1930* (Brill, 2021). Currently, he is also working on a second book that shifts his attention from the mostly rural environs of the Japanese archipelago to the undoubtedly urban environment of nineteenth and twentieth-century Tokyo. At the University of Illinois, he offers a variety of courses on the history of Japan, East Asia, and the environment.

\*\*\*

**Timothy David Amos** is Associate Professor in Japanese Studies at the National University of Singapore. His research focuses on marginality in Japan from the early modern period through to the present. He recently published *Caste in Early Modern Japan: Danzaemon and the Edo Outcaste Order in Eastern Japan* (Routledge, 2020).

**Akiko Ishii** is Adjunct Research Fellow at the Department of Japanese Studies at the National University of Singapore. She recently published an edited volume, *Revisiting Japan's Restoration: New Approaches to the Study of the Meiji Transformation* (Routledge, 2022), which she co-edited with Timothy David Amos.

**Acknowledgement:** Image Title: Old Plum (1646); Artist: Kano Sansetsu  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art