



Comparative Asian Research Network

Monthly Lecture Series on Issues and Research in the Asian Region

Organized by the Department of Japanese Studies, CUHK

Demographical Change and Individualization in Japan: Case Study of Funerals for a Human Being and a Pet

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Date: 20 January, 2014 (Monday)

Time: 14:30 – 15:30

Venue: LT 2, Mong Man Wai Building, CUHK

Language: English

Abstract:

I will describe Japanese demographic changes, peoples' decisions not to marry and postponing marriages resulting in low fertility, especially after twenty years' stagnant economy, competitive careers, lack of child-rearing support, and expensive housing. Unbalanced mobility between cities and regions caused extreme aging and a volatile society.

My case study shows the individualization of funerals in which people are liberated from conventions and planned their ending in different ways. Such orientations attracted certain peoples' attentions and the formation of network amongst elders who decide not to rely on children or have no such choice. Another interesting issue in pets' funerals is peoples' privatized religious prayers for being with their beloved "object" forever. Japanese secularized and commercialized religions cooperate with peoples' new demands. We can recognize various aspects of individualization, by looking at the current funerals of man and their animals.

All are Welcome!!

Speaker Biography

Dr. Yoshihide Sakurai is a professor of sociology at the Graduate School of Letters, Hokkaido University, Japan. He obtained Ph.D in Development Studies of Thailand at Hokkaido University and published many papers and books on the research of Thai Buddhism, East Asian transnational religions, and Japanese religions from sociological and anthropological perspectives.

No registration necessary.

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