

AJLS Newsletter

Association for Japanese Literary Studies

No. 56 (Autumn 2022)

Edited by Matthew Fraleigh

AJLS • c/o GRALL Brandeis University, P.O. Box 549110, Waltham, MA 02454-9110
781-736-3229 (Tel) • 781-736-3207 (FAX) • ajls@brandeis.edu (E-mail)
<https://sites.google.com/view/ajls/>

AJLS 30th Annual Meeting

In step/out of step:

performance/culture/location/dislocation

May 12–15, 2023, University of Pittsburgh

The 30th annual meeting of the Association for Japanese Literary Studies will be held at University of Pittsburgh May 12–15, 2023. The event will be hosted by Charles Exley and Elizabeth Oyler, University of Pittsburgh, with the cooperation of Christopher Lowy and Yoshihiro Yasuhara, Carnegie Mellon University.

Call for Proposals:

We live in a world both fragmented and connected through technologies enabling new platforms for creative expression. These range from online publishing to co-located theatrical productions to tiktok. Such platforms bring to the fore the possibility for performance to be simultaneously playful, individually creative, and socially engaged as they redefine the temporal and spatial parameters of “performance.” The transformation of how, what, and where we perform and experience performances has evolved dramatically in very recent years, but the roles that performance and other arts play as spaces for creative engagement with society, contemporary politics, and the past have been important worldwide throughout history. In Japan, the numerous traditional performing arts designated as Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO attest to the significance of performance as a defining cultural feature, as do contemporary experimental theatre companies and the thriving film industry. From early myth through court ceremony and medieval and early modern theatre to 20th- and 21st-century street theatre and anime, performance has been an important tool to provoke, to transform, and to reimagine.

For the 30th annual meeting of AJLS, the University of Pittsburgh welcomes proposals for panels or individual papers on the theme of performativity and literary expression in Japanese culture from earliest times through today. Building on past conferences focused on performance, we invite participants to continue this conversation in the context of increasing technological mediation and innovation, and to reflect on the nature of our increasingly mediated moment. We encourage participants to explore not only new modes of performativity and new kinds of texts in Japanese culture, but also the broad range of ways performativity provides a framework for re-considerations of Japan’s past and its connection to the present and future. We welcome proposals engaging the topic in innovative ways, and suggest the following general topics as starting points for organizing panels or individual presentations:

Literature in relation to other performative fields

Performing arts as represented in Japanese literature, film, or other media

The concept of performance spaces in literature, performing arts, and everyday life
Hotspots in urban areas that serve as stages
Urban legends (*toshi densetsu*)
Rethinking folkloric/anthropological constructs in modern Japanese culture
Adaptation and innovation in new media and genres
Creativity and commercialization in contemporary media
Performance and cultural memory
Personae and identities

Individual and panel proposals are equally welcome. We particularly encourage panels that transcend the pre-modern/modern divide as well as those that propose innovative formats. In general, panels should consist of three presenters and a discussant and should plan for a 90-100-minute time slot, with a minimum of three and a maximum of five participants. The portal for applications will be available on the conference website and open from October 15 – October 31, 2022. For each discrete proposal, we ask that applicants provide the names and affiliations of each participant, as well as an abstract of approximately 250 words. For panel proposals, in addition to a 250-word panel abstract, please also prepare 250-word abstracts for individual contributions. If proposing an innovative format for which an alternative type of proposal seems appropriate, and for any other questions, please contact Elizabeth Oyler at eaoyler@pitt.edu.

Conference website: <https://sites.google.com/view/japan-studies-at-pitt/ajls-pitt-conference>

Report on the 29th annual meeting of AJLS at UCLA, May 2022

The 29th annual meeting of AJLS was held from May 12 to May 14, 2022, at UCLA on the theme of “Turning Points.” Originally scheduled for the spring of 2021, the conference was postponed for one year in light of the pandemic. As a prelude to the in-person annual meeting, the UCLA conference committee convened two wide-ranging roundtable conversations that took place online in spring 2021. The first was moderated by Torquil Duthie and featured Michael Bourdaghs, David Lurie, Vyjayanthi Selinger, and Satoko Shimazaki, and the second was moderated by Michael Emmerich and featured Will Bridges, Seiji Lippit, Mimi Long, and Sharalyn Orbaugh; both can be viewed on the [conference website](#).

A series of events in honor of the late Sari Kawana (Professor of Japanese, University of Massachusetts at Boston), who passed away in October 2020, were held at the opening of the conference. Several of Dr. Kawana’s former mentors, friends, and colleagues, including Linda Chance, Jonathan Abel, Sarah Frederick, Bruce Baird, and James Dorsey, shared memories of her and reflections about how her scholarship had informed their own.

For the following two days of the conference, twelve panels were organized on a range of “turning points” across the full span of Japanese literary and cultural history. Nearly fifty papers, by scholars based not only in the United States and Canada, but in Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands were presented. Participants and discussants took part both in person and online.

On the first night of the conference, Furukawa Hideo gave a keynote lecture and reading.

Thank you to Torquil Duthie, Michael Emmerich, Seiji Lippit, Satoko Shimazaki, and Junko Yamazaki for the flexibility and adaptability they showed in navigating a constantly changing situation. Their thoughtful and careful planning ensured that the conference could be successfully held in person.

Announcements

Prof. Tomoyuki Sasaki at the College of William & Mary is gathering information about COVID-related border control policy changes and their impact on Japanese studies and invites participation in a survey.

He writes:

If you are a researcher (college professor, graduate student, independent scholar, etc.) in any Japan-related field (history, literature, linguistics, sociology, anthropology, political science, cultural studies, film studies, gender studies, and religious studies, etc.) who lives outside Japan and conducts research in Japan, I would like to ask for your help with the survey below concerning Japan's current strict border restrictions and the state of Japanese studies.

I have written on this issue for such media outlets as [Nikkei newspaper](#) and [nippon.com](#).

The purpose of the survey below is to clarify the extent to which the pandemic and Japan's strict border restrictions have affected Japan researchers' current and future research and the field of Japanese studies. The results may be shared with media outlets interested in raising awareness of the issues of Japan's extreme border control and its ramifications.

There are nine brief questions. It will probably take only five minutes. If you would like to share your own thoughts, experiences, etc., you can do so in Q10. This is an anonymous survey. Confidentiality will be maintained. Here is the survey:

https://wmsas.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_08MBQDZxcEkzx8a

I would be very grateful if you could help. If you have any questions, please contact me at tsasaki@wm.edu. Thank you.

Publication of vol. 21 of *Proceedings of the Association for Japanese Literary Studies*

Inclusivity and Exclusivity in Japanese Literature (PAJLS, vol. 21), which gathers papers from the 28th annual meeting of AJLS at Emory University in January 2020 will soon be printed and sent to AJLS members.

The Table of Contents is as follows:

Editor's Foreword
Cheryl Crowley

Poets, Places, Gender, and Genre: Social Aspects of Premodern Poetry

Banquet Poetry and the Gendering of Social and Textual Spaces in the *Man'yōshū*
Danica Truscott

Poets to Unite and Poems to Divide: What Audience Reactions Reveal About the Social Functions of Heian *Waka*
Gian Piero Persiani

Imagined Journeys: *Daiei* travel poetry in *Senzaishū*
Bonnie McClure

Crossing the Threshold: Genre, Gender, and Reading in Ema Saikō's Poetry
Matthew Mewhinney

Building and Breaking Boundaries: Science, Fiction, and Science Fiction from Meiji and Beyond

Creative Science: Meiji-Era Science Fiction and the Discursive Location of *Zōkaki-ron*
Kumiko Saito

Mixed Media: Science Fiction and the Social Force of Genre
Brian White

The Corporeality of Belonging: Representations of Women and Work

Seizing/Ceasing Reproduction: Matsuda Tokiko, Birth Control Politics, and Proletarian Solidarity in "Chichi o uru"
Edwin Michielsen

Vulnerability of Women's Bodies through Post War and Post Fukushima Literature
Saeko Kimura

Including the Young in Modern Literature

Children as Cultural Imaginary: The Making of "Little Citizens" through *Shōnen sekai*, 1895–1914
Wakako Suzuki

Love and Sexuality in Tomishima Takeo's Junior Fiction
Hiromi Tsuchiya Dollase

Countdown to the Demise of Novels for Girls
Kume Yoriko; Barbara Hartley (trans.)

Acceptable Retellings and Transformative Works: Translations and Adaptations

Researching Adaptation: Reading/Watching "The Hell Screen"
Michele Eduarda Brasil de Sá

Sympathy for an Invert: the Translation and Reception of Mishima Yukio's *Kamen no Kokuhaku* (Confessions of a Mask) in English
Patrick Carland-Echavarria

Matayoshi Naoki and Dazai Osamu: Rethinking the Solitary Masculine Literary Subject
Anri Yasuda

Difference and Indifference: Inclusion and Exclusion in Contemporary Literature

Murakami Haruki on a Little Planet
Masaki Mori

Dead Man Walking: Yū Miri's *JR Ueno Eki Kōenguchi*
Doug Slaymaker

The Gentle Inclusivity of Kawakami Hiromi's "Summer Break"
Kathryn Hemmann

About the Contributors

Update on vol. 22 of *Proceedings of the Association for Japanese Literary Studies*

Participants in the UCLA conference should have already heard from Torquil Duthie about preparations for *PAJLS* vol. 22. The deadline for essay submissions is December 31, 2022. Participants in the UCLA conference who did not respond to the initial inquiry but who would still like to submit their papers are still welcome to do so. Please send an email indicating your intention to submit your paper to ajls2022ucla@gmail.com and cc ajls@brandeis.edu

Digital Archive for *PAJLS*

As you may know, the complete contents of *PAJLS*, more than 450 articles in 20 printed volumes, has been digitized and made available online. On [this page](#), the covers of our back issues are displayed. Click on a volume and you will be taken to a detailed listing of the contents of that volume. Click on an article of interest and you will be taken to that article in a PDF viewer.

Brandeis University Library has agreed to host the digital files in perpetuity as part of its institutional repository. The articles can be freely browsed or downloaded. The complete contents of the predecessor of *PAJLS*, *PMAJLS* (Proceedings of the Midwest Association for Japanese Literary Studies), were recently added. These include more than one hundred articles from the five published volumes of *PMAJLS*.

There is also a [comprehensive index](#) of all contributors to *PAJLS* and *PMAJLS* with links to all of the articles that they have published in both journals.

AJLS Activities

Please join us or renew your membership regularly. It is easy to renew your membership (or join AJLS for the first time). Just visit our [membership page](#) and complete the form with your name and contact information. You can then pay the annual membership dues using the Paypal link that appears beneath the form or by mailing a check made out to AJLS to the address that appears on the above page. You can also pay multiple years of membership dues at once by adjusting the quantity when you make payment. Our publications solely depend on your membership dues.

• **Annual Meeting**

An annual meeting is organized by an elected conference chair(s) and held at the host institution. A call for papers is announced in the spring issue of the AJLS Newsletter. A program of the meeting is published in the fall issue of the Newsletter.

• **PAJLS Publication**

All papers presented during the annual meeting can be included in an officially registered serial titled PAJLS (Proceedings of the Association for Japanese Literary Studies).

• **Membership**

The annual fee is US\$30.00 for regular, student, and institution members (US\$40.00 for overseas members outside North America). Membership provides you with:

- Panel participation for our annual meeting (if your proposal is selected).
- Two newsletters (electronic publication)
- One copy of our latest proceedings.
- One free copy of a back or additional current issue of the proceedings if you are a student member.

Inquiries and orders (with checks payable to AJLS) should be sent to the AJLS office.

All annual meeting participants must become members in order to present.

Upcoming AJLS Annual Meetings

If you are interested in hosting our meeting during the 2023–24 academic year or later, please contact Professor Ann Sherif at: ann.sherif@oberlin.edu.

PAJLS Back Issues

Each back issue is \$10.00 for AJLS members and \$15.00 for non-members. Orders should be sent to the AJLS office (or by emailing ajls@brandeis.edu). (Add \$20 for mailing if you order from outside the North American area.) Tables of contents of our back issues are posted on our association [website](#).

Here is the list of our back issues (those issues marked with an asterisk are unavailable):

Poetics of Japanese Literature, 1993. Includes keynote addresses by Kawamoto Kōji and Watanabe Kenji.

**The Desire for Monogatari*, 1994.

**Japanese Theatricality and Performance*, PMAJLS 1, 1995.

Revisionism in Japanese Literary Studies, PMAJLS 2, 1996. Includes a keynote address by Earl Miner and a major address by Takahashi Tōru.

* *Ga/ Zoku Dynamics in Japanese Literature*, PMAJLS 3, 1997.

The New Historicism and Japanese Literary Studies, PMAJLS 4, 1998. Includes keynote addresses by Karatani Kōjin and Komori Yōichi.

* *Love and Sexuality in Japanese Literature*, PMAJLS 5, 1999 Includes keynote addresses by Saeki Junko and Inaga Shigemi.

Issues of Canonicity and Canon Formation in Japanese Literary Studies, PAJLS 1, 2000. Includes keynote addresses by Kubota Jun, Takahashi Mutsuo, and Suzuki Sadami.

* *Acts of Writing*, PAJLS 2, 2001. Includes keynote addresses by Zdenka Avarcova and Ohsawa Yoshihiro.

Japan from Somewhere Else, PAJLS 3, 2002. Includes essays by Tawada Yoko, Ito Hiromi, Kyoko Mori, and other creative writers.

Japanese Poeticity and Narrativity Revisited, PAJLS 4, 2003. Includes keynote addresses by Mizuta Noriko and Yoshimasu Gōzō.

Hermeneutical Strategies: Methods of Interpretation in the Study of Japanese Literature, PAJLS 5, 2004. Includes keynote addresses by Fujita Masakatsu and Matsumoto Yūji.

Landscapes Imagined and Remembered, PAJLS 6, 2005. Includes a keynote address by Nakahodo Masanori.

Reading Materials: The Production of Narratives, Genres, and Literary Identities, PAJLS 7, 2006. Includes a keynote address by Jordan Sand.

Travel in Japanese Representational Culture: Its Past, Present, and Future, PAJLS 8, 2007. Includes a keynote address by Yoshiaki Shimizu.

Literature and Literary Theory, PAJLS 9, 2008. Includes a keynote address by Minae Mizumura.

Parody, PAJLS 10, 2009. Includes a keynote address by Noriko Yamashita.

Rethinking Gender in the Postgender Era, PAJLS 11, 2010. Includes keynote addresses by Noriko Mizuta and Susan Napier.

* *Technology and Japanese Literary, Film and Performance Studies*, PAJLS 12, 2011 (unpublished).

The Poetics of Ageing: Confronting, Resisting, and Transcending Mortality in the Japanese Narrative Arts, PAJLS 13, 2012.

Rhetoric and Region: Local Determinants of literary Expression, PAJLS 14, 2013. Includes a keynote address by Suzuki Sadami.

* *Performance and Japanese Literature*, PAJLS 15, 2014.

Religion and Spirituality in Japanese Literature, PAJLS 16, 2015. Includes a keynote address by Miyasaka Satoru.

The Senses and Sensory Experience in Japanese Literature and Culture, PAJLS 17, 2016.

* *Word/ Image/Japan*, PAJLS 18, 2017.

Violence, Justice, and Honor in Japan's Literary Cultures, PAJLS 19, 2018.

* *Evidence, Transmission, and Inheritance in Japanese Literature and Media*, PAJLS 20, 2019.

Inclusivity and Exclusivity in Japanese Literature, PAJLS 21, 2020.