

“Borderwork: Migration and Territory in East Asia”

1. “Growing Pains?: Marriage Migrants in East Asia”

As the number of immigrants rise in Japan and Korea, so do international marriages. In Japan, it is said that about 2% of marriages in 2014 were international marriages, while in Korea that number is about 9%. Yet the Japanese and South Korean self-identity of racial homogeneity dies hard, and the concept of “multiculturalism” or ethnic coexistence has yet to reach the stage where people can discuss how to integrate different cultural groups into a harmonious society and benefit from the diversity. Even today, many interracial couples and their family experience discrimination.

This presentation will look at the dynamics of international marriages in both countries, including the factors that bring foreign brides to the two countries, difficulties in mainstreaming, the victimization of these women, and examples of support (both from the local community and government agencies) that they receive in their countries.

Naomi CHI is currently Assistant Professor at the Graduate School of Public Policy, Hokkaido University. Her area of specialization is East Asian politics, with an emphasis on migration, demographic changes, multiculturalism, gender, ethnic and sexual minorities, as well as human security in East Asia. She is currently the chair of the Japan Chapter of the Association of Borderlands Studies (ABS), as well as a member of the Eurasia Unit for Border Research in Japan (UBRJ) and the Arctic Challenge for Sustainability (ArCS) project at the Arctic Research Centre, Hokkaido University.



2. The Changing Shape of Japan: territorial disputes and remapping borders

Over the past five years, the Japanese government has made concerted efforts to attempt to homogenize the notion of territory deployed by Japan in her disputes with Russia, Korea and China. During the Cold War, these disputes were generally treated as competing claims over remote islands, able to be resolved through bilateral negotiations between the parties. However, as “integral territory”, these areas have been transformed into disputes over vast expanses of maritime space, the results of which will literally shape Japan in the future.

The notion of ‘integral territory’ is a product of the changing nature of national territory under the impact of UNCLOS and Abe’s hawkish stance on security. It also, though, reflects the national state’s adoption and encouragement of local activism. The concept of “integral territory” is therefore significant in demonstrating both the inherent flexibility of notions of sovereignty and territorial fixity, upon which the state grounds its authority, and how these notions come to be defined.

Edward Boyle is Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Law and Center for Asia-Pacific Future Studies, Kyushu University. He is establishing Kyushu University Border Studies (KUBS) as an interdisciplinary hub for all things border-related, and is currently examining multiscalar border effects and their implications in projects on Japan, Georgia and Northeast India.



Event hosted by UBC Centre for Japanese Research and the Institute of Asian Research



CENTRE FOR
JAPANESE RESEARCH



INSTITUTE OF ASIAN RESEARCH

April 12, 2017 2-3:30 PM
UBC Institute of Asian Research Room 120
(C.K. Choi Building 1855 West Mall)