Workshop

TIMING DAY AND NIGHT: 'TIMESCAPES' IN PREMODERN JAPAN

Abstracts

Theories of Time in the Study of Premodern Japan

Raji Steineck (Zurich University)

Recent theories of time – starting with J.T. Fraser's *Time as a Hierarchy of Creative Conflicts* (1970) – have acknowledged that their subject comes in many more forms than the A- and B-series (time as the universal, one-dimensional and unidirectional sequence of (A) past, present and future or (B) of earlier and later events) that dominate current philosophical discussions. Indeed, as sociologists Maki Yūsuke (*Jikan no hikaku shakaigaku,* 1981) and Günter Dux (*Die Zeit in der Geschichte,* 1989) have argued independently of each other, the modern standard conceptions of time these represent appear to be historically late developments, and tied to specific societal conditions. It would thus be a mistake to assume that time as we intuit it – 'abstract world time' in Dux's terminology – can be found in premodern societies. Dux proposed an evolutionary theory of time in human history. His model is based on the hypothesis that there is a causal connection between the complexity of the mechanisms of coordination in social reproduction and the structure of a society's dominant concepts of time.

As I will show, Dux's model provides a valuable heuristics for anthropological research on premodern Japanese culture, but it is in danger of over-emphasizing the linearity of historical developments and of underestimating the power of imagination stimulated by strong symbolic incentives. In contrast, Maki established a theory of four fundamental types of time imageries (oscillating time, circulating time, segmented linear time and continuous linear time), ordered by degrees of adhesion/transcendence to a) community and b) nature. His theory is similar to Dux's in assuming a strong link between social organization and the dominant time imagery, but less teleological and thus more appreciative of time imageries other than continuous linear time/abstract world time. Maki also offered an analysis of time consciousness in

ancient Japan, arguing that it was dominated by 'mythical', oscillating and circulating time imageries. His analysis is instructive also in its methodological weaknesses. It exposes the dangers in interpreting literary sources as representing 'social consciousness' – and in letting ourselves be guided in research by a search for 'otherness' in premodern Japanese culture.

The calendar and the hour system in Japan: a historical review

Gerhard Leinss (Humboldt University, Berlin)

When Japan adopted the continental time order in the seventh and eight centuries, a way of keeping time was introduced, which included the usage of a water clock and a method to sub-divide the day into twelve hours. We do not know much, however, about that system initially applied, and it is only from the tenth century onwards that received texts and extant calendars allow us to reconstruct the time system in which hour were of equal length and announced as such at the Heian court. Thereafter, there were only minor changes to that system and no innovation of any significance in the way time related events were marked on the surface of calendars. This is particularly true for the new calendar formats that emerged from the 13th century onwards, which contain far less time references than the earlier Chinese versions; this suggests that there was not much demand for such kind of information from female members of the aristocracy for whom these new formats written in Japanese script were devised. This lack of entries that relate to the sub-division of the day in calendrical documents continued when in the 14th century printing became the primary method, by which calendars were reproduced to supply larger groups of the population with an annual calendar.

It is safe to assume that by the end of the 17th century all groups of society had access to a printed calendar, although these editions were still comparatively void of any time related references. This changed fundamentally in the early 18th century when the bakufu-editors of the standard printed calendar introduced again accurate time related issues such as specifying, among others, the length of day and night and the precise hours for sunrise and sunset at certain days of the year. Prefaces of extant calendar written by the officials reveal however that in that case the hour system used by the astronomers led to conflicts with the time perception that prevailed among the population: they obviously had different ideas about the beginning of the day and the hours which were announced by the time bells differed from those expressed on the surface of the calendar. It was only in the last calendar reform of the premodern period in 1844 that the astronomers decided to adjust their time notations to this widespread use of hours that varied in length according to the seasons. From that year onwards, calendar hours and hours struck by the time bells were in tune. However, this situation lasted only 29 years until 1873 when the adoption of the Western time system shifted the hour system back to hours of equal length, thus to that time system, which was maintained during all those centuries by the astronomers on the archipelago who were computing and devising the yearly calendar.

Timing sleep in premodern Japan

Brigitte Steger (University of Cambridge)

Our ancestors went to bed when night fell and 'naturally' got up early, or so is the general assumption. Yet the sleeping schedules of yesteryear appear not to have been such a simple affair. In this paper I will investigate sleep times and sleep patterns throughout premodern Japanese history from the earliest written sources to the Meiji Restoration in 1868. According to time-use surveys, sleep is the one activity on which humans on average spend by far most time. Investigating sleep patterns allows us to address a number of questions pertaining to time-related values and practices.
Some of these questions are: Was nocturnal sleep-time regulated? If so, how was it regulated, by whom, and for whom? What time signals, incl. clocks, animal noises, plant cycles or social activities were used to manage sleep patterns? How were these regulations reflected in everyday life? Were there notions of an 'appropriate sleeping time' and what considerations went into making this determination? What about napping? Can we detect polyphasic or perhaps even polychronic sleep habits (through the practice of *inemuri*) and what does this say about premodern timescapes more generally?
Based on a discussion of sleep times, I will attempt to formulate a number of hypotheses on premodern timescapes that may be starting points into our research project on the timing of daily (and nightly) life from the early written sources to the early Meiji period.

The Night in Japanese Fairy Tales

Gergana Petkova (Sofia University)

A Japanese proverb says that if a fairy tale is told at day-time, the walls around will tremble and fall apart. And if still one needs indeed to tell that story, then s/he at least should make the room darker. Fairy tales are very sensitive in regard to "day" and "night", and not only as far as story-telling process is concerned. About 35 tales from Keigo Seki's Index of Japanese folktales (which makes about a fifth of all fairy tales), define evening or night as setting's timeframe. And night is not simply a background motif, but a very important part of the plot.

The present work is based on over ten years of research in the field of Japanese fairy tales and offers a folkloristic perspective to the topic of timing day and night in premodern Japan. It is composed as a brief account of night motif and its representations in Japanese fairy tales, among which the evening as a portal between worlds (when the boundary between the worlds of human beings, nature and the supernatural are most trespassable); the night as a meeting point with the supernatural (animals disguised as human beings appear on the threshold of protagonists or protagonists meet supernatural beings outdoors); staying overnight and marriage consequences; manipulativity of time (fox and badgers as time- and reality manipulators and their special skills to make the day look like a night). Special attention will be drawn to the night- and day-dreaming, dreams (time- and space-travel function) and wish-fulfilment.

Conch shell and ritual sticks: Extraordinary and ordinary time during *yamabushi* practices

Claudio Caniglia

The ritual of the mountain retreat (*nyūbu*) performed by the Japanese mountain ascetics (*yamabushi*) until the Meiji period, was structured according to a complex symbolism involving many elements: embryology, agricultural cults of the mountain-harvest goddess and the tantric Buddhist idea of enlightenment in this very body (*sokushin jōbutsu*).

After entering the "other" space of the mountain several rituals were performed with the aim of getting out from the ordinary dimension of time. The ascetic would reach a state in which he became detached from all bounds with the past and found himself in a ritual drama. Then going through all states of conditioned existence, he was finally reborn as a new entity endowed with the powers of the buddha/*kami* and able to put into practice his divinatory and magical-exorcist powers when upon his return to the secular world.

The sacred time of the mountain retreat is marked by the succession of different rituals, started and closed by the sound of the conch shell, or by practices purifying the space, performed by striking together ritual sticks. The meticulous organization of the mountain retreat period creates an extraordinary condition where time and mountain's sacred space end up being bound together determining the final empowerment of the mountain ascetic.

During his magical-exorcist activities, the *yamabushi* displays the power accumulated during the sacred ascent. To what extent the efficacy of this power is due to his breaking the ordinary time of the parishioner's daily life by re-enacting the extraordinary condition of the mountain retreat?

Time in the Tea Ceremony

Eric Decreux (Université Orleans)

This talk has the purpose to present some aspects of the interaction of the conception of time and the spatial organization of the Japanese tea ceremony room. This spatial organization appears indeed to be mostly important in this practice and contributes to the creation of an atmosphere which may be relevant for the understanding of some aspects of the apperception of time, as one of the well known watchwords of this practice *'ichiko-ichie', 'one time, one meeting'*, may suggest it.

The tea ceremony appears to be significant for the interaction of the Japanese sensibility with a large range of traditional Japanese activities from the 16th century onwards. Since this time, the fixed rules of this practice exclude among others the use of any tools of objective measure like clocks. Anyway, time is present through a net of allusions from the displayed objects and emphasized by the conversation.

In this talk, we will show how the tea ceremony can appear as an artistic representation, and even as the construction of a symbolic *milieu,* in which time should be a non-independent parameter. We will in particular focus on both the interaction between spatial rhythm and the peoples' behaviour and the narrative

dimension of the evocation of time. We also will make a link between these remarks and some other Japanese traditions: the *renga* chained poetry, which is often linked with the tea ceremony by the major schools of this practice, but also other performance arts. Eventually, the character of time in this artificially constructed place may be discussed, and a link with some writings of Japanese philosophers of the Meiji era like Kuki Shuzo may be done.

Stopping the Sun in the Sky: Manipulating Time in Japanese Folktales and Legends

Raluca Nicolae (Bucharest University of Economic Studies)

Some extravagant stories of time paradoxes deal with the motif of stopping the sun in the sky and, as a result, dilating the duration of the day. The biblical account of Joshua stopping the sun and moon to enable the Israelites to overpower the Canaanites (Joshua 10:12-14) provides a widely-known example of this motif. In Japanese folk tradition this motif of temporal addition is called *hi-maneki* 日招き (beckoning the sun). The legends revolving around court politics develop this motif into different episodes such as *hi-maneki Hachiman* 日招き八幡 [Hachiman who stopped the sun in response to a worshipper's prayers], *hi-maneki hashi* 日招き橋 [the bridge of sun beckoning] or *hi-maneki dan* 日招き壇 [the platform of sun beckoning], related either to the benevolence of Hachiman, the god of war, or to certain places (bridges) or valiant heroes (Sasaki Takatsuna or Minamoto no Yoshiie, also known as Hachiman Tarō). Trying to influence the odds of a battle, the main character prays to the setting sun to stop in the sky so that he might win the combat and the sun does stand still for a while to help him overcome his enemies.

Dilating time is, thus, perceived as a creative abuse in the historical narratives of *hi-maneki*, unlike the folktales focusing on harvesting practices. In the *Asahi chōja* 朝日長者 type, the rich landowner who tries to stop the sun so that his subjects might finish planting the rice in one day faces the harsh consequences of manipulating time as afterwards his rice fields are all changed into rushes. On the other hand, the female character who is pressed by her mother-in-law to finish planting a huge rice field in only one day manages to put an end to the task by beckoning the sun and postponing the sunset, but she drops dead as soon as the planting is over or is found dead in the following morning. This category is ominously entitled *yome-goroshi-ta* 嫁殺し田 [the field that kills the daughters-in-law], or *yome no ta* 嫁の田 [the daughter-in-law's field]. Therefore, in *asahi chōja* or *yome no ta* legends, the act of reshuffling the time in a random tapestry has tremendous consequences on the individual, whereas at the historical level it is but a legitimized deed that endorses a potential, charismatic leader.

Birds of a Feather: Ornithology, Rice Cultivation, and the Passing of Time in the *Kōwakamai Fushimi Tokiwa*

Ben Grafström (Akita University)

This paper shows 1) how in medieval/premodern Japan migrating birds alerted rice farmers to seasonal changes, and 2) how the activities of local birds influenced rice farmers' circadian rhythms.
Fushimi Tokiwa is split into two parts: in the first, Tokiwa flees the capital to escape Taira no Kiyomori's wrath, and eventually finds refuge in a remote, mountain village. In the second part of the narrative, five local women who have heard about Tokiwa visit the home where she is staying to find out why she is so secretive. Tokiwa manages to hide her true identity by telling the women a tragic love story. In order to cheer her up, the five women each sing a rice-planting song characteristic of their home towns.
This Muromachi-era narrative communicates the passage of time to audiences in two different ways. In the first part, words and recitative techniques common to *kōwakamai* and other Muromachi tales indicate the passage of time. However in the second part, the narrator indicates the passage of time in relation to the activities of local fauna: by observing migratory birds and the habits of local birds, rice-farmers are able to discern critical times of the rice planting season. The narrative then suggests that farmers synchronized their work days with local birds' daily habits in order to maximize time spent in the fields. This paper shows that not only does the narrator's inserting of these five female characters in *Fushimi Tokiwa* provide a dramatic climax to this *kōwakamai*, but their songs and the tales they recount also give modern audiences some insight to how the passage of time was observed in rural rice-planting communities in premodern Japan, namely through the observation of birds in the wild.

Drums, solar position and paper reports: The expansion of early medieval beliefs about temporal orientation as seen in construction rituals and the 12th-century *sato dairi*.

Kristina Buhrman (Florida State University)

This paper examines the interaction of divination and techniques and technologies of time measurement and management in the Insei Period (1086 – 1221), and how these practices changed and spread to new social contexts with the rise of private courts, and particularly with the institutionalization of the *sato dairi*.
The selection of auspicious times and the avoidance of inauspicious times strongly motivated time measurement practices in premodern Japan: from the affirmation of the importance of divinatory notes on official calendars in a decree of 810 to the compilation and circulation of almanac guidebooks (大雑書 *ōzassho*) in 19th century, we see the enduring appeal of such forecasting. During the Heian Period, sources attest to growing concern with increasingly elaborated systems of temporal

forecasting, culminating with guidebooks compiled in the late 12th and early 13th centuries. While some of this interest can be attributed to growing wealth and elaboration of particular *kenmon* power blocs, the on-going spatial and social reformulation of the capital also played a role: as private households became recognized political centers—particularly those courts of the regent and *In*—rituals and technologies that had previously been restricted to the court of the *tennō* spread to new spatial and social contexts. Specifically, the shift from the *dairi* palace complex to *sato dairi* or "rustic palaces," meant that construction activities on buildings in the capital proper became increasingly formalized, employing both *onmyōji* to announce time and drums to regulate it, emulating official construction rituals. The spreading need for correct and more regulated time just as the court's monopoly on determining time itself was weakening is a wider context that reveals the ways in which cultural change is driven not simply from the top down or bottom up, but through an interaction of social forces in both directions.

Telling Time in the Diaries of Yoshida Kanemi and Bonshun

Elizabeth Kenney, Kansai Gaidai University

My presentation focuses on diaries written by two half-brothers in the late Muromachi and early Edo periods. The elder brother, Yoshida Kanemi 吉田兼見 (1535-1610), was the chief priest of the politically and ideologically powerful Yoshida Shrine. The younger brother, Bonshun 梵舜 (1553-1632), was a Buddhist priest. Together, their diaries, *Kanemi kyōki* 兼見卿記 and *Bonshun nikki* 梵舜日記, cover more than sixty years, from 1570 to 1632. The diaries should allow us to understand something about how Kanemi and Bonshun viewed time in their lives.

Kanemi and Bonshun lived in violent times and were closely connected to the most important historical figures of the age. Historians of Japan have, for the most part, used the diaries as sources of information about momentous events in Japanese history, e.g., the death of Oda Nobunaga. In contrast, I am interested in what the diaries tell us about daily life at Yoshida Shrine. The brothers wrote about the weather, strange atmospheric phenomena, earthquakes and floods, dreams, political events, battles, executions, tea ceremonies and poetry parties, illness and medicine. My presentation at the 2014 European Association of Japanese Studies focused on the specifically religious elements in the diaries.

The years and the days of the months are clearly recorded. Sometimes the day in the sexagenary cycle is also noted. The diary entries are brief, and Kanemi and Bonshun usually did not include the quotidian details about which we are now curious. For example, Bonshun often records that relatives or friends came to breakfast 朝食, but he does not write at what time that morning meal was eaten. Activities are frequently described as occurring at a time of day: dawn 暁 (very rarely), early morning 早朝, evening 晩, night 夜. Bonshun rarely uses the Sino-Japanese 'hours' to tell the time of an event. The examples I have found so far are: comments on the weather; important ceremonies; the burning of the Great Buddha Hall in 1602.

日本近世における都市の暮らしと時間
Timing City Life in Edo Japan

Morishita Toru (Yamaguchi University)

近世という時代を前近代社会の到達点として位置づけるとき、時間の問題一つとっても、近代化以前における固有な達成とはいかなるものだったのか、興味を引くところである。西洋化される直前の社会では、どのような形で時間が人々の暮らしを規定し、あるいはいかなる時間感覚が普及していたのか。そうした問題を考えようとするとき、日本近世の特徴として、今日の地方都市の原型でもある城下町が、全国各地に一斉に建設されたことに注意を向けなければならない。そこには農村を離れた領主（武士）たちが居住したため、文字による行政が発達したといわれている。あるいは都市の急成長は、もちろん商品市場の飛躍的発展と同義でもあった。都市が全国にできたことで、総じて社会の〝合理化〟がもたらされたと考えられる。そうしたなか、それまでの自然と一体だった時間感覚に、一定の変容がもたらされたと想定することもできよう。このような関心から、城下町において、武士や町人たちの暮らしを時間がどのように規定していたのか見てみようと思う。もっとも、そうした時間意識を直接にうかがうことは史料的にはなかなか困難である。そこで、藩による規制とそれへの逸脱という局面に分析の焦点を絞り、そこから時間をめぐる規範や、人々の時間意識といったものを垣間見る、という方法をとることにする。

When positioning the early modern era as the point of departure from premodern society, when considering the question of Time, just what its characteristic form can have been prior to modernisation is something which catches one's attention. How did time regulate people's lives in a society that was yet to be swept up by Westernization, and what did time awareness mean to them? In considering these issues, we must turn our attention to castle towns, which sprang up all over the country at the time and are characteristic of early modern Japan, and still form the archetype for provincial cities in present-day Japan. Inhabited by the ruling warrior class that had left the farming villages, castle towns developed an administrative system based on written documents. The rapid growth of cities also went hand in hand with a fast expansion of the commercial market. This urbanisation taking place all over the country can be said to have brought about a 'rationalisation' of early modern Japanese society. We can hypothesize that in this process the time awareness of the Japanese, which had until then been in unity with nature, saw certain changes. Historical materials which provide direct evidence of time consciousness are difficult to ascertain. I will therefore focus my analysis on domain regulations and instances of deviation from them, which permit us to catch a glimpse of the standards set concerning time, as well as people's time awareness in Edo Japan.

Nightless Cities: Timing the Pleasure Quarters in Edo Japan

Angelika Koch (University of Cambridge)

Tokugawa Japan's licensed prostitution quarters have often been described as the antithesis of the everyday, a space separate from the normality of life in the cities in terms of mores, as well as physical location. This 'otherness' also found expression with regard to time and the rhythms of life in the quarters, which became 'nightless cities', where 'dawn was breaking when the sun set over the city', as a comic poem from the period would have it. Moreover, the pleasure quarters did not only have their distinct annual festivals and idiosyncratic jargon, they also had their own units of time that applied when costumers engaged women for pleasure, and their ways of measuring these. In fact, certain classes of prostitutes and geisha entertainers were remunerated on a time-based system, which seems to have differed significantly across regions, providing a fairly rare example of work being 'paid by the hour' in early modern Japan. Drawing on a range of sources including documents, guides to the pleasure quarters and fictional accounts, this talk will explore the pleasure quarters as an early modern 'timescape', discussing the time markers, announcement and measurement methods and relevant to pleasure quarter life at the time.

Temporal behaviour in Japanese rural society and the Local Improvement Campaign (1906-1918)

Katja Schmidtpott (FU Berlin)

While it can be assumed that the Western 24-hour system became accepted in daily life rather quickly, it seems that temporal behaviour as such remained largely unchanged for more than a generation. Temporal values crucial to the building of the nation-state such as punctuality and efficient time use were taught in modern institutions such as schools, the military and the factory since the 1870s. Outside these institutions, however it appears that large parts of the population continued to follow 'premodern' patterns of daily life that were only loosely structured by clock-time.

In the course of Japan's rise as an imperialist power after the wars against China (1894-95) and Russia (1904-05), the 'premodern' temporal behaviour of the population became increasingly perceived as a problem by the government bureaucracy. An ubiquitous lack of time discipline not only hampered agricultural productivity, it also endangered the functioning of local government. By means of a moral campaign mainly directed towards the rural population, the state in cooperation with private actors tried to persuade people to be punctual and to use their time productively. Although they aimed at strengthening the modern nation-state, the methods they recommended were often borrowed from premodern times: e.g. early rising was propagated as an indigenous substitute for daylight-saving time which was introduced in the belligerent nations of Europe and the USA during the First World War.

In my presentation, I will show how individual temporal behaviour in daily life became the focus of official attempts to create modern citizens, how the 'modern' and the 'premodern' were intertwined in the Local Improvement Campaign, and how this was linked to Japan's emergence as an imperialist power.

Space and Temporality in the Japanese Empire

Juliane Aso (FU Berlin)

The understanding and use of time in Japan did not only order daily life but regions and the perception of other peoples. Geography was – and still is – not concerned about space but it can be a means of structuring time as well. By analyzing geography textbooks that were used in primary schools for girls and boys during 1905 and 1945 I contribute to 'timescapes in Japan' with an approach that combines the theory of Michel Foucault's discourse analysis and visual culture. I will also refer to Tessa Morris-Suzuki who has already demonstrated how time and space are linked to the process of creating a nation and the discussions in the field of anthropology. The works of Johannes Fabian and Elizabeth Edwards have shown how anthropologists and anthropometric pictures place different peoples in different times by creating a temporal unevenness.

Geography textbooks contributed to the making of modern subjects by giving the Japanese territory its boundaries and placing it in a modern time. Different regions could belong to different times. Inner Japan (*naichi*) was located in a present and modern time contrary to its colonies. One indicator for a temporal unevenness is the pictures of indigenous people and landscapes that accompany the textual discourse in the textbooks. The time manipulation becomes clearer when looking at the different Japanese colonies. Kwangtung that served as a gateway to Manchuria symbolized the future of Japan whereas Nan'yō was placed in a continuous past. Although inner Japan and its colonies belonged to the same territory a hierarchy was created by giving each region a different time. Time became therefore a political means to show that Japan was a modern state like the Western ones which had the right to bring civilization to the regions belonging to past but also to bring a new future back to Japan.