

# Networks in Early Modern Japan

**Date:** April 14, 2012  
**Location:** Sophia University, Bldg. 10, 3 Floor, Room 301  
**Time:** 13:30 until 17:00  
**Organizer:** Network Study Research Group (Sophia University)  
**Language:** English  
**Web:** <http://network-studies.org>



13:30–14:30

Gaye Rowley (Waseda University, Tokyo):

## “Nakanoin Nakako and the Dragon Scale Scandal of 1609: Researching a Woman’s Life in Seventeenth-Century Japan.”

Japan in the early seventeenth century was a wild place. Serial killers stalked the streets of Kyoto after dark, cutting down people at random; while in the imperial palace, at parties hosted by the Emperor's principal consort, noblemen and women mingled freely, pouring saké for one another and enjoying performances by a group of itinerant young women whose abandoned style of dancing would come to be known as kabuki. Then, in the seventh month of 1609, Emperor Go-Yōzei discovered that a group of his courtiers and concubines had been meeting clandestinely to indulge in illicit sexual escapades. He was furious. Two of those who had rubbed the Emperor the wrong way were put to death, and the lives of several others were ruined. My talk tells the extraordinary story of one of the young concubines, Nakanoin Nakako, the only woman involved whose life can be traced from beginning to end.

14:45–15:45

Thomas Harper (University of Leiden, Ret.):

## The Foundation Stones of the Chūshingura Legend: or, How do we know what we know about the “Akō Incident”?

The vendetta of the 47 Ronin from Akō—or the “Akō Incident”, as Correctness conscious historians prefer to call it—is one of the best documented events in Japanese history. This fortunate state of affairs, however, is more the result of the work of Edo period literati than that of modern scholars. This talk will be a brief introduction to three of the men to whom we are most indebted for our knowledge of this fascinating Incidentincident.

16:00–17:00

Tove Bjoerk (Rikkyo University, Tokyo)

## The economic structure of Edo Kabuki theaters and Ichikawa Danjūrō II as a Kyōhō-era manager

The Kabuki theaters of Edo were economic engines generating cash flows that sustained whole business networks of merchants, literati, artists, tailors, publishers, brothels, restaurants, and caterers. During the Kyōhō recession, the three theaters Nakamura-za, Ichimura-za, and Morita-za accumulated huge debts. Nonetheless, using the device of temporary permits, called “*hikae yagura*” and first issued in 1734, the Edo Kabuki industry would thrive until modern times, employing a managerial style in which expenditure would always exceed revenue. My presentation will investigate one of the key figures of the entertainment industry of the time, the actor Ichikawa Danjūrō II and his backstage activities.

Prior registration not required

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