

# How Tokyo Invented Sushi

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Room 301, 3F, Building 10, Sophia University Yotsuya Campus

Today sushi is a global phenomenon, coming in countless forms around the world. But the classic *Edomae-zushi* or *nigirizushi*, with pieces of raw fish laid over small hand-formed lumps of vinegared rice, was invented by restaurateurs in nineteenth-century Edo. What special conditions of the city of Edo-Tokyo produced this culinary invention, which would go on to represent Japanese cuisine itself? This presentation will explore the social and environmental context that produced *Edomae-zushi*, then consider how these conditions changed with modernization, and how, in turn, those changes affected sushi. Close examination of a familiar delicacy reveals a surprisingly rich history not only of Japanese gustatory choices, but of fisheries, of markets and class relations in urban Japan, and of the environmental effects of changing political regimes.

Jordan Sand is Associate Professor of Japanese History and Culture at Georgetown University in Washington, DC. He is the author of *House and Home in Modern Japan* (Harvard University Press, 2004) and *Tokyo Vernacular: Common Spaces, Local Histories, Found Objects* (University of California Press, forthcoming 2013). He is also co-editor of *Flammable Cities: Urban Conflagration and the Making of the Modern World* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2012). Other publications include "Good Science, Bad Science and Taste Cultures: A Short History of MSG" (*Gastronomica*, Fall 2005), and the journal special issue "Imperial Japan and Colonial Sensibility" (*Positions*, Spring, 2013). He is presently working on a book about material culture in the Japanese empire.

Lecture in English / No registration necessary

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