

Rethinking Circulation of Japanese-Language Books between Japan and its Oversea Territories before the World War II

Yoshitaka Hibi

Associate Professor, Graduate School of Letters, Nagoya University

Jan. 23 (Fri): 17:30 – 19:00

Sophia University Yotsuya Campus, Room 10-301

Before the World War II, along with the expansion of the Japanese Empire, enormous amount of people, materials and information “migrated” from Japan to East Asia, Southeast Asia and the Americas and vice versa. The circulation of Japanese-language books, magazines and newspapers was a part of this migration. Most of the past scholarship on the Japanese-language publication outside Japan tended to pay attention to publications printed within the Japanese overseas territories, their creators and perhaps their readers. On the other hand, I am interested in the very network in which Japanese-language books were circulated, connecting Japan and its overseas territories or settlements -- specifically in the history of book distributors and bookstores. By focusing on the network of circulation itself, I hope to shed light on the transnational dynamism of Japanese-language print culture, such as the multi-ethnic customers/readers of bookstores, the space of bookstores as the “contact zone,” and the diverse contexts and activities of bookstore owners and workers. As examples I will discuss the business of book distributors such as Osakayago shoten and big bookstores in overseas Japanese settlements like Niitakado in Taipei.

Yoshitaka HIBI is an associate professor of modern Japanese literature and culture at the Graduate School of Letters, Nagoya University, and a member of the editorial boards of *Border Crossings : The Journal of Japanese-Language Literature Studies* (跨境 日本語文学研究). He is the author of *Jikohyōshō no Bungakushi: Jibun o Kaku Shōsetsu no Tōjō* [A literary history of self-representation: the rise of the shōsetsu to write about oneself, 2002] and *Japanīzu Amerika: Imin-Bungaku, Shuppan-Bunka, Shūyōjo* [Japanese America: Immigrants' Literature, Publishing Culture, and the Internment, 2014]. He has also written many articles on the I-novel, privacy and literary writings, and modern Japanese print culture before the WWII.

Lecture in English / No registration necessary