

# “What was sacred in Japan’s “sacred war”?: the boundaries of the sacred and profane in wartime kamishibai”

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

During Japan’s Fifteen Year War (1931-1945), kamishibai (紙芝居) plays were one of the most widely distributed and frequently accessed media used to transmit propaganda messages about the “sacred war” (聖戦) to audiences in Japan (naichi) and the colonies (gaichi). Originally a street performance art for children that celebrated the earthy and lurid, kamishibai was repurposed by government agencies to address adults as well, and to convey to all its audiences important messages—through illustrations and script—encouraging them to support the war effort. This presentation will analyze the way the concepts of sacred and profane were deployed in the service of political persuasion.



**Sharalyn Orbaugh** is Professor of Asian Studies at the University of British Columbia, specializing in modern Japanese literature, popular culture, and visual culture. Following the 2015 publication of *Propaganda Performed: Kamishibai in Japan’s Fifteen War* (Brill), she is now working on a second book on kamishibai.

Free of charge/No Prior registration necessary