

Kataribe:

Cultural practice of storytelling in post-disaster
Tohoku

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18:30-20:00, November 7, 2017

Room 301, 3F, Building 10, Sophia University

Kataribe is a Japanese word that comes from the verb *kataru*, "to tell". After The Great East Japan Earthquake of 2011, these storytelling performances have flourished as an important local means of retaining and transmitting the memory of the disaster in almost all of the areas affected by the tsunami. This presentation analyzes the practice of *kataribe* in post-disaster Tohoku, focusing on their contribution in establishing the stories that will become the core of local collective memory for the future generations. The practice of storytelling affects place-making in areas that need to be almost completely rebuilt. In addition, by telling stories of the recent local past to outsider visitors, *kataribe* also enhances rebuilding by encouraging tourism, volunteering and local economic recovery. The presentation will be drawing on ethnographic research, including participant observation in *kataribe*, one-to-one interviews and analysis of oral narratives, as well as written testimonial narratives of 3.11 survivors.

Flavia Fulco got her PhD in American Studies from Università di Roma Tre (Rome) in 2011 working on literature of *Nikkeijin* women writers in Brazil and in the United States. Her focus was how Japanese ancestry influences *Nikkeijin* writers and the role of memory in shaping their identity. From 2015 she been a JSPS post-doctoral fellowship, and is a visiting researcher at Sophia University Institute of Comparative Culture, where she is conducting research within the project "Voices from Tohoku." Her research focuses on cultural practices related to the memorialization of the disaster, and is interested in interdisciplinary and comparative approaches between Social Sciences and Humanities.

This talk is organized by Professor David Slater for ICC research Unit on 3.11 as Crisis and Opportunity

Language: English / No Prior registration necessary