

# Advocating the Local on a Global Basis: The Slow Food Movement in Japan

地域の「食」の保持とグローバル化の推進：

日本におけるスローフード運動

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**Building #10, 3F, Meeting room 301**

Japan has a highly refined traditional food culture centered on regional and seasonal foods, but the arrival of fast food chains in Japan such as McDonald's in 1971 and the coffeehouse Starbucks in 1996 and other changes accompanying modernization have significantly changed eating habits.

This presentation will address the activities of Slow Food Japan as an example of an organization established to counterbalance globalization and the spread of fast food. Slow Food Japan was founded in 1998 and currently has 2,000 members. It originated from the Slow Food Movement, a non-governmental organization founded 1986 in Italy that seeks to preserve a variety of local foods and agricultural products such as fruits and vegetables that are at risk of vanishing and to ensure the high quality of food. The movement is currently active in 100 countries. Members are organized in so-called *convivia* to coordinate food fairs, public lectures and "taste education" in schools in order to inform consumers about the cultivation and preparation of regional foods. Members of these *convivia* also aim to strengthen the distribution of endangered foods through communication with producers of foods. The Slow Food Movement seeks to protect local foodways but is increasingly active on a global basis.

The presentation is based on one year of field research in Miyagi Prefecture in Northern Japan and draws from a number of sources such as participant observation at food fairs and in-depth interviews with members of the prefectural government and members of Slow Food Japan.

Lecture in English only (講演は英語で行なわれます・通訳なし)

Prior registration not required (事前予約などは必要ありません)

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## About the speaker

### EDUCATION

- 1998 - 2003 Doctor of Philosophy (Magna cum laude) in Japanese Studies, Institute of African and Asian Studies, University of Hamburg, Germany
- 1999 - 2001 Department of Commerce, Dōshisha University, Kyoto, Japan, Research towards a Doctoral Dissertation, funded by a Japanese Government Fellowship (Monbushō)
- 1990 - 1997 Master of Arts in Japanese Studies, History, and Political Science, University of Hamburg

### CAREER HISTORY

- since 2004 Tohoku University, Center for the Advancement of Higher Education, Sendai, Japan.  
Lecturer for German as a Foreign Language
- since 2004 Electronic Journal of Contemporary Japanese Studies (ejcjs), edited by Peter Matanle (Lecturer in Japanese Studies, School of East Asian Studies, University of Sheffield) Newsletter Editor  
<http://www.japanesestudies.org.uk/contents/bulletin.html>
- 2005 - 2006 Tokyo International University, Japan, Japan Studies Program (JSP). Part-time Instructor, Title of Course: Gender in Japanese Society.
- 2002 - 2004 Colón Language Center, Hamburg, Germany, Language Instructor
- 2001 - 2002 Consulate General of Japan, Hamburg  
Assistance in Public Relations and organisation of cultural events

**LANGUAGES** German, English, Japanese

### RESEARCH INTERESTS

Consumer behavior, especially with regards to fashion and foodways, gender issues and social stratification in contemporary Japan.

### PUBLICATIONS

#### Monographs:

- Wertewandel und soziale Schichtung in Japan. Differenzierungsprozesse im Konsumentenverhalten japanischer Frauen (Value Change and Social Stratification in Japan. Aspects of Women's Consumer Behaviour), Institute for Asian Affairs, Hamburg, 2005.

#### Edited Volumes

- Past and Present in Japanese Foodways, co-edited with Eric C. Rath, (Associate Professor, Department of History, University of Kansas) (manuscript in progress and to be submitted to Stanford University Press in August 2008).

#### Articles

- "Between Tradition and Innovation: The Reinvention of Kimono in Japanese Consumer Culture", Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture, ed. Valerie Steele, Berg Publishers, September 2008 (forthcoming).
- "Japanese Women's Magazines. Inspiration and Commodity", in: Electronic Journal of Contemporary Japanese Studies (ejcjs), 2003. <http://www.japanesestudies.org.uk/discussionpapers/Assmann/html>.
- "Der Versandhandel in Japan" (Mail-Order Business in Japan), in: Manfred Pohl (ed.), Japan 1997/1998. Politik und Gesellschaft (Politics and Society), Institute for Asian Affairs, Hamburg, 1998, pp. 273-302.

### PRESENTATIONS

- "Reinventing Culinary Heritage in Northern Japan: Slow Food and 'Traditional Vegetables'", talk to be delivered to the Social Science Group at the German Institute for Japanese Studies, Tokyo, June 18, 2008.
- Abstract: [http://www.dijtokyo.org/?page=event\\_detail.php&p\\_id=533](http://www.dijtokyo.org/?page=event_detail.php&p_id=533)
- Role of Discussant: Holy Feasts and Unholy Beasts in Premodern Japan, panel chaired by Eric C. Rath, Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, Atlanta, USA, April 4, 2008.
- "The Long Path towards Gender Equality in Japan: The Revision of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law (EOL) and its Implementation", 107th Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington DC, USA, November 28, 2007.
- Organizer/Chair: Session on "(Non) Consumption of Food in Japan – Past and Present", Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, Boston, USA, March 22, 2007, title of presentation: "Slow – Slower – Slowest: The Slow Food Movement in Japan".
- "The Reinvention of Tradition in Japanese Consumer Culture", 105th Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association (AAA), Washington DC, USA, December 2, 2005.
- 「消費行動の多様化。日本人女性を例にして」 (The Diversity of Consumer Behaviour – Taking Japanese Women as an Example), talk delivered in Japanese to the Faculty of Commerce, Dōshisha University, Kyoto, June 16, 2005.
- "Value Change and Social Stratification in Japan: Aspects of Women's Consumer Behaviour", CSSI Center for the Study of Social Stratification and Inequality, Tohoku University, Sendai, February 20, 2005,  
Abstract: <http://www.sal.tohoku.ac.jp/coe/index-en.html>