

## 24th World Congress of Philosophy 2018

Society Sessions organized by International Association of Japanese Philosophy (IAJP)

### **CONTEMPORARY (POST-WAR) JAPANESE PHILOSOPHY**

(C 070018)

August 17 2:00pm – 3:50pm

Room 401, China National Convention Center

Moderator: Cheung Ching Yuen

Speakers: John Krummel, Nobuo Kazashi, Mayuko Uehara

#### **Presentation 1**

**Title:**

Introduction to *Contemporary Japanese Philosophy: A Reader*

**Presenter:**

John Krummel

**Affiliation:**

Hobart and William Smith Colleges

**ABSTRACT**

My presentation will serve as an introduction to my forthcoming edited book, *Contemporary Japanese Philosophy: A Reader* (Rowman & Littlefield International). The book will be an anthology of contemporary (post-World War 2, post-1945) Japanese philosophy, showcasing the variety of tendencies and schools of thought. The book will be divided into two parts. The first part will be selections of essays or excerpts of writings from important contemporary Japanese philosophers who have succeeded in making an original contribution to the Japanese philosophical landscape and whose work also promise to make a contribution to world philosophy (beyond the scope of Japan). Most of these selections will appear in English for the first time. The second part will consist of essays written especially for this volume by scholars in Japanese philosophy on specific topics. In this presentation, I discuss what I understand to be “philosophy,” “philosophy in Japan,” and “Japanese philosophy.” Then I discuss the emergence after the Second World War of a style of philosophy distinct from the Kyoto School and some of the key thinkers involved in it, mainly at the University of Tokyo, and their relationship to the Kyoto School. I will then briefly discuss the content of the book which is

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divided into Part 1 and Part 2 and introduce the authors of Part 2, some of whom will be presenting shorter versions of their chapters following my presentation.

### Presentation 2

#### **Title:**

*“Tell Me, Where Has Her Soul Gone?”: Ishimure Michiko, or Ur-Thinking Born in the Sea of Suffering*

#### **Presenter:**

KAZASHI Nobuo

#### **Affiliation:**

Kobe University

#### **ABSTRACT**

This presentation is based on the section-II of my contribution entitled “Organic Intellectuals from Minamata to Fukushima: Ui Jun, Ishimure Michiko, and Takagi Zinzaburō.” After the unprecedented triple disaster in Fukushima in March 2011, many Japanese called into question, not only nuclear power generation, but also the whole modernization process in Japan, which has eventuated in such a nightmarish disaster. Thus, my contribution highlights the careers and thoughts of some of the key figures who played decisive catalytic roles in the environmental movements in post-war Japan.

In particular, Kugai Jōdo (Paradise in the Sea of Sorrows: Our Minamata Disease/ Japanese original in 1969; German and English translation in 1995 and 2003 respectively) is known as the literary work that contributed most to bringing Minamata (mercury poisoning) disease to the attention of the wider public, and Ishimure Michiko is often referred to as the “Rachel Carson of Japan.” Kugai Jōdo is an extraordinary work, not only for its deeply poignant and grabbing power, but also for its unique mixed style combining mimetic description, fictional narrative, and critical reportage including medical and legal documents. We shall bring some of its most outstanding features into light.

At bottom Kugai-jōdo is a work of vehement accusation of horrendous injustice and callous inhumanities. However, Ishimure says her work is a “poem”; it conveys the joy of being in the lives of patients, sometimes even with a touch of humor, as well as the splendor of a now lost way of life intermingled with nature. In this age of massive disasters the “dead” has become an

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axial collective question, and some are reflecting on it anew in reference to Ishimure's work as an exemplar of "joint-struggle with the dead."

### Presentation 3

#### **Title:**

The Contemporary Philosophy of Hiromatsu Wataru: From Marxist Philosophy to the Theory of Facial Expression

#### **Presenter:**

Mayuko Uehara

#### **Affiliation:**

Kyoto University

#### **ABSTRACT**

In this talk, I would like to conduct a case study by focusing on Hiromatsu Wataru (廣松渉) (1933-1994) as one philosopher representative of contemporary thought in order to understand an aspect of contemporary Japanese philosophy. Ordinarily Hiromatsu is understood, primarily as a philosopher of Marxism. According to his pupil, Kobayashi Toshiaki (小林敏明), "Hiromatsu's thinking fundamentally begins with 'Marxism'." And he states that because Marxism made a retreat in Hiromatsu's later period any "consistency in his convictions was all the more rare." We can surmise that the current of post-war thought during 1950s Japan leads to the philosophy of Hiromatsu Wataru as one nodal point.

While investigating the issue of the body-mind and the self-other relationships, Hiromatsu in fact was also much interested in the issue of expression (hyōjō 表情) in relation to the former issues. How did he come to grapple with the topic of expression? In this presentation, we will examine Hiromatsu's philosophy while looking for the real situation behind his passage from Marxist philosophy to his theory of expression.