International Conference

Deciphering the Social DNA of Happiness: Life Course Perspectives from Japan

April 24-26, 2014

University of Vienna
Department of East Asian Studies / Japanese Studies

in cooperation with

the German Institute for Japanese Studies Tokyo

Location: Campus of the University of Vienna –
Department of East Asian Studies / Japanese Studies
Spitalgasse 2, Hof 2; Entrance 2.4; room JAP1 (ground floor)

Organization by
Barbara HOLTHUS and Wolfram MANZENREITER

International Conference

Deciphering the social DNA of happiness:
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Thursday, April 24, 2014

18:00-20:00   **WELCOME, INTRODUCTION AND KEYNOTE SPEECHES**

Makoto TAKETOSHI, Japanese Ambassador to Austria

Matthias MEYER, Dean of Faculty, University of Vienna

Barbara HOLTHUS and Wolfram MANZENREITER (University of Vienna, Austria)

DIJ research focus on happiness and unhappiness in Japan

Florian COULMAS (German Institute for Japanese Studies Tokyo, Japan)

What is a good society? A perspective from happiness research

Shigehiro OISHI (University of Virginia, USA)

20:00-22:00   Welcome reception

Friday, April 25, 2014

9:30-10:00   *Agenda setting*

Barbara HOLTHUS and Wolfram MANZENREITER (University of Vienna, Austria)

10:00-12:00   **SECTION 1: CHILDHOOD / ADOLESCENCE**

Happiness in a Japanese day nursery?

Eyal BEN-ARI (Kinneret College on the Sea of Galilee, Israel)

"It's good to go to school": First graders' views about schooling and learning in Japan

Yoko YAMAMOTO (Brown University, USA)

Socio-physical space and well-being: The case of burakumin youth in contemporary Japan
Christopher BONDY (International Christian University, Japan)

12:00-14:00	Lunch

14:00-16:00   **SECTION 2: ADULTHOOD: MARRIAGE AND FAMILY**, PART 1

Specialization and happiness in marriage: A U.S.-Japan comparison
Hiroshi ONO (Texas A&M University, USA)

"Being happy as a woman": The meaning and implications of being happy among Japanese housewives in post-bubble Japan
Ofra GOLDSTEIN-GIDONI (Tel Aviv University, Israel)

Single motherhood, living arrangements, and well-being in Japan
James RAYMO (University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA)

16:00-16:30   Coffee break

16:30-18:30   **SECTION 3: ADULTHOOD: MARRIAGE AND FAMILY**, PART 2

Whose responsibility? Whose well-being? On pregnancy and prenatal care in Japan
Tsipy Ivry (University of Haifa, Israel)

Happiness in "endurance": Impacts of internalized parenting norms
Yoshie MORIKI (International Christian University, Japan)

Happiness in balance: Married working women and household gender roles in Japan
Mary BRINTON (Harvard University, USA)

Saturday, April 26, 2013

9:00-10:20   **SECTION 4: ADULTHOOD: MEN AT WORK – AND AT HOME**

Happy and unhappy professors in contemporary Japan
Roger GOODMAN (University of Oxford, UK)

How happy are salarymen: Continuity and change in the meaning of well-being for Japanese middle-class men
Futoshi TAGA (Kansai University, Japan)

10:20-10:40   Coffee break

10:40-12:00	**SECTION 5: ADULTHOOD: COMMUNITY BUILDING**, PART 1

No man is an island: Social well-being as a prerequisite for subjective well-being in Japan?
Carola HOMMERICH (German Institute for Japanese Studies Tokyo, Japan)

Political participation: Entering a new world or plunging into disappointment? A case study of "Greens Japan" activists
Phoebe HOLDGRÜN (German Institute for Japanese Studies Tokyo, Japan)

12:00-13:30   Lunch

13:30-14:50   **SECTION 6: ADULTHOOD: COMMUNITY BUILDING**, PART 2

Experiences, narratives and transformations of disaster volunteers in Tohoku: Purpose in life, self-complacency, insecurity
Susanne KLIEN (Hokkaido University, Japan)

Japanese religions and human happiness: Exploring an ambivalent relationship
Mark MULLINS (University of Auckland, New Zealand)

14:50-15:15   Coffee break

15:15-17:15   **SECTION 7: OLD AGE / END OF LIFE**

Embracing decline: Understanding the impacts of ageing and depopulation on well-being in rural Japan
Peter MATANLE (Sheffield University, UK)

Loneliness among older people in Japan: A perspective from happiness economics
Tim TIEFENBACH (German Institute for Japanese Studies Tokyo, Japan)

Conceptions of a meaningful life and "good" death in end of life decision-making
Celia SPODEN (Heinrich-Heine University Duesseldorf, Germany)

17:15-17:30   Coffee break

17:30-18:30   **CONCLUSION**

Concluding discussion
Gordon MATHEWS (The Chinese University of Hongkong, China)

Discussion on book project and closing remarks
Barbara HOLTHUS and Wolfram MANZENREITER (University of Vienna, Austria)

ABSTRACTS

DIJ research focus on happiness and unhappiness in Japan

Florian COULMAS

For the past several years, "Happiness and Unhappiness in Japan" has been one of two principal research foci at the German Institute for Japanese Studies Tokyo (DIJ). This paper explains the rationale for establishing this research focus, gives a brief overview of the projects that were and are still being carried out, and offers some general thoughts about happiness research. A major motivation for launching the said research program has been Japan's role as the first non-Western industrializer and modernizer, adopting Western values and competing with Western countries on terms laid down by these countries. In the course of the 20th century Japan has joined the ranks of the most advanced countries, experiencing similar developmental stages and crises. The mediating function of culture continues to be debated. The overarching question is whether the parameters for measuring happiness conceived in the West can be applied to Japan. If an answer to this question can be found, it can only be as the result of detailed empirical research. To this end we have identified a number of research domains that are potentially relevant to aggregate happiness, including precarity and perceived social exclusion, parental well-being, political party programmes, political participation, prosocial behavior, trust in institutions, as well as—in response to the Great East Japan Earthquake and its aftermath—effects of disasters on happiness. With these projects we hope to contribute to both the burgeoning field of happiness studies and a better understanding of contemporary Japan.

Florian Coulmas is director of the German Institute for Japanese Studies, Tokyo. Prior to assuming this position in 2004, he was chair of Modern Japanese Studies at the Institute of East Asian Studies, Duisburg-Essen University. He is editor of *Contemporary Japan*, and associate editor of the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*. Among his recent publications are *Imploding Populations in Japan and Germany* (Brill, with Ralph Luetzeler) and *The Illusion of Happiness* (Verlag Neue Zürcher Zeitung, in German).

What is a good society? A perspective from happiness research

Shigehiro OISHI

What is a good society? Philosophers from Plato to Bentham have argued that a good society is a happy society—namely, a society in which most citizens are in general happy and satisfied with their lives. Since the publication of *The Wealth of Nations* by Adam Smith in 1776, most economists have implicitly assumed that a happy society is a materially wealthy society. Thus, gross national product (GNP) and related indices became the most popular indicators of the well-being of nations from the 1950s to date. Recently, however, prominent economists as well as political scientists, sociologists, and psychologists have argued that a good society is a happy society. In order to make this successful scientific endeavor, however, it is critical to develop the appropriate (reliable and valid) measures of happiness. In my talk, I will first discuss main measurement issues such as "Can we measure happiness?" and "Is it possible to compare happiness across cultures?". Second, I will summarize major findings from the Gallup World Polls, the World Values Surveys, and the General Social Surveys, on the predictors of a happy society, focusing on psychological factors such as a sense of fairness and

trust. Finally, I will discuss recent findings regarding the concepts of happiness and a happy society among Japanese today, and explore whether Japanese happiness is different from others.

Shigehiro Oishi is Full Professor at the Department of Psychology of the University of Virginia. He is a social psychologist, interested in culture, social ecology and well-being. His major research interest is to uncover the causes and consequences of well-being. Among his publications are *The Psychological Wealth of Nations: Do Happy People Make a Happy Society* (Wiley-Blackwell) and *Doing the Science of Happiness: What we learned from Psychology* (Shinyōsha, in Japanese).

Agenda setting

Barbara HOLTHUS and Wolfram MANZENREITER

Japan is scoring fairly high in run-of-the-mill statistics on national wealth and economic development. Yet in terms of life satisfaction, Japan is falling behind. Cross-national surveys like the Happy Planet Index, the World Happiness Report or the OECD Better Life Index reveal a striking discrepancy between socio-economic development and subjective appreciation of life in Japan. Hence Japan is a good case in point to demonstrate that material gain and economic growth alone are not the key to more happiness.

The greater share of the burgeoning literature on happiness in Japan has been produced in the fields of economics and psychology. However, what their approaches usually are missing is a clear understanding about how well-being is enhanced or restrained by social systems and institutions. Researchers have come to consider networks of social relations, gender, class, human capital, leisure time experience, political freedom, and religious belief, among others, to be of utmost importance to balance economic factors against social and cultural issues that impact a society's and its members' sense of well-being. Sociology and anthropology are uniquely positioned to simultaneously place structure and agency at the center of their inquiring. Qualitative research methods are particularly well equipped to assess the cultural variability of happiness as a discursive construct, while quantitative methods can generate additional insight into the variation of happiness among social groups and throughout the life course. Paying attention to plurality and diversity is not just a strategy to counter prevalent views of Japan as homogeneous entity but also a significant correction of the holistic approach in quantitative cross-cultural comparisons.

The fundamental objective of this conference and subsequent publication is to generate advanced knowledge about the linkages between socio-structural aspects, individual agency and happiness in contemporary Japan. In particular, we pursue three objectives: to further insight into what makes life worth-living for different age groups within specific social milieus; to aid in scholarly understanding of how cultural institutions, social relations, the economy and policy making impact objective conditions of well-being and the subjective perceptions of their significance; to contribute to the emerging debate on happiness among social scientists globally by using Japan as a prominent case study.

Barbara Holthus joined the University of Vienna as Assistant Professor in December 2013. From 2007 to 2013, she was Senior Research Fellow at the German Institute for Japanese Studies Tokyo. Her research interests are in the areas of marriage and the family, social and demographic change, childcare, and media. Her publications include *Partner relationships in Japanese women's magazines*

since 1970: Media and gender in Japan (Edwin Mellen, in German) and "Parental well-being and the sexual division of household labor: A new look at gendered families in Japan" (*Asiatische Studien,* with Hiromi Tanaka).

Wolfram Manzenreiter is Professor of Japanese Studies at the Department of East Asian Studies at the University of Vienna. His research is mostly concerned with social and anthropological aspects of sports, emotions, and migration in a globalizing world. His most recent book-length publications include *Sport and Body Politics in Japan* (Routledge, 2014) and the co-edited volumes on *Migration and Development. New Perspectives* (ProMedia 2014, in German).

SECTION 1: CHILDHOOD / ADOLESCENCE

Happiness in a Japanese day nursery?

Eyal BEN-ARI

Most research on "happiness" and "well-being" focuses – like much of the social sciences – on adults. Even when children's well-being is involved in research they are often seen as objects of adults' views, care, and normative prescriptions. This kind of emphasis is part of a wider bias at the base of our disciplines, that is, to view things from the perspective of fully developed social actors (and usually middle-class). Moreover, issues related to happiness tend to be researched at the "macro" scale through surveys, questionnaires or analyses of policy. Hence relatively little has been written based on sustained and extended ethnographic fieldwork (although there is work based on interviews).

This paper aims to explore what happens at the micro-scale: at the level of interactions between adults and children. Specifically, it uses cases of two day-care centers in Kyoto in which I carried out fieldwork in 1988 and 2005. I seek to explore care and well-being as it is put into practice in institutions devoted to children in formal institutions. Towards this end, I analyze first the type of professional folk model of happiness that the teachers and caretakers hold (their assumptions about human nature, the causal reasoning they use; their self-image as caretakers); second, the types of practices and interactions through which care is intentionally or unintentionally connected to well-being (spanning mundane activities – sleeping, eating, dressing – and special events like festivals or birthday parties); and third, the types of wider sociological changes in Japanese society and their impact on the micro-level (such as the questioning of authority, the emphasis on consumerism, or demographic changes). Where possible I will place my study in a comparative frame both within and outside Japan.

Eyal Ben-Ari received his doctoral degree in Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge, UK. Besides his research on Japan within the last thirty years he focused on introducing an anthropological point of view on the Israeli army. One of his recent publications is "Militaries and the Multiple Negotiations of Intervention" in G. Kuemmel and B. Griegrich (eds) *The Armed Forces: Towards a Post-Intervention Er*a*?* (Springer). In 2011 he established the FEBA Research and Consultancy and since 2013 he is a Senior Research Fellow at Kinneret Center, Israel. He is author of *Japanese Childcare: An Interpretive Study of Culture and Organization* (Kegan Paul International).

"It's good to go to school": First graders' views about schooling and learning in Japan

Yoko YAMAMOTO

Positive academic and school experiences play a critical role in children's self-esteem and well-being as students. However, little is known about how Japanese children feel about going to school and how they view the purposes and meanings of going to school after their transition to formal schooling. In Japan, the "first grade problem", the rapid increase in first graders who are unprepared for learning at school, growing numbers of students who do not participate in classroom learning, and widening academic discrepancies associated with family backgrounds have served as a warning to educational practitioners and policy makers. These educational issues call attention to young children's feelings toward schooling as well as their views about learning, especially in relation to students' socioeconomic backgrounds. Cross-cultural studies have demonstrated that from age 4, children are able to articulate the purposes and meanings of learning and schooling in relation to specific cultural and socioeconomic contexts. In this presentation, I will present first graders' views about learning and feelings toward schooling in Japan by examining both middle-class and working-class children.

Data is derived from interviews with 100 first graders, 6- or 7-year-olds, and surveys with their mothers in the Kansai area (50 from middle-class and 50 from working-class backgrounds). By employing a storytelling interview method, which provides a picture of reality through stories, I elicited and analyzed in-depth narratives and views of children in relation to schooling. Preliminary analysis demonstrated that most Japanese first graders were aware of the importance of attending school. However, they demonstrated diverse views related to learning including social, emotional, and intellectual benefits as well as how learning would bring happiness. In addition to culturally unique views, I will discuss social class differences in first-graders' views related to learning.

Yoko Yamamoto is Adjunct Assistant Professor at the Department of Education at Brown University. In 2006 she earned her Ph.D. in Human Development and Education at the University of California, Berkeley. Her latest articles are "Social class and Japanese mothers' support for young children's education: A qualitative study" (*The Journal of Early Childhood Research*) and "Cultural capital in East Asian educational systems: The case of Japan" (*Sociology of Education*, with Mary Brinton).

Socio-physical space and well-being: The case of burakumin youth in contemporary Japan

Christopher BONDY

Well-being comes from myriad sources and components, as Mathews and Izquierdo (2009) show. In this paper, I consider two broad areas they highlight in my own research on buraku youth in Japan: interpersonal and structural dimensions. This paper argues that these are inextricably connected based on the manner in which burakumin are labeled in Japan and how people respond to those labels, creating both comfort and discomfort among the burakumin.

For many burakumin, interpersonal interactions with others (burakumin or not) are, at their core, an experiment of relationships. How one presents (or chooses not to present) oneself with others is, by definition, an interpersonal project that defines well-being.

This paper highlights how interpersonal levels of well-being can be found at different dimensions of a socio-physical space. While the youth in my research described the security and comfort they found within their district, the district alone did not create this sense of well-being. Many of the youth

noted the sense of true comfort, of "being themselves" and establishing trust in interpersonal relations while participating in children's club (*kodomo kai*), a joint social movement and school organized event.

While interpersonal interactions may be private ones, the socio-physical spaces where the youth find comfort are, by definition, structural. Being burakumin in contemporary Japan is a result of governmental decisions, past and present, as to whom, and what area, are labeled as different. Further, the application of such labels changed historically. At the initial stages of my research, national level policies on burakumin were changing, invoking a sense of unease among many of my informants regarding what the future would hold for them. Structural changes shaped their sense of well-being.

Christopher Bondy, Ph.D. University of Hawaiʼi at Mānoa, is Associate Professor of Sociology at International Christian University, Tokyo, Japan. His research interest includes comparative sociology of Japan and the United States, comparative racism, identity construction, minorities and social movements. His recent publications include "How did I get here? The social process of accessing field sites" (*Qualitative Research*) and "Understanding buraku inequality: Improvements and challenges" (*Contemporary Japan*).

SECTION 2: ADULTHOOD: MARRIAGE AND FAMILY, PART 1

Specialization and happiness in marriage: A U.S.-Japan comparison

Hiroshi ONO

This paper examines the relationship between specialization and happiness in marriage in the U.S. and Japan. Our findings, based on the General Social Surveys in the U.S. and Japan, indicate both similarities and differences in the determinant of marital happiness in the two countries. In the U.S., the findings are mixed. Women's reported marital happiness in the U.S. is more likely to follow the predictions of the bargaining model where their happiness is determined by their own income. Men's marital happiness in the U.S. follows the predictions of the specialization model; they are happier if their wives are not working or, alternatively, if they are financially dependent on their wives. In Japan, we find support for the specialization model, particularly in the case of women; they are happier if they are specialized in the household and they have a higher household income. Our research highlights how marital quality is affected by the institutional context and the normative environment.

Hiroshi Ono is Associate Professor at the Department of Sociology at Texas A&M University. His research focuses on economic sociology, stratification and inequality, work, organizations and international business. Recent publications include: "Marriage, cohabitation, and happiness: A cross-national analysis of 27 countries" (*Journal of Marriage and Family*) and "Welfare states and the redistribution of happiness" (*Social Forces*, both together with Kirsten Schultz Lee).

"Being happy as a woman": The meaning and implications of being happy among Japanese housewives in post-bubble Japan

Ofra GOLDSTEIN-GIDONI

In her best-seller *The Howl of the Loser Dogs* (*Makeinu no tōboe*), Sakai Junko laments about the social criticism faced by the "losers." A woman could be beautiful, smart, fashionable, rich, and have a respectable career, nevertheless if she is single she is considered "not happy as a woman". In my interviews with Japanese housewives - those who are considered the "winners" according to Sakai and others - they often related to "happiness" (*shiawase*) as measured by a proper fulfillment of social expectations ("becoming a good bride and wife [means] happiness").

As suggested by Mathews and Izquierdo (2009), ethnographies aiming at the study of happiness or well-being too often do not relate to the degree of individual agency as opposed to the extent people are controlled by their societies and culture in their sense of happiness. In my study I intend to focus on the women's perceptions of their "happiness" and thus will closely examine the relationship between individual agency and the social and cultural impact. Another lacuna in the anthropological study of well-being according to the same study, is that it does not sufficiently emphasize the diversity of senses of well-being within the society, a diversity refracted through social class, age and especially gender. Re-examining my empirical data about Japanese housewives, I attempt to look specifically for this kind of diversification not only vis-à-vis other social categories such as single women or men but also within the category of housewives, as for example in terms of (thin) social class distinctions and age.

Ofra Goldstein-Gidoni is Associate Professor at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology and East Asian Studies at Tel Aviv University. She earned her Ph.D. at the University of London. Her research focuses on gender, women and "new fathers" in Japan, on cultural globalization and the incorporation of New Age spirituality in Israeli mainstream. Among her publications are *Packaged Japaneseness: Weddings, Business and Brides* (Curzon Press and University of Hawai'i Press) and more recently *Housewives of Japan: An Ethnography of Real Lives and Consumerized Domesticity* (Palgrave Macmillan).

Single motherhood, living arrangements, and well-being in Japan

James RAYMO

Single mothers fare less well than their married counterparts on a range of outcomes, but the implications of these relationships for social inequality are largely unexplored in Japan. In this paper, I examine the role of single motherhood in shaping educational differences in several dimensions of well-being. Data come from the 2011 and 2012 rounds of the National Survey of Households with Children conducted by the Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training (n = 4,211). Using these data, I first estimate a series of regression models to describe differences in mothers' well-being by their own educational attainment and that of their parents. Measures of well-being include job satisfaction, subjective economic well-being, self-rated health, depressive symptoms, and happiness. Previous research suggests that we should see a strong positive educational gradient in each of these measures of well-being. In the next step, I extend models by distinguishing unmarried mothers from their married counterparts. This allows for an assessment of the extent to which educational differences in well-being observed in the first step reflect the concentration of single motherhood

among women with lower levels of education. It is clear that the rise in divorce and single-mother families in Japan is most pronounced among women with a high school education or less, but the implications of growing educational differentials in family behavior for socioeconomic inequality are not well understood. In the third step, I further extend models to evaluate the extent to which living arrangements and associated support from parents may moderate the relationships observed in the first and second steps. It is clear that single mothers are more likely than their married counterparts to coreside with parents and that intergenerational coresidence is positively associated with well-being, but it is not clear if or how differences in living arrangements may moderate the contribution of educational differences in single motherhood to variation in well-being. Results will shed light on the role of new family arrangements (single motherhood) and old forms of support (intergenerational coresidence) in shaping patterns of social stratification in contemporary Japan.

James M. Raymo is Professor at the Department of Sociology and Director of the Center for Demography and Ecology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. His areas of interest include demography, marriage and family, ageing and the life course, social stratification, methods, contemporary and Japanese society. Among his most recent publications are "Educational differences in divorce in Japan" (*Demographic Research*, with S. Fukuda and M. Iwasawa) and "Coresidence with parents and well-being of single mothers in Japan" *(Population Research and Policy Review*, with Yanfei Zhou).

SECTION 3: ADULTHOOD: MARRIAGE AND FAMILY, PART 2

Whose responsibility? Whose well-being? On pregnancy and prenatal care in Japan

Tsipy Ivry

My paper will address the tensions and paradoxes in contemporary Japanese moral economy and gendered division of accountability underling ideas about well-being as seen from the social arrangements surrounding the beginning of life. Pregnancy, as formulated by a range of professional discourses in contemporary Japanese society, is one stage of the life course where the interrelatedness and even inter-subjective dimensions of health and well-being materialize inside women's bodies.

My ethnography of pregnancy and prenatal care in Japan in the decade preceding the 3/11 triple disaster of 2011 shows that pregnant women were perceived not merely as receptacles of their unborn babies – as implied in more genetically oriented truth regimes – but as powerful somatic environments that determine their future babies' health. Within the "environmental" regime of prenatal care, the idea of using techniques to diagnose fetal anomalies in-utero was approached with extreme cautiousness and hesitation by doctors and pregnant women.

Instead, women were made accountable for fetal health through authoritative calls to manage their nutrition and physical activity as well as their mental well-being according to professional prescriptions. On the one hand pregnant women were endowed with powerful agency; as the creators of their unborn babies. On the other hand they had to bear the moral burden of managing their somatic environment, sometimes against all odds, for the sake of fetal well-being.

These tensions reached a climax when after the Fukushima disaster the Japanese Ministry of Health distributed pamphlets claiming that anxieties over radiation endanger one's well-being more than the radiation itself. However, new guidelines issued for a new non-invasive genomic test to detect

trisomy 13, 18, and 21 in 2013 might signify an emergent acknowledgement of the genetic chromosomal and genomic aspects of well-being.

Based on data collected in Japan during January-February 2014, I ask how the environmental version of motherhood can be practiced under heightened environmental anxieties and ambiguous information about radioactivity danger; how socio-cultural regimes of "nurture" are transformed under environmental disruption; and what is the role of reproductive technologies, scientific knowledge and medical experts in such transformations.

Ivry Tsipy, Ph.D. from Hebrew University, is Senior Lecturer at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Haifa. Her areas of research include medical anthropology, cultural politics, religion, new reproductive technologies, cultures of pregnancy, body and embodiment and Japanese society. She is the author of *Embodying Culture: Pregnancy in Japan and Israel* (Rutgers University Press). One of her latest publications is "Halachic infertility: Rabbis, doctors and the struggle over professional boundaries" (*Medical Anthropology: Cross-Cultural Studies in Health and Illness*).

Happiness in "endurance": Impacts of internalized parenting norms

Yoshie MORIKI

This study examines the nature of happiness among Japanese people who are at a childrearing stage in their life-course. It questions whether Japanese parents, who are said to be structurally forced to forgo "their" life for the sake of children, and who appear to be "enduring" "with patience," indeed subjectively view themselves as unhappy. It also investigates reasons why they continue to pursue a seemingly stressful parenting style, focusing on the internalization process of parenting, and mothering in particular. Such issues as lunch (*obento*)-making, parent-child co-sleeping, and sexless marriages are examined as examples of "proper" and "child-centered" behaviors observed in the daily life of Japanese. The practice of parent-child co-sleeping is widely observed and valued in Japan. This popular sleeping arrangement, however, has implications for sexless marriages, which are widely prevailing in Japanese society. This study explores the cultural meaning associated with sexless marriages in connection to parent-child co-sleeping, giving special attention to husbands' views and their sense of happiness.

Data used for this paper were collected via focus group discussions. The author organized six focus groups in Tokyo involving a total of 35 participants (15 males and 20 females, 6 never-married people and 29 currently married people). The discussions, which were led by the author, focused around issues related to child-rearing and mothering, including such topics as ideal mothers, the expected roles of mothers, good/bad memories of their own mothers, the difficulties of being parents in daily life, the joys of being parents, sleeping arrangements, and any child-rearing problems encountered. Relying on transcribed focus group texts, the meanings of parenting, family, and happiness are discussed, along with implications for Japanese demographic structures.

Yoshie Moriki is Associate Professor at the Department of Society, Culture and Media at the College of Liberal Arts at International Christian University, Tokyo, Japan. In May 2007, she earned her dual degree Ph.D in Anthropology and Demography at Pennsylvania State University. Her latest publications include "Mothering, co-sleeping, and sexless marriages: Implications for the Japanese

population structure" (*The Journal of Social Science*) and "Co-Residence Among Bangkok Elderly: Implications of Children's Marital Status," *Marriage and Family Review* 47: 529-547.

Happiness in balance: Married working women and household gender roles in Japan

Mary BRINTON

As women have attained ever-higher rates of university education and labor force participation in Japan and elsewhere in the post-industrial world, the "unfinished gender revolution" has created increased stress in many couples. Women's advances in education and the labor market have not been matched by a corresponding decline in their household and childcare responsibilities. Increasingly, demographers concerned with low fertility levels in postindustrial societies have linked this gender inequity in the household sphere to lower fertility, as women struggle to balance the dual sets of demands from the household and the market. This renders the link between married women's happiness and the gendered division of labor an important subject of inquiry. In this paper, I use quantitative data (the 2009 Japan National Survey on Family and Economic Conditions) to examine how Japanese married women's level of subjective happiness is related to the household division of labor. Quantitative data are supplemented with in-depth interviews of married women in two large metropolitan areas. These interviews ask women to reflect on their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the division of labor between themselves and their husbands and to discuss why they feel the way they do. The paper aims to provide insights into how Japanese married women view the balance of labor between themselves and their husbands, and how this is related to their sense of self and their level of subjective happiness.

Mary C. Brinton is Chair of the Department of Sociology at the Reischauer Institute of Harvard University. Her research focuses on gender stratification, education, labor markets, social demography, contemporary Japanese society and economy, economic sociology and comparative social stratification. Her recent publications include *Lost in Transition: Youth, Work and Instability in Postindustrial Japan* (Cambridge University Press) and "School-work systems in postindustrial societies: Evidence from Japan" (*Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, with Zun Tang)

SECTION 4: ADULTHOOD: MEN AT WORK – AND AT HOME

Happy and unhappy professors in contemporary Japan

Roger GOODMAN

According to a survey undertaken by the Carnegie Foundation in the mid-1990s, Japanese professors think of themselves as researchers in the German mold rather than teachers in the Latin American mold or as both researchers and teachers in the Anglo-American mold. At the same time, some comparative surveys suggest that professors in Japan feel more dissatisfied in their working conditions (a condition defined by Akira Arimoto as 'high psychological stress') than those in many other advanced societies which have a large higher education sector. This paper sets out to explore the roots of this unhappiness in the context of: the historical development of the professoriate since the 1870s; the changing sense of individual and collective identity that professors have had over this period; and, the current pressures they find themselves under as Japan's changing economic,

political and demographic situation combined with the effects of globalization of the higher education sector collectively impact on their daily experience. The paper draws on a combination of ethnographic material and the recently completed Changing Academic Profession project – carried out by three Japan specialists (Ulrich Teichler, Akira Arimoto and William K. Cummings) under the auspices of the Research Institute of Higher Education at Hiroshima University – which is a follow-up to the Carnegie Foundation report and constitutes the largest comparative survey ever carried out of views of academics about their profession. The analysis of the contemporary professoriate divides it into different categories – based on gender, age, generation, personal educational histories, mode of recruitment and type of contract, and whether they work in the public or private higher education institutions – and demonstrates that all of these variables have a major impact on their sense of autonomy and well-being.

Roger Goodman holds the Nissan Chair of Modern Japanese Studies at Oxford University. Since 2008, he is also Head of Oxford's Social Sciences Division. His research over the past thirty years has been mainly on Japanese education and social policy. Furthermore, he does comparative work on South Korea and the United Kingdom. Among his many publications is *Children of the Japanese State: The Changing Role of Child Protection Institutions in Contemporary Japan* (Oxford University Press). His latest edited book is *Higher Education and the State* (Symposium Books).

How happy are salarymen: Continuity and change in the meaning of well-being for Japanese middle-class men

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Futoshi TAGA

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During the postwar period, the salaryman had long been representing a happy life for Japanese men. Even now, salaried male workers remain in a socio-economically advantaged position in society, while the proportion of casual workers has been increasing for both men and women. However, salarymen seem to face a lot of difficulties. They have been criticized for their work-centered lifestyles and expected to participate more in housework and childcare. At the same time, they have been expected to work longer and harder to remain in regular employment positions and play their roles as the family breadwinner. Are they still feeling happy in such a difficult situation? Based on in-depth interviews with male employed workers, the paper explores the objective conditions and subjective conceptions of well-being for salarymen from various perspectives. Although their sense of well-being still depends largely on how much they feel appreciated on the job and how much they find their job worthwhile to do, they are looking for comfortable places outside the workplace as well. Single salarymen among the younger generation are likely to attain self-development by establishing relationships with people outside their company, while married men are likely to put their family before their job, regardless of how much they share household duties. The majority of fathers are feeling a conflict between work and parenting, which in the past was regarded as an issue that only working mothers faced. Some informants avoid having children because they take it as a burden or a risk to a tranquil life or a success in their careers. Geographic mobility such as commute and transfer is also one of their primary concerns which are associated with their pursuits of well-being. These findings are discussed in light of continuity and change in the meaning of happiness for Japanese middle-class men against the background of globalizing society, individualizing life-courses and progressing gender equality.

Futoshi Taga is Associate Professor at the Faculty of Letters of Kansai University since 2009. His research fields include sociology of education and gender with a special interest in masculinities. Among his recent publications are *Sociology of Masculinities: Changing Men's Life Courses* (Sekai Shisōsha) and "Attitudes and behaviors of fathers who help children take entrance examinations for junior high schools" (*Educational Sciences Seminary*, both in Japanese).

SECTION 5: ADULTHOOD: COMMUNITY BUILDING, Part 1

No man is an island: Social well-being as a prerequisite for subjective well-being in Japan?
Carola HOMMERICH

As a sub-theme to the more general discourse on social inequality and risk taking place in Japan in recent years, a weakening of social bonds has been discussed by academic scholars and the media, coining the term *muen shakai* (society without bonds) as an addition to the newly established self-image as *kakusa shakai* (gap society). The loss of social capital can be expected to have negative implications for the social well-being of those immediately affected as well as for the social cohesion of Japanese society as a whole. Research on the interrelation of social capital, social and subjective well-being within Japanese society, however, is yet lacking.

Based on data from a nationwide postal survey from 2009 carried out by the German Institute for Japanese Studies Tokyo (DIJ), I will try to do a first step towards filling this gap. Social well-being, meaning „the appraisal of one's circumstances and functioning in society" (Keyes), is the subjective evaluation of one's social context. This individual assessment of "the quality of one's relationship to society and community" (ibid.) relates to what Mathews and Izquiero call the "interpersonal dimension of well-being". Placing this concept at the center of my presentation, I will try to answer the following three questions:

1. How do Japanese people feel within their social context: Are there certain groups who feel especially well integrated into/especially disconnected from the social whole?
2. Does a lack of social capital affect social well-being?
3. Does low social well-being have a negative effect on subjective well-being?

Carola Hommerich-Horikoshi holds a Ph.D in Sociology from the University of Cologne. Since 2008 she is Senior Research Fellow at the German Institute for Japanese Studies Tokyo, where she researches happiness and social inequality in Japan. Her publications include *'Freeter' and 'Generation Internship – Changing Working World? A German – Japanese Comparison* (Iudicium, in German) and "Adapting to risk, learning to trust: Socioeconomic insecurities and feelings of disconnectedness in contemporary Japan" (*Asiatische Studien*).

Political participation: Entering a new world or plunging into disappointment? A case study of "Greens Japan" activists

Phoebe HOLDGRÜN

On July 28th, 2012, around 400 people gathered in Tokyo to launch the Green Party of Japan (Midori no tō, "Greens Japan"), a political organization that stands for abolishing nuclear power, among other topics on the agenda. In the aftermath of the nuclear accident in Fukushima in March 2011, many Japanese citizens started to articulate their concerns about nuclear safety and to participate in politics for the first time in their life. As a consequence, numbers of members and supporters of the green movement have grown significantly. But compared to established parties, party members as well as financial resources are still very scarce. The "Greens Japan" fielded candidates for the Upper House elections in July 2013. Green activists struggled hard to make their voice heard, and it is indispensable to gain access to parliament in order to be recognized as a political party on the national level. However, prospects for success were very small – and they ended up without winning a single seat.

But how are members of the Green Party themselves perceiving the outcome of their political activities? What effects does participating in the green movement have on them? Are subjective feelings of unhappiness prevalent among the "Greens Japan" activists, due to negative prospects for future success? Or can we witness strong interpersonal and existential reasons for happiness that motivate continued activities?

This paper deals with the question of how political activities are valued by active people themselves and how subjective well-being and happiness are articulated in narratives of political activists. The research questions are based on the assumption that not only the outcome of political processes matter, but that political participation itself addresses needs of autonomy, relatedness and competence and can therefore lead to increasing subjective feelings of well-being. Qualitative interviews with activists of "Greens Japan" and participant observation before and after the election campaign for the Upper House elections in 2013 provide empirical data for this study.

Phoebe Holdgrün holds a Ph.D in Japanese Studies from the Heinrich-Heine-University in Düsseldorf. Since January 2012, she is Senior Research Fellow at the German Institute for Japanese Studies Tokyo. Her research focuses on the effects of political participation on subjective feelings of well-being and happiness. She is interested in gender and politics, multilevel governance and decentralization. Her recent publications include *Gender Equality Policies in Japanese Prefectures. Decentralized Implementation Strategies* (Iudicium, in German) and "Government change, policy change? Gender equality policies in Japan since 2009" (*Asiatische Studien*).

SECTION 6: ADULTHOOD: COMMUNITY BUILDING, Part 2

Experiences, narratives and transformations of disaster volunteers in Tohoku: Purpose in life, self-complacency, insecurity

Susanne KLIEN

In this ethnographic study I discuss individuals between 20 and 40 who have come to northeast Japan from all over the country to engage in volunteer work. The empirical data obtained during

fieldwork and from in-depth interviews since April 2011 suggests that for many, engaging in volunteer activities has a profound impact on their values and lives, but many among those I encountered had already been seeking opportunities to change their lives before the disaster; volunteering has turned out as a welcome opportunity to rethink and reshape their lives.

To date, ethnographic studies of individual volunteering experiences are still rare. Contrary to the commonly held belief that volunteering is all about altruism and empathy, I argue in line with others that many volunteers in fact are searching for their purpose in life while helping others. The aim of this paper is to document the experiences, narratives and transformations of selected younger volunteers and to link the literature on volunteering to existing research into the meaning of life or *ikigai* (Mathews and Izquierdo 2009).

My data shows that regardless of the multiple reasons of individuals for engaging in volunteer activities, pro-social engagement generally provides a salient increase in subjective well-being for most involved individuals especially with regard to enhanced levels of sociality and higher levels of self-determination. Nevertheless, numerous informants also reported a lingering sense of insecurity due to their irregular work patterns and income as well as unclear long-term work perspectives.

Susanne Klien is Associate Professor for the modern Japanese studies program at Hokkaido University. Her areas of research include Japanese culture and society, transmission and appropriation of tradition in contemporary rural Japan, debates about Japanese identity, young volunteers in Tohoku, and purpose in life. She is the author of *Rethinking Japan's Identity and International Role – An Intercultural Perspective* (Routledge). Among her recent publications is "Bullfighting in Oki: Post-retirement leisure, social network or purpose in life?" (*Asian Anthropology*).

Japanese religions and human happiness: Exploring an ambivalent relationship

Mark MULLINS

The Constitution of Japan (1947) guarantees its citizens the "right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" (Article 13). Whether religion contributes to this pursuit in the Japanese context is not entirely clear. It is hardly unusual for religious groups to claim that their teachings and practices constitute the path to human happiness. This is certainly the case for many Japanese religions. One obvious recent example is the new religion Kōfuku no Kagaku (Science of Happiness), founded by Ōkawa Ryūhō in 1986. In 2009, this group entered politics and launched its own "Realization of Happiness Party" (Kōfuku Jitsugentō) to spread the benefits of religion to the larger society. While other religious groups may be less explicit, most would similarly claim that happiness is the natural benefit of authentic religious practice.

Happiness gained through organized religion, however, seems to be the experience of only a small minority. There is an abundance of evidence that also links religion with "unhappiness." This is often in connection with coercive religious groups widely referred to as "cults"—Aum Shinrikyō, Hōnohana, Tōitsu Kyōkai, for example—that have been charged with acts of violence, high-pressure recruitment tactics, brainwashing, and fraudulent fund-raising activities. Today there are also some seeking protection from "coercion" related to the imposition of civil-religious obligations in public institutions. Given that happiness appears to be closely related to "freedom from coercive control," this paper will consider in more detail the loss of individual freedom in relation to two "public" or "national institutions" (Mathews and Izquierdo 2009), Yasukuni Shrine and public schools. Since the neo-

nationalistic resurgence from the mid-1990s, they have again become sites for a revitalized civil religion and obligatory involvement and ritual practice. The "politics of inclusion" as practiced by Yasukuni Shrine—enshrinement whether a family requests it or not—and public schools—forced teacher participation in leading students in singing the Kimigayo against their will—reveals how the imposition of quasi-religious patriotic rituals creates an environment that clearly contributes to the unhappiness of those forced to go along.

Mark R. Mullins is Professor of Japanese Studies and Director of the Japan Studies Centre, New Zealand Asia Institute at the University of Auckland. His research fields religion and modern society (Sociology of Religion), and East Asian religious traditions. From 2010 to 2012 he was editor of *Monumenta Nipponica.* His many publications include *Christianity Made in Japan: A Study of Indigenous Movements (*University of Hawai'i Press), and more recently "Secularization, deprivatization, and the reappearance of 'public religion' in Japanese society" (*Journal of Religion in Japan*).

SECTION 7: OLD AGE / END OF LIFE

Embracing decline: Understanding the impacts of ageing and depopulation on well-being in rural Japan

Peter MATANLE

Since at least as far back as the 1950s, rural society in Japan has been undergoing a slow but steady collapse. Out migration of younger people to urban areas and, latterly, chronically low fertility, have meant that many communities have either disappeared entirely or are on the verge of doing so. These so-called '*genkai shuraku*', or 'marginal communities' are increasing in number and size as Japan ages and depopulates, and urbanization processes continue. Spatially this is being experienced as a retreat from the peripheries of the archipelago with the most remote hamlets disappearing first, and progressively larger settlements being drawn into a recursive spiral of depopulation and decline. This paper will re-examine existing quantitative and qualitative data to show that the quality of life for rural Japanese has declined markedly over the past half-century or so of Japan's development, and continues to do so. State intervention measures, principally in the form of infrastructure development, have only had a partial and temporary success in alleviating the crisis in Japan's countryside, and may even have made the situation worse. In terms of the well-being of rural people, the most serious issue is the dramatic ageing of communities and the impacts that this has on the quality of individual, family, and community life. Now that Japan's national population is shrinking in number there is little that can be done to reverse the overall situation, and the only option left for those that remain is to abandon the expectation of a return to growth and to manage, or even embrace, shrinkage as a way of life.

Peter Matanle is Senior Lecturer in Japanese Studies at the University of Sheffield's School of East Asian Studies and Director of the White Rose East Asia Centre's Research Cluster on "Social Change and Transition in East Asia". His research focuses on social change, demographic transition and aging in East Asia. Publications include the edited volume *Japan's Shrinking Regions in the 21st Century: Contemporary Responses to Depopulation and Socioeconomic Decline* (Cambria Press, with A.

Rausch), and "Coming soon to a city near you! Learning to live 'beyond growth' in Japan's shrinking regions" (*Social Science Japan Journal*, with Y. Sato).

Loneliness among older people in Japan: A perspective from happiness economics

Tim TIEFENBACH

In the last two decades the concept of social capital has received substantial attention within all social sciences. Recently it also became a topic within happiness economics where a number of studies show the effects of trust and social connectedness on well-being. However, loneliness, which can be interpreted as the opposite of social connectedness, has so far received little to no attention within happiness economics. This is especially surprising when considering that loneliness is an established concept in psychology and gerontology – both fields which are not unrelated to happiness economics. This apparent neglect is in part due to missing data, since not many data sets include questions regarding loneliness, and those which do often either focus on small groups or on elderly people. Analyzing a representative nation-wide government survey from Japan Tiefenbach and Kohlbacher (2013) identify loneliness as the biggest impact factor influencing happiness: even when controlling for income, age, marital status and many other socio-demographic control variables, people feeling lonely are by far less happy. These findings indicate that loneliness is not only a problem for elderly people or minorities with mental disorders. It is a societal problem, and needs to be treated as such on a public policy level.

The aim of this study is twofold. In a first step it is analyzed how the effects of loneliness change when separating between young and elderly people as well as between people living in rural and urban areas. Using ordinary least square regression models on recent data of the National Survey of Lifestyle Preferences the impact of loneliness on happiness and life satisfaction is analyzed stratified by age and degree of urbanization. In a second step the correlates and determinants of loneliness are analyzed by using the same data set. Finally, the paper concludes with a discussion of the impact of 3-11 on loneliness.

Tim Tiefenbach, Ph.D. in Economics, University of Bayreuth, is Senior Research Fellow at the German Institute for Japanese Studies Tokyo. His research interests are happiness economics, new institutional economics and economic ethics. His recent publications include *The Contribution of Economic Theory on the Question of "The Good Life"* (NMP, in German) and "Subjective well-being across gender and age in Japan: An econometric analysis", E. Eckermann (ed.) *Gender, Lifespan and Quality of Life* (Springer).

Conceptions of a meaningful life and "good" death in end of life decision-making

Celia SPODEN

Since the 1990s, the rejection of life-sustaining medical technologies and writing a "Living Will" for end of life situations in advance have become more and more widespread in Japan. Likewise, there has been a rise in calls for a legal recognition of the "right to die". The public discussion is polarized. On one side, the Japan Society for Dying with Dignity postulates the right to die as the basis for a dignified life until death. On the other, several NGOs have combined to form a counter movement,

demanding a better recognition of the right to life and the pursuit of happiness for disabled people or chronically ill patients, as granted by the Japanese Constitution.

But what circumstances and perceptions of life and death lead individuals to opt for a Living Will? Living and dying in accordance with notions of the individual character (*jibunrashisa*) plays an important role in the decision-making process. I will draw on my empirical data and discuss my interviewees' thoughts about what makes life worth living and what circumstances and conditions of life make death desirable.

Reflections about a "good" death often lead to assessments of what it means to live a meaningful life based on personal experiences, notions of self and interpersonal relations. The rejection of life-sustaining medical technologies might be expressed as a self-dependent way of life, taking responsibility for one's own life and death, and relieving family members or even being a tool of resistance to family decision-making if someone's personal values are not compatible with those of their family.

Celia Spoden is research assistant and lecturer at the Institute for Modern Japanese Studies, Heinrich-Heine University, Duesseldorf, Germany. She just completed her dissertation *Decision-Making towards the End of Life in Japan – An Empirical and Philosophical Study*. Her fields of interests include Okinawa, bioethics in Japan and self-determination. Her publications include "The relevance of the 'foreign/other' for the construction of narrative identity" (*Minikomi*, in German).

Pursuits of Happiness: Concluding discussion

Gordon MATHEWS

All scholars who presented their work here during the conference had been encouraged to refer to a compound model of well-being as drafted by Mathews and Izquiero (*Pursuits of Happiness: Well-being in Anthropological Perspective,* 2009, Berghahn). The model divides well-being into four experiential dimensions of the physical, the interpersonal, the existential, and the structural. The physical dimension involves corporeal sensualities and the placement of the self in the material world, including health and the absence of pain and disability, the capability to move freely, the pleasures derived from sensual experiences of the body in motion or in relation to other bodies, and its aesthetic appreciation, among others. Social relations in the broadest sense, including family relations, membership in social networks and the exposure to friendship, but also professional and formal encounters in organizations are at the heart of the interpersonal dimension. The existential dimension construes of ideas and value systems that give people a sense of the meanings of their life. Finally, the structural dimension is an overarching dimension of national institutions and global forces giving shape and structure to the conception, perception, and experience of well-being in the previously mentioned dimensions.

By wrapping up individual findings, Gordon Mathews will demonstrate how this multidimensionality of happiness is shifting throughout the life course, as it is shaped by social institutions and socio-cultural values in the context of life stages and life events. Furthermore he will comment on the variability of happiness within society and differences or commonalities among its subgroups.

Gordon Mathews, Ph.D. Cornell University, is Professor at the Department of Anthropology at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. His research interests are how individuals create senses of meaning

in life and identity within different cultural and social contexts, and 2) how individuals culturally, socially, and economically locate themselves within the contemporary world of globalization. His recent publications include *Ghetto at the Center of the World: Chungking Mansions, Hong Kong* (University of Chicago Press) and "Death and 'the Pursuit of a Life Worth Living' in Japan." In Hikaru Suzuki (ed.) *Death and Dying in Contemporary Japan* (Routledge).
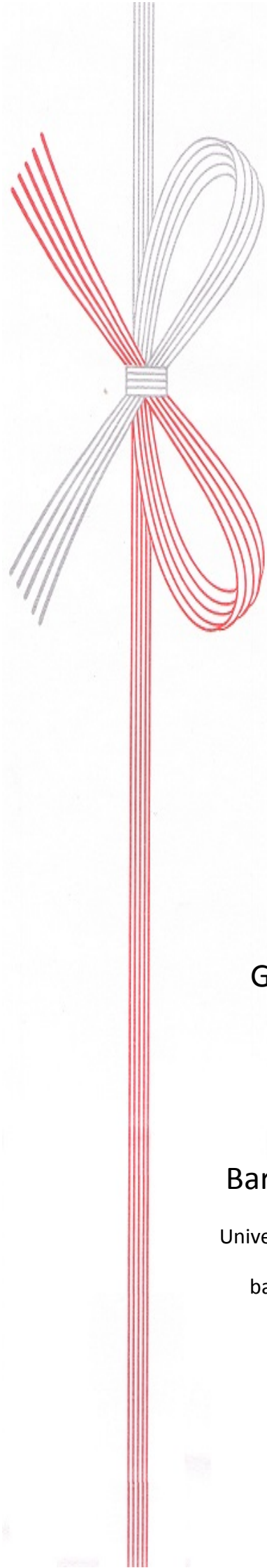
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