

German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ)

DIJ Social Science Study Group



Wednesday, 11. January 2012, 18.30 h

Patricia L. Maclachlan, University of Texas at Austin

The People's Post Office: The History and Politics of the Japanese Postal System, 1871-2010

Drawing from her new book, *The People's Post Office: The History and Politics of the Japanese Postal System, 1871-2010* (Harvard University East Asian Monographs, 2012), Patricia L. Maclachlan explores the causes and consequences of the economic, political, and even social functions of the postal services. Why did the postal system play such an integral part in the modernization of Japan? How did the commissioned postmasters come to assume a powerful role in Japanese elections? To what extent, finally, has Koizumi Jun'ichirō's 2005 privatization legislation transformed the post office's position in Japanese society and the political economy? To answer these questions, Dr. Maclachlan examines the historical institutional, political and leadership factors that shaped the postal system's evolution from its inception during the early Meiji era to the present.

Patricia L. Maclachlan is Associate Professor of Government and Asian Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. She is the author of *Consumer Politics in Postwar Japan: The Institutional Boundaries of Citizen Activism* (Columbia University Press, 2002), and co-editor of *The Ambivalent Consumer: Questioning Consumption in East Asia and the West* (Cornell University Press, 2006).

The DIJ Social Science Study Group is a forum for young scholars and Ph.D. candidates in the field of Social Sciences organized by Maren Godzik and Barbara Holthus. All are welcome to attend, but registration (holthus@dijtokyo.org) is appreciated.

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