

CALL FOR PAPERS

'Narratives of decline: the changing patterns of death and aging in contemporary Japanese religions'

Japanese Studies Workshop, The University of Manchester

Tuesday, 31 May 2016

Narratives of decline are embedded in both academic and popular discourses concerned with religion in today's Japan. As contemporary Japanese society is faced with serious challenges of rapidly aging population, declining local communities, low fertility rate, and problematic social welfare measures, Japanese religious institutions are equally affected and confronted by stagnation and negativity in the public discourse. This one-day interdisciplinary workshop aims to address the narratives of decline from a range of disciplinary perspectives incorporating sociological and anthropological discourses, and beyond.

The workshop will explore how Japanese religions, including both established religious traditions and "new religions", address these challenges through reinventing their symbolic practices and adopting new forms of social engagement. Along with highlighting the discussion on narratives of decline in Japanese religious traditions, the event also aims to establish a network of researchers working in the area of religious studies in contemporary Japan.

We invite papers addressing, but not limited to, the following topics:

- rituals and narratives of death and dying
- aging society and religion
- faith-based welfare relating to death and elderly care
- narratives of religious decline

Confirmed Keynote Speakers:

- Dr. Jason Danely, Oxford Brookes University
- Dr. Jessica Main, The University of British Columbia

Submission of Proposals:

Please send an abstract of 250 words maximum and a short bio (100 words, including affiliation and area of study) by 1 March 2016 to both Paulina Kolata paulina.kolata@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk and Aura Di Febo aura.difebo@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk.

Successful applicants will be notified by 15 March 2016.

The workshop is funded by the Economic and Social Sciences Research Council (ESRC), the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), and the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures (Arts Methods Manchester) at the University of Manchester. Presenters will receive a contribution towards transportation and/or accommodation costs up to £120.