



“ETHNIC COMMUNITIES WITHIN GLOBAL JAPANESE STUDIES — ENCOUNTERING DIVERSITY IN A MULTI-ETHNIC, MULTI-CULTURAL JAPAN”

(International Collaborative Research-Networking Talk Series at Ritsumeikan University)
Sponsored by Toshiba International Foundation

LABOR, SKILL HIERARCHY, AND HUMAN CAPITAL IN JAPAN: FROM CORPORATE ELITES TO TECHNICAL INTERNS



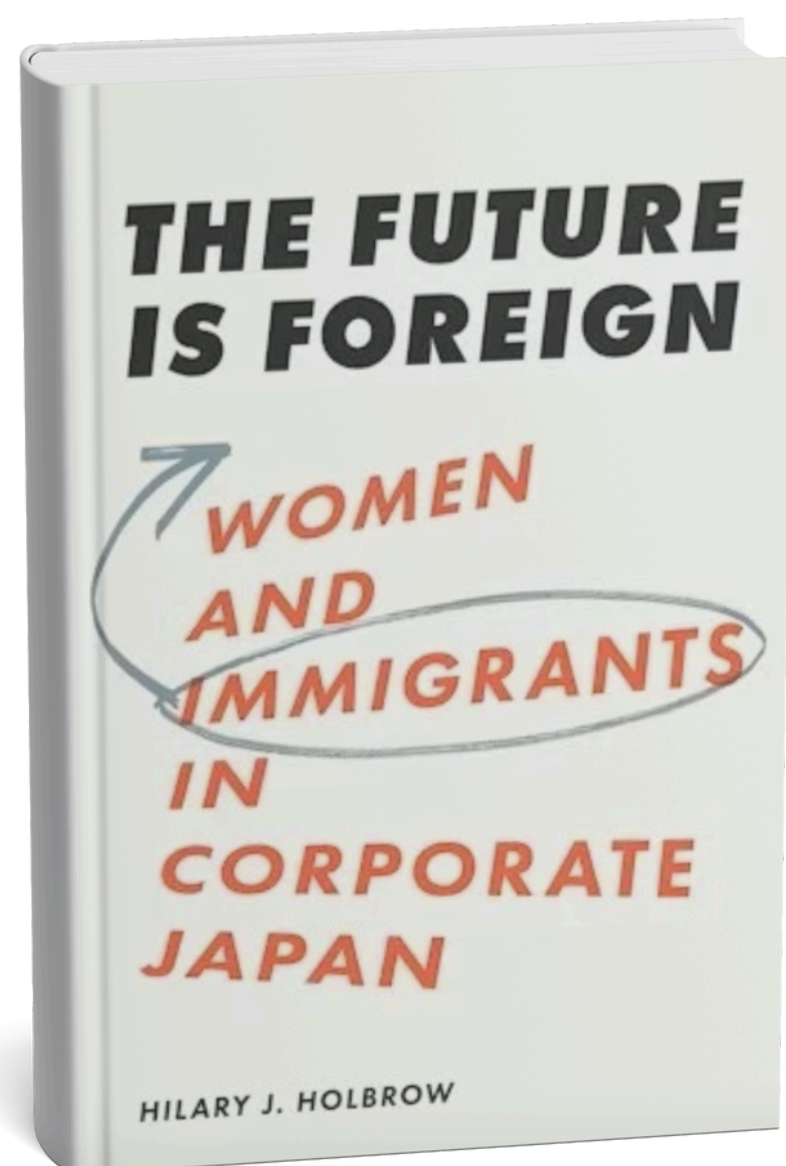
December 14, 2025

10:00–12:00 JST



**Suekawa Memorial Lecture Hall,
Ritsumeikan University**

Format : Hybrid (Online via Zoom)



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PROGRAM OUTLINE

LABOR, SKILL HIERARCHY, AND HUMAN CAPITAL IN JAPAN: FROM CORPORATE ELITES TO TECHNICAL INTERNS

OPENING REMARKS

DR. JACKIE J. KIM-WACHUTKA
RITSUMEIKAN UNIVERSITY

BOOK TALK #1

DR. HILARY HOLBROW
INDIANA UNIVERSITY BLOOMINGTON



The Future Is Foreign: Women and Immigrants in Corporate Japan By Hilary Holbrow, Cornell University Press, 2025

“Japan is at the forefront of global population decline. The Future Is Foreign investigates how elite Japanese firms are responding to this unprecedented challenge. Hilary Holbrow argues that labor shortages push Japanese firms to hire more immigrants and women, and to ease excessive demands on all workers. At the same time, not all employees benefit equally. Japanese women's enduring overrepresentation in low-status clerical roles reinforces gender biases that hold all women back. In contrast, the small but growing presence of white-collar Asian immigrant workers weakens the ethnic prejudices of their Japanese colleagues. Despite Japan's reputation for xenophobia, white-collar immigrant men disproportionately reap the dividends of Japan's shrinking population. The Future Is Foreign sheds new light on the processes that perpetuate inequality in Japanese firms, and in organizations worldwide. While managers and policymakers often assume that increasing women and minorities' representation in leadership will erode prejudice, Holbrow reveals that the people we see when we “look down” the organizational hierarchy are more important to the social construction of bias than are the people we see when we “look up.””

BOOK TALK #2

DR. YUSY WIDARAHESTY
THE ASIA JAPAN RESEARCH ORGANIZATION
RITSUMEIKAN UNIVERSITY



Dreaming of a Better Life: Journeys of Indonesian Migrant Workers to Japan By Yusy Widarahesty, Palgrave Macmillan Singapore, 2025

“The book offers a detailed examination of how Indonesian migrants seek a better life through migration, placing their aspirations in Japan to fulfill their dreams there. Notably, this book explores an emerging field within Japan's labor migration studies, providing in-depth insights to reveal the complexities of Japan's Technical Intern Trainee Program (TITP), seen not only from the viewpoint of the host country but especially from that of the country of origin. In this context, the book investigates Indonesia's involvement in the TITP. It analyzes the roles of various stakeholders, such as the Indonesian government, the supervising organization, the Indonesian community, former trainees, and the trainees themselves. The analysis is structured around three interconnected phases: (1) the pre-departure phase, (2) the on-program phase, and (3) the post-program phase.”

DISCUSSION, Q&A, AND CLOSING REMARKS

Organized by: Dr. Jackie J. Kim-Wachutka (Project Director)
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