

25th Annual Japan Studies Graduate Conference at UCLA

Call for Papers

Aftermath: Critical Approaches to Temporality, Memory, and Subjectivity in Japan

This conference seeks to explore the idea of “aftermath” and its ontological implications across Japanese history and culture. Aftermath is not simply what follows an event, but rather constitutes a potentially generative instant of both rupture and continuity. The aftermath of events can be thought of as representative of a temporal slippage or moment of anachronism, in which a newly Janus-faced present reorients itself toward both the past and the future. Indeed, the creation of new memories and presentiments, as well as their intertwining, begets new socio-political subjectivities and reconfigures lived experiences. The form that aftermaths take is never, however, predetermined: the aftermath of events is marked by uncertainty and ruled by contingency. As such, aftermath is perhaps best thought of as not simply what did happen but what could have happened or should have happened; in other words, aftermath is not an element of causality but rather a complexity of possibilities, losses, and formations.

We are interested in projects that creatively apply such an approach to a variety of aftermaths across time. The ramifications of an event can manifest in a variety of ways, including legally, scientifically or medically, religiously, artistically, and affectively, while the traces of aftermath are evident in a variety of loci, such as place, social organization, population, and narrative. Some catalyzing events could include, but are not limited to, natural and man-made disaster, pandemic, cultural reform, economic collapse, war, empire, and revolution and could take place in pre-modern or modern times, on a collective or individual level.

We welcome applications from various disciplinary backgrounds, including history, anthropology, literary and cultural studies, political science, environmental studies, cinema and media studies, gender studies, and more. This year’s conference will take place entirely online, with participants pre-circulating their papers for discussion. Please send inquiries and applications, including a short bio and abstract of no more than 250 words to uclajapanesegradconference@humnet.ucla.edu.

ABSTRACTS (250 words) DUE BY: August 31, 2020

NOTIFICATION OF ACCEPTANCE BY: End of September 2020

CONFERENCE DATE: Thursday, November 12 - Friday, November 13, 2020

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Gennifer Weisenfeld, Professor, Department of Art, Art History & Visual Studies, Duke University