



Japanese Scandal: Social Performance Between Ritual and Strategy

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演講摘要

Japanese news production today is unthinkable without scandal. Its enormous proliferation on the one hand, and ritualized nature of performance on the other, constitute the crux of my speech. I will elaborate upon the particular logic of constructing Japanese scandal while illustrating how did ritualized performance come to constitute "scandal culture" in postwar Japan. Drawing on theoretical arguments from Japanese philology, cultural sociology and media studies, I analyse Japanese scandal as *social drama* (as termed by Victor Turner) structured by the dialectic of pollution via transgression, purification through exclusion, and eventual reintegration of the transgressor. This is important, because in Japan, deep ritualism and "adherence to algorithm" bears rich cultural connotations that also inform the understanding of scandal performances. Thus, I take aim at approaching Japanese scandals as pragmatic social performances between *ritual* (expressive behaviour stemming from cultural rites) and *strategy* (conscious action determined by journalistic routines and political power-games). I will argue that the frequented power-related corruption is not conducive to any sweeping reform, both structural and moral. Once revealed, Japanese scandals function rather as pre-scripted and commodified media rituals of pollution and purification.

講者簡介

Igor Prusa is currently affiliated with the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (Oriental Institute, East Asia Department) and teaches a course on Japanese Media Culture at Brno's Masaryk University (Faculty of Arts, Japan Studies Seminar). In 2010 Igor received his first PhD in Media Studies (Charles University of Prague, Institute of Communication Studies and Journalism) and in 2017 he defended his second dissertation titled Scandal, Ritual and Media in Postwar Japan at the University of Tokyo (Graduate School of Interdisciplinary Information Studies). Igor's research interests include Japanese media culture, scandals, and antiheroism. Majored in Japanese and German Philology, his first doctoral thesis Media and Society in Japan explored the character of Japanese mediascape and its mediopolitical transformations. Igor's texts include Mediating Scandal in Contemporary Japan (French Journal for Media Research 2017), Heroes Beyond Good and Evil: Theorizing Transgressivity in Japanese and Western Fiction (Electronic Journal of Contemporary Japanese Studies 2016) and Megaspectacle and Celebrity Transgression in Japan: the 2009 Media Scandal of Sakai Noriko (Palgrave MacMillan 2012). Apart from his academic activities, Igor Prusa is a music composer and guitarist.

~~本次演講備有餐點，故請來信報名參加(10月12日中午12點止)~~

時間：2018年10月17日(星期三) 12:00~14:00

地點：中研院人文館南棟9樓社會所904會議室

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