

## International Association of Japanese Studies, 2018

# J.A.P.A.N 'in Bits'

December 1-2, Toyo, University, Tokyo

Applications must be sent by October 31, 2018 to [s\\_maezaki@yahoo.co.jp](mailto:s_maezaki@yahoo.co.jp)

Since the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the assumption that nations possess an organic unity has been increasingly challenged as supporting entrenched hierarchies and naturalizing the power of the state while masking violence and oppression. Assumptions of a people unified across time and space by a monolithic culture have been cast into doubt more recently by the erosion of liberal democratic structures, the rise of transnational hyper-capitalism and epochal changes in communication, information and human migration flows. In order to theorize how analyses premised on the nation have foreclosed alternative approaches, the theme of this year's IAJS conference is "J.A.P.A.N in Bits." We invite papers that consider how the claim of a singular Japan—past, present and future—has been ripped apart and fragmented into parts that are impossible to conceive as a recoverable totality. We are asking the question: Can we detect fractured and 'othered' j.a.p.a.n.s?

In order to seek a path beyond the hopeless, the incurable, the ruined and the cynical, we ask presenters to imagine the future becoming of j.a.p.a.n.(s). What flux of identities might seep out from the breaches and outlets? What must be resisted and what must be summoned forth? While we hope to gather scholars researching seemingly irresolvable 'bits'—such as the Fukushima nuclear power issue; Okinawa and the American military; structures of ethnic, cultural and gendered oppression; the *hikikomori* syndrome and rising precarity—we also invite research that detects hairline fractures signaling something affirmative to come. We challenge scholars to delve into catastrophic crises to engage in utopian, imaginative projections or thought experiments, involving art, anime and manga, architecture, film, literature, philosophy, science fiction, and social practice. Scholars are also invited to consider issues connected with activation points, political incitement, social confrontation and ecological defiance.