



# Japan Studies in the 21st Century

Asia Institute  
Inagaki Seminar on Japan

Public Event

## Professor Philip Seaton, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

The last few decades have seen a major shift in Japan studies. It used to be dominated by the “outsider looking in” view. Research was published by scholars, journalists and temporary foreign residents who unlocked the nation’s mysteries for a non-Japanese audience. In many ways, this remains the academic status quo, and is reinforced in the rankings conscious 21st century academic order by the fact that most of the prestigious impact factor journals and academic presses disseminating English-language research on Japan are edited and published outside of Japan. Nevertheless, the tenor of Japan studies has shifted towards the view of the “insider looking out”. Increasing numbers of respected English-speaking academics (both Japanese and non-Japanese) are permanent residents rather than visiting scholars, and when they write about Japan they address issues affecting their country of domicile rather than a far off land.

In 2019, this process reaches another milestone with the opening of the School of Japan Studies at Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, which is the first undergraduate department of Japan Studies at a Japanese national university. A full department at a national university signals the Japanese Ministry of Education’s resolution to put “Japan studies in Japan” on the global academic map.

Is this simply maximizing Japan’s natural advantage in supplying Japan studies courses to the global higher education market? Or is there a deeper political agenda at play? This talk considers the opportunities and risks, and challenges and advantages of doing Japan studies in Japan in the twenty-first century, and whether “Japan Studies in Japan” is even the best way to describe the type of research and teaching that we do.

**Philip Seaton** has been a professor in the Institute of Japan Studies, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies since April 2018. Previously, he spent 14 years at Hokkaido University, where he was convenor of the Modern Japanese Studies Program. His main research areas are war memories and tourism, and he is the author/editor of *Japan's Contested War Memories* (Routledge 2007), *Voices from the Shifting Russo-Japanese Border* (with Svetlana Paichadze, Routledge 2015), *Local History and War Memories in Hokkaido* (Routledge 2017), and *Contents Tourism in Japan* (with Takayoshi Yamamura, Akiko Sugawa-Shimada, and Kyungjae Jang, Cambria Press 2017).



## Event Details

**Date:**  
Monday 17 September 2018

**Time:**  
4.40pm - 6.00pm

**Venue:**  
Yasuko Hiraoka Myer Room  
Level 1, Sidney Myer Asia Centre  
The University of Melbourne  
Parkville VIC 3010

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**Bookings:**  
Bookings are essential for this free seminar. Register at <http://alumni.online.unimelb.edu.au/Seaton2018>