



Scuola Italiana di Studi
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2015 KYOTO LECTURES

Wednesday, July 11th, 18:00h

Andrea De Antoni Ecological Ghosts An Anthropological Approach to Occult Experiences in Contemporary Japan

SPEAKER

The supernatural and the occult have long been a subject of study in anthropology. Most authors have proposed interpretations of beliefs in the occult as a symbolic framework for critiques to colonialism, capitalism, modernization, or globalization. However, they tend not to take into consideration personal experiences, nor their interrelational features. On the other hand, experiences related to ghosts and the occult in contemporary Japan have mainly been a subject of study in folklore, whereas an anthropological approach is nearly missing.

This talk will analyze personal experiences in places haunted by ghosts by focussing on how these are constructed through interaction among human and non-human actors. Drawing on ethnographic data gathered through fieldwork, processes of creation of haunted places in the media will be first presented, with a particular focus on the internet. Secondly, people's experiences will be taken into consideration, arguing that a specific attention on the interrelation with the environment is fundamental for understanding haunted places as networks of relationships.

Andrea De Antoni is a JSPS Postdoctoral Fellow at the Institute for Research in Humanities at Kyoto University, Research Associate at the Italian School of East Asian Studies (ISEAS), and Research and Development Manager at the Organization for Intra-Cultural Development (OICD). His current research project relates to ghosts and haunted places in contemporary Japan, with a particular focus on ghost tours in Kyoto. His research interests include Japanese religions, the anthropology of religion and magic, tourism studies, as well as the anthropology of identity. He is co-editor of two forthcoming works on death symbols and practices: *Death and Desire in Modern and Contemporary Japan* (co-edited with Massimo Raveri, expected 2013) and *Death Rituals in Contemporary Japan* (working title, co-edited with Chris Feldman and John Traphagan, expected 2012).

This lecture will be held at the Institute for Research in Humanities (IRH), Kyoto University (seminar room 1, 1st floor).

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