

## FOSTERING THE NEXT GENERATION

# 白眉 — The Hakubi Project

## A Unique Opportunity for Outstanding Young Talent

This Project was established by Kyoto University in 2009 to foster outstanding young researchers in any academic field. It gives them a valuable opportunity to devote themselves entirely to their research.

**WEB** [www.hakubi.kyoto-u.ac.jp/eng](http://www.hakubi.kyoto-u.ac.jp/eng)

### COMP-CUL Making Meaningful Cross-Cultural Contact

*Doing research on Japan in Kyoto University.*



Have you ever visited a country and felt so foreign, yet at the same time so at home? My research on Japan, which began in 2002, is a long-term, ongoing exploration of this conundrum. Japan has always felt so different to me, yet also so *right*. I love the way Japanese society functions so efficiently, so peacefully, and so beautifully. In particular, I have been interested in Japanese culture, education, and sports, in part because my first experiences in Japan came as an Assistant Language Teacher on the JET Programme and I found it easier to teach my students through sports than through textbooks. As a member of the Hakubi Project, I am trying to understand the historical roots and educational perceptions that lay underneath sports both in Japan, and in my home country of the United States. Many sports were initially invented in the United Kingdom and in the United States, yet they have taken on new cultural meanings in Japan, which fascinates me. Kyoto University and the Hakubi Center for Advanced Research are the preeminent place to undertake such research. I will forever be grateful for this opportunity.



Dr. Miller also published a book about his research in 2013

**Aaron L. Miller, PhD**

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### JPN-CULT War Memory and the Japanese Cinema

*Understanding changing memories through popular culture.*

In our current political climate, it is more important than ever to understand how war is memorialized and remembered. As the Japanese government re-interprets the pacifist Article 9 of the Constitution, this project addresses the memorialization of WWII and the Asia Pacific war in popular culture, aiming to understand how national memory is affected by film trends. How to people remember war, and how do these memories change over time? Interviewing Japanese film fans who regularly attended cinema screenings between 1945-1979, my research aims to incorporate the voices of everyday viewers into a field of study dominated by critical and academic writing. Understanding viewership is key to understanding the political implications of popular culture.



**Jennifer Coates, PhD**

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*Eiga fan, Waga seisyun ni kui nashi,*  
June 1946, 12.

## INTELLECT-HIST The Narcissism of Minor Differences

*Imagining “Man” through the Medium of Biography.*

How would you describe yourself in five words? While this question might be answered in an infinite number of ways, chances are you will focus on matters such as your appearance, race, nationality, religion, work, and personality. That is, when thinking about the characteristics that set ourselves apart from others, our imaginations are effectively restricted to but a few categories. Most of these categories, however, are not given *a priori* but are dependent on both cultural and historical factors. My research is an attempt to explain when and how these categories have changed in the case of Japan by analyzing the huge volume of biographies published during the period 1600-1912.



**Niels van Steenpaal, PhD**

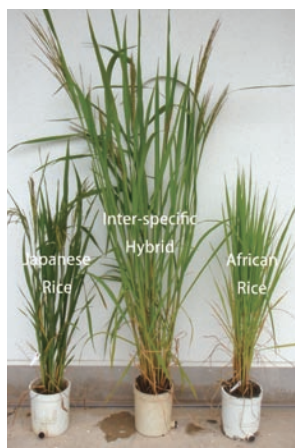
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Entry on Alexis de Tocqueville in *Wayō Kijinden* (1872)

## PLANT BREED Using Japanese Rice to Improve Rice in Africa

*Molecular genetics of sterility in hybrids of Japanese and African rice species.*



Rice is a staple food in Japan, and the scenery of rice fields is a traditional image of the Japanese countryside. It is not surprising then, that the country's researchers have made great efforts towards rice research and that the Japanese people are proud of the high quality rice grown in the country. I am seeking to improve rice in Africa by using the knowledge obtained from Japanese rice research. I found that hybrids of African and Japanese rice grow vigorously. However, these inter-specific hybrids do not produce seeds because of a harmful interaction between genes of the two species. I am investigating the molecular mechanisms of seed sterility in inter-specific rice hybrids in order to overcome that problem.

**Yohei Koide, PhD**

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## JPN-HIST How Wars End

*Understanding the conditions of war and peace.*

My work concerns the relationship between war and peace. The question of how to end war is both old and new but has grown in importance as the number of civil wars continues to increase around the world. Shedding light on the process of war termination, my research focuses on Japan's diplomatic strategies at the end of World War II, especially how Japan's foreign policies were influenced by issues of diplomatic trust. My findings suggest that political leaders decide whether to end wars based on anticipated results, as well as by the extent to which they believe the enemy can be trusted.

**Tamon Suzuki, PhD**

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Tamon Suzuki, *Japan's long road to surrender: a political history, 1943-1945* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 2011)