



TOHOKU  
UNIVERSITY

# The 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Hasekura International Japanese Studies Symposium

# Naraku: Discord, Dysfunction, Dystopia

Registration >> registration deadline: September 25<sup>th</sup>



<https://forms.gle/nLu3p7SURsSARnNY8>

Conference Language **English**

2022.

9.27<sup>TUE.</sup>–29<sup>THU.</sup>

Venue

Sendai International Center  
Conference building 2F and 3F

The world we know is unravelling, beset by problems ranging from the collapse of decaying capitalist orders, to never-ending wars, to global pandemics. *Naraku* (奈落) is a Japanese term that resonates with the current state of the globe. Originally a religious term, its meaning has evolved in recent times to refer to deeply flawed conditions more generally, becoming “the worst of all possible worlds” in its longer form of *naraku-no soko* (奈落の底). This symposium draws its inspiration from *naraku*, here interpreting it as describing states of discord, dysfunction, and dystopia. Historical concerns with decline, systemic failure, and the betrayal of hopes; literary and other depictions of failed and failing societies and futures of death and destruction; religious prophecies of spiritual and worldly decay; and philosophical musings and lamentations concerning the multifold failings of humanity and the futility of human civilization are a small sampling of the ways that *naraku* intersects with scholarly concerns. This symposium brings together scholars from five continents specializing in a wide range of disciplines to explore dysfunction and systemic failure in all their forms and discuss *naraku* in past, present, and future.

## Program



Sep. 27 (Tue.)	9:15-10:45	MURDER, DISASTER, AND WAR IN CLASSICAL JAPANESE LITERATURE	11:00-12:00	CAUTIONARY TALE: JAPAN AND FAILURE IN WORLD IMAGINATION
	13:00-15:00	PROGRESSING INTO RUIN: CIVILIZATION, CLASS, EMPIRE, AND RELIGION	15:15-16:45	POLITICS OF APOCALYPSE, FAILURE, AND DEATH
Sep. 28 (Wed.)	10:00-12:00	CONCEPTUALIZING COLLAPSE	13:00-15:00	POISONOUS CONTINUITIES AND HISTORICAL DYSFUNCTION IN JAPAN
	15:15-16:45	THE DEATH OF INEVITABILITY OR THE INEVITABILITY OF DEATH		
Sep. 29 (Thu.)	10:00-12:00	THE NEED FOR NEW LEADERSHIP IN THE FACE OF DYSTOPIAS OF FREEDOM AND HARMONY		

## Contact

GPJS Office  
[gpjs@grp.tohoku.ac.jp](mailto:gpjs@grp.tohoku.ac.jp)

Graduate School of Arts and Letters, Tohoku University  
27-1 Kawauchi, Aoba-ku, Sendai, Miyagi  
980-8576, Japan



GPJS

International Graduate Program in  
Japanese Studies



115<sup>th</sup>  
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