

Collaborative Research Project International Symposium: “Mediating Fragmented Realities in Literature & Media Ecologies of Late 20th-Century Japan”
(FEB. 9, 2026)

The Center for Integrated Japanese Studies at Tohoku University will host a symposium titled “Mediating Fragmented Realities in Literature & Media Ecologies of Late 20th-Century Japan.” This symposium brings together international scholars of literature, film, and media culture to examine how cultural texts from the 1960s through the 2000s mediate fragmented experiences of realit(ies) shaped by crisis, social transformation, and rapidly shifting media environments and technologies. With presenters joining from four different countries, the symposium offers an international forum for collaborative exchange and discussion. Through a keynote lecture and two panel sessions, the symposium aims to cultivate collaborative frameworks and sustained dialogues around questions of media, ecology, and representation.

We warmly welcome faculty members, graduate and undergraduate students, and all those interested in modern and contemporary Japanese literature, media studies, and cultural theory to attend.

This symposium is held as part of the CIJS’s collaborative research project, “Mediating Fragmented Realities in Literature & Media Ecologies of Late 20th-Century Japan,” organized by Ajjana Thairungroj (Principal Investigator, Distinguished Assistant Professor, CIJS) and Kennosuke Motegi (Co-Investigator, Associate Professor, Graduate School of Arts and Letters). **Mediating Fragmented Realities** is an ongoing collaborative research project that examines how literature and media in modern and contemporary Japan—and, in broader perspective, Asia—negotiates continually shifting experiences of “reality.” The project seeks to develop a sustained forum for interdisciplinary exchange, asking how cultural forms register and mediate the social, political, and sensory transformations that have shaped the second half of the twentieth century. For more details, please check the project introduction page.

Date: Monday, February 9, 2026

Venue: TOKYO ELECTRON House of Creativity (B02)
Tohoku University, Katahira Campus,

Program (Tentative):

10:00

WELCOME REMARKS

10:05-11:05

KEYNOTE LECTURE

“Pedagogies in Plenitude: Collaborative Methods in the Break” – Franz Prichard
(Associate Professor, Florida State University)

Abstract: The uncertainties of the contemporary period elaborate a material and affective landscape riddled with fissures forged through the ongoing crises and compounded catastrophes of nation-state and capital’s pursuits of growth at all costs. This talk will pursue an incomplete genealogy of collaborative moments of critical and creative praxis that enumerate pathways through the breaks and ruptures that literary and visual media have reckoned with from the 1960s to the present in Japan. My talk explores the ways that Ishimure’s Minamata literature, Nakahira Takuma’s photographic thought, and Lee Chongwa’s embodied acts of curation generate varied collaborative modalities of inquiry that continue to resonate in powerful ways in the present. I discuss how such practices offer collaborative pedagogies for unlearning the intellectual inheritances of competing imperialisms and settler colonialism as practices that materialize an abundance of critical possibilities for reimagining the contours of our collective work of research and teaching in an age of man-made disasters.

13:00- 14:30

PANEL 1: Print Infrastructures and Mediated Environments (1970s-2000s)

Discussant: Franz Prichard (Associate Professor, Florida State University)

“Invisible Environments”: Yamaguchi Katsuhiro’s Intermedia and Expo ’70

- Yusung Kim (*Postdoctoral Fellow, Seoul National University*)

Mediating Fragmented Lifestyles: Magazine Culture and the Politics of “Feeling Good”
in 1980s Japan

- Ajjana Thairungroj (*Assistant Professor, Tohoku University*)

1990～2000 年代における怪談とメディア

- Kennosuke Motegi (*Associate Professor, Tohoku University*)

14:45- 16:15

PANEL 2 : Image Politics, Platforms, and Transnational Mediations

Discussant: Franz Prichard (Associate Professor, Florida State University)

Photography at the Turn of the Century: Taki Kōji's Image Theory

- Junnan Chen (*Assistant Professor, NYU Shanghai*)

Japanese Women's Imagined Femininity in the South Korean Digital Sphere

- Han Sang Kim (*Associate Professor, Ajou University*)

Illusions of Labour: Unpacking Work and Reality in Perfect Blue

- Joelle Nazzicone (*Assistant Professor, Kyoritsu Women's University*)

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