

GSI Caravan

Project Title: Revolutionizing the concept of the “universal” through the experiences of small nations and collectivities

Principal Researcher: Kiyonobu Date

Research Plan for the Academic Year 2021

As the project enters its second year, two new members have joined the caravan team: Sana Sakihama (EAA Project Research Fellow, Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia, the University of Tokyo) whose research centers on Okinawa, and Hiroki Tanaka (Doctoral student, the Graduate School of Humanities and Sociology and Faculty of Letters, the University of Tokyo) whose research deals with the idea of secularity in France and Japan from a religious studies perspective. Despite the challenges posed by the ongoing pandemic, the team plans to carry out one GSI Overseas Caravan Practice and hold one or two international seminars.

The first international seminar is scheduled for September 2021. We will be inviting Professor Katsuya Hirano from the UCLA Department of History as our guest speaker, who will reexamine the concept of sovereignty in international law through the lens of the history of the Ainu.

In November, we will conduct an overseas caravan practice at l'Université Laval in Quebec, Canada, where a roundtable will be held between five representatives from the University of Tokyo and five representatives from l'Université Laval. The roundtable will take place online if traveling is not possible. As the head representative of l'Université Laval, Professor Jean-François Laniel will be running an introductory session with Kiyonobu Date. The speakers and the outlines of the subsequent presentations are as follows: Hiroki Tanaka on Kōtoku Shūsui's critique of imperialism and his advocacy for a small nation; Céline Philippe on the significance of Quebec literature in the study of small nations; Sana Sakihama on the conception underlying Okinawa's post-independence constitution; Félix Mathieu on the values of intercultural citizenship; Hubert Rioux on the Quebec model in the context of economic nationalism; Hiroyuki Ogawa on the relations between small nations and the British Empire/the British Commonwealth of Nations; François-Olivier Dorais on the correlation between the study abroad destinations of Québécois youths and their eventual roles in society after their return; and Taro Tsurumi on the history leading to the founding of the Israeli state as an example of an ethnic group within an empire succeeding in forming an independent nation. In preparation for the overseas caravan practice, the Japanese representatives plan to hold a research meeting prior to departure.

If conditions permit, we also hope to conduct another international seminar sometime between January and March 2022, inviting Professor Odd Arne Westad from the Yale History Department.