



DIJ Method Talk

March 30, 2023, Thursday, 6.30pm (JST) / 11.30am (CEST)
/ 10.30am (GMT)

Patchwork Ethnography: Interpretations of the Personal and the Professional in Research

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For researchers using ethnographic methods, long-term fieldwork is becoming difficult. Neoliberal university labour conditions, expectations of work-life balance, environmental concerns, and feminist and decolonial critiques have demanded a rethinking of fieldwork as a process that entails spending a year or longer in a faraway place. Gökçe Günel and I propose 'patchwork ethnography', to consolidate the innovations that are already happening in ethnographic research out of necessity—to balance family and research, for example—but that remain black boxed. Patchwork ethnography begins from the acknowledgement that recombinations of 'home' and 'field' have perhaps always existed in fieldwork practices. However, the interpenetration of the personal with the professional is often deemed illegitimate in research practices. This talk presents patchwork ethnography as a provocation to open spaces of honest conversation so that models other than uninterrupted fieldwork can become recognized methodological approaches, while still upholding the importance of long-term commitments, language proficiency, and contextual knowledge.

Chika Watanabe is Senior Lecturer in Social Anthropology at the University of Manchester. Her current research and teaching interests are on development and humanitarianism, disaster preparedness, pedagogy, play, and the future in the contexts of Japan and Chile. She is the author of *Becoming One: Religion, Development, and Environmentalism in a Japanese NGO in Myanmar* (U of Hawai'i Press) and co-editor of the *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*.

About

The [DIJ Method Talks](#) are part of the Social Science Study Group, a forum for scholars conducting research on contemporary Japan. Meetings are open to speakers from all disciplines of the social sciences focusing on methods and methodological questions. The event is open to all.

Online Presentation

Registration is required. Please register via the [webpage](#). **Log in data** will be provided after registration.