

German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ Tokyo)

DIJ Study Group



February 12, 2025, 6:30pm (JST) / 10:30am (CET)

“Marriage hunting” and intimate governance in Japan

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“Marriage hunting” (*konkatsu*) is a multi-billion-yen industry comprising diverse dating services, from matchmaking apps to marriage agencies. With marriage remaining an important precursor to childbearing (only 2 percent of children in Japan are born to unwed mothers), the Japanese government has increasingly invested in “marriage support” (*kekkon shien*) to address population decline and aging. In this talk, I draw on data from twenty-seven months of research in Japan, including more than 150 interviews with market professionals and their male and female clients, participant observation of marriage-hunting events, and documentary evidence, to explore the various collaborations between the private and public sector in marriage promotion efforts. I suggest that these alliances constitute a new form of intimate governance which regulates how individuals enter and conceptualize romantic and familial relationships.

Anna Woźny is a joint postdoctoral fellow at Princeton University and Tokyo College. She received her PhD in Sociology from the University of Michigan and her BA in East Asian Studies from the University of Tokyo. Anna’s research examines how political and economic forces shape experiences of intimacy, family, and reproduction as well as everyday practices of gender and sexuality. She currently working on a book project entitled *Marriage-hunting: Dating Markets and Intimate Governance in Japan*.

About:

The DIJ Study Group is a forum for scholars from all disciplines conducting research on contemporary or modern Japan. The event is open to all.

This session is organized by Isaac Gagne.

On-site Only Event:

On-site participation: please register via email to gagne@dijtokyo.org until February 10, 2025.

Venue:

DIJ Tokyo: <https://www.dijtokyo.org/access/>