

KYOTO LECTURES 2024



Holocaust Ashes on the Move

Incinerated Human Remains as *Objects* of Global institutional Exchange

Wednesday, July 24th, 18:00

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SPEAKER

From 1963 onward, six urns containing of Holocaust victims remains have been interred in Japan. These urns' journey was both transnational, converging with the Polish state museums memory diplomacy, and local, as the meaning of and politics around the remains were connected with Japan's experience. This phenomenon is not unique to Japan, being part of efforts by Polish museums to build a secular network of pilgrimage sites. Taking advantage of the fragile corporeality of ashes, this practice transformed them into portable commemorative objects. The objectification of the Jewish dead globally and in Japan meant different things for different actors. Tracing the urns' journey and uses reveals the complex politics of World War II commemoration in Japan and beyond.

Ran Zwigenberg is associate professor at Pennsylvania State University and Kyushu University. His research focuses on modern Japanese and European history, especially memory and cultural history. His latest manuscript *Nuclear Minds: Cold War Psychological Science and the Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki* (University of Chicago Press, 2023) deals with the psychological aftermath of the nuclear attacks on Japan.



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