

KYOTO LECTURES 2026



The Paradox of Sake Territory, Identity, and Global Influences in the Making of Japan's "Rice Wine"

Thursday, April 30th, 18:00 (JST)

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SPEAKER



Sake (*nihonshu*) occupies a singular place among fermented beverages, both in its nature and in its social uses, making it, paradoxically, a "Japanese exception." As an identity-bearing drink, it is inseparable from the territory of Japan, its rice-growing landscapes, and the cultural representations associated with them. The recent application of foreign concepts such as *terroir* to sake highlights its contemporary paradoxes and reveals the complex relationship between place, identity, and production within its cultural and territorial framework.

Nicolas Baumert is Professor at Dokkyo University and an affiliated researcher at the Institut français de recherche sur le Japon (UMIFRE 19, MFJ). His research focuses on cultural geography, gastronomy, Geographical Indications, and the cultures of wine and sake, from a comparative European–Japanese perspective. He is the author of *Le saké, une exception japonaise*, translated into Japanese in 2022.



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