MONDAY FEBRUARY 24
1 - 2:30 PM / BUNCHE 10383
FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

ARBITERS OF PATRIOTISM
RIGHT-WING SCHOLARS IN IMPERIAL JAPAN
WITH PROFESSOR JOHN PERSON, UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY, STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

DURING THE 1930S AND 1940S, JAPANESE ACADEMICS WITH AN INTEREST IN MARXIST AND LIBERAL THEORIES OF POLITICAL REFORM FACED A BARRAGE OF ATTACKS FROM NATIONALIST CRITICS WHO CHARGED THAT SUCH APPROACHES AMOUNTED TO TREASON. THIS TALK EXPLORES THE NOTORIOUS RIGHT-WING INTELLECTUALS OF THE GENRI NIPPON SOCIETY THAT LED THE CHARGE IN THESE ATTACKS, AND THEIR ETHNONATIONALIST THEORY CALLED “JAPANISM.” AT TIMES COLLABORATING WITH GOVERNMENT AGENCIES IN CRUSHING VOICES OF CLASS STRUGGLE, AND AT OTHERS BECOMING THE TARGET OF GOVERNMENT SURVEILLANCE THEMSELVES, THESE INTELLECTUALS CAME TO EMBODY THE PARADOXICALLY HEGEMONIC YET ARBITRARY NATURE OF NATIONALIST IDEOLOGY. THIS TALK PROVIDES AN ACCOUNT OF THE COSMOPOLITAN ROOTS AND UNSTABLE NETWORKS OF ETHNO-NATIONALISM IN IMPERIAL JAPAN, AS WELL AS ITS SELFDESTRUCTIVE TRAJECTORY.

JOHN PERSON is assistant professor of Japanese studies at the University at Albany, state university of New York where he teaches courses on the history of Japan. He holds degrees from Gustavus Adolphus College and the University of Chicago, and was a postdoctoral fellow at UCLA and Hamilton College before coming to Albany. He is the translator of Hiroki Azuma’s General Will 2.0: Rousseau, Freud, Google (Vertical) and his first monograph Arbiters of Patriotism: Right-Wing Scholars in Imperial Japan is forthcoming from University of Hawai’i Press.

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