



Alpine Globalization - Japan and Switzerland

Prof. Claude Hauser, Université de Fribourg



Wednesday, October 12, 2022, 18:00–19:00

Universität Zürich, Rämistrasse 59, 8001 Zürich

Room RAA-G-15

This lecture will be held in English and is open to the public (no registration is necessary).

For questions, please contact the Section for East Asian Art History: kgoa@khist.uzh.ch

The event is organized and supported by the Swiss-Japanese Society.



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Abstract:

Japan is an island country, yet it is largely defined by its special relationship with the mountains, which have become an essential part of its mental landscape. This Asian country has an alpine imagination that is both endogenously constituted by the lived space of the Japanese Alps and nourished by the external projection of the Swiss alpine model.

From the first ascent of the Mittelegi route of the Eiger in 1921 by the Japanese mountaineer Yuko Maki, accompanied by his Bernese guide Samuel Brawand, to the opening of a tourist office specially dedicated to Japanese visitors in Grindelwald during the 1980s, the symbolic investment of the alpine narrative and its economic and commercial repercussions can be approached by analyzing a few important stages of the cultural, touristic, and economic exchanges that mobilized the representations of the mountain between Japan and Switzerland in the 20th century.

This phenomenon of reciprocal exchanges, symbolic reinterpretations, or progressive decantations of Swiss Alpine stereotypes between Japan and Switzerland (the North Face of the Eiger, the Matterhorn, the figure of Heidi, the Swiss chalet...) will be approached through several accounts and images of the Swiss Alps evoked in particular in the magazine of the Japanese Alpine Club *Sangaku* and other archival documents.

Claude Hauser

Claude Hauser is a Professor Ordinarius at the Université de Fribourg where, among other subjects, he teaches cultural history, international cultural relations, history of intellectuals, and history of national minorities. His publications include *Jura: les sept clichés capitaux. Essai d'histoire Culturelle* (Neuchâtel: Editions Alphil, 2012) and *La Chine en partage. Ding Zuochoao – Auguste Viatte. Une amitié intellectuelle au XXe siècle* (Neuchâtel: Editions Alphil, 2018). He is the founder and co-director of the Centre suisse d'études sur le Québec et la Francophonie and is teaching at the Faculty of History at UniDistance, Swiss Distance Learning Institute.