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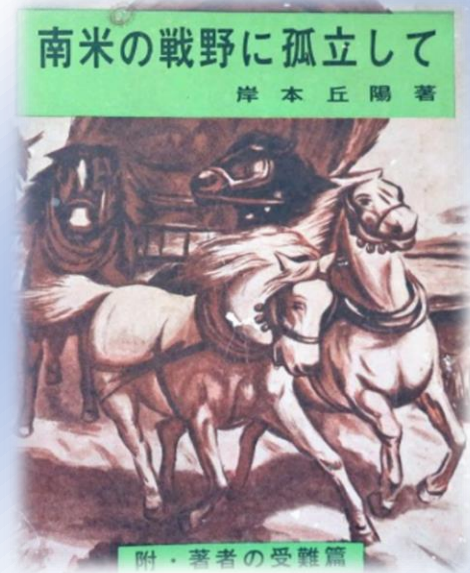
GLOBAL JAPANESE STUDIES

RESEARCH WORKSHOP

Visions of War: Nationalism, Pride, and Rancor in Japanese and Brazilian Testimonials

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(Comments by Matias CHIAPPE IPPOLITO, Waseda University)



The Second World War was a defining moment for the Nikkei community in Brazil. After being placed under increasing pressure to assimilate during the 1930s, Japanese immigrants were persecuted by the Brazilian government during the war years. Such persecution fomented resentment against their host country and rekindled nationalist devotion toward Japan, and its aftereffects had a deep influence on the postwar Nikkei community in Brazil. This presentation first asks why the memory of wartime persecution was largely suppressed or diluted in postwar writings by Nikkei intellectuals. Next, the presentation considers how the perception of wartime Japan was shaped in Brazil. For most Brazilians, Japan was considered an exotic and now dangerously imperialistic nation. To what extent did this perception influence the way the Nikkei community was treated during the war?

This presentation connects these two topics by exploring the writings of Kishimoto Kōichi, a Japanese immigrant who was imprisoned in Brazil during the war, and those of Mário Botelho de Miranda, a young Brazilian intellectual who was living in Japan when the conflict began. In 1944, Miranda—a one-time enthusiast of all things Japanese—attracted attention for a firsthand account that was critical of wartime Japan. Three years later, Kishimoto released a scathing denunciation of the persecution endured by the Japanese in Brazil that became a bestseller within the community but almost resulted in his deportation. Their testimonies—riddled with inflamed patriotism, hurt pride, and large doses of resentment—are vivid accounts of how the war was seen and experienced from opposite sides of the empire.

May 24, 2021, 17:00 ~ 18:30 (JST)

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