

Abstract Alexis Dudden; "Modernity's Diffusion and Studying the Japanese Empire"

From a global perspective, even using the term "empire" in relation to Japanese history is not just about the past but about modernity — colonial modernity — and its implications for the present. My talk will consider various recent trends in approaching the Japanese empire writ large. Particular focus rests on the enduring problem with many broader imperial studies' continued failure to examine and/or incorporate Japan's experience into their theoretical frameworks, which only perpetuates exceptionalist ideas about Japan as "different" from some pre-supposed norm.