

Mountains on the Move: From Kumano Sanzan to Dewa Sanzan
Andrea Castiglioni
Associate Professor
Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Nagoya City University

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15:30–17:00
Room 6019
Kanagawa University, Minatomirai Campus

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Abstract: The cult of the Three Mountains of Dewa—Haguro, Yudono, and Gassan—originated from the spread of faith in the Three Mountains of Kumano—Hongū, Shingū, and Nachi—in the Tōhoku provinces since the twelfth century. This talk focuses on some of the key features of this devotional transmission concerning the Three Mountains of Kumano and Dewa not only by examining the role of retired emperors such as Toba (1103–1156) and Go-Shirakawa (1127–1192) but also by analyzing the crucial activities carried out by the “Kumano guides” (Kumano *sendatsu*) in founding parishes (*dannaba*) dedicated to the worship of these sacred mountainous sites. In addition to their role as guides for Kumano pilgrims, the Kumano *sendatsu* exercised a crucial function in the ritual transfer (*kanjō*) of the Kumano pantheon within the Tōhoku landscape, fostered the replacement of Senju Kannon with Shō Kannon to fit the regional worshipping taste, and promoted the circulation of specific ascetic practices such as the “one-thousand-days ritual seclusion” (*sennichi no sanrō*) among local ascetics. This talk aims, therefore, to show how the transmission of faith into sacred mountains such as the Kumano and Dewa triads was always also a creative operation of translation and adaptation to enable full devotional circulation within hitherto unexplored religious and social landscapes.



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Inquiries ・お問い合わせ: James Welker jrwelker@kanagawa-u.ac.jp



Castiglioni, Preregistration