

Branding Japanese Food

Washoku and Beyond

Katarzyna J. Cwiertka

Wednesday, March 10, 7:00 pm on Zoom



What is “washoku” and why should we talk about it? At the center of the narrative is the 2013 inscription of “Washoku, traditional dietary cultures of the Japanese, notably for the celebration of New Year” on UNESCO’s Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The presentation challenges the very definition of washoku as it was presented in the UNESCO nomination, and exposes the multitude of contradictions and falsehoods used in the promotion of Japanese cuisine as part of the nation-branding agenda. It is based on Prof. Cwiertka’s new book *Branding Japanese Food: From Meibutsu to Washoku* (University of Hawaii Press, 2020).

Katarzyna J. Cwiertka is Chair of Modern Japan Studies at Leiden University in The Netherlands. She is an expert on food history of modern Japan and Korea, both as a domain of culture and as a window into historical inquiry that extends beyond the realm of cuisine and nutrition. Cwiertka is the author of *Modern Japanese Cuisine: Food, Power and National Identity* (Reaktion Books 2006), and *Cuisine, Colonialism and Cold War: Food in Twentieth Century Korea* (Reaktion Books 2012). She has also edited a number of volumes with broader geographical focus, including *Asian Food: The Global and the Local* (University of Hawai‘i Press 2002) and *Critical Readings on Food in East Asia* (Brill 2012). Currently, she is working on a book manuscript on the history of food packaging in Japan.

Lakeland University Japan: 5-7-12 Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo
See <http://luj.tokyo/maps> for map; Tel: 03-3225-0425

The Lakeland Lectures are a forum for researchers, students and members of the public to discuss contemporary issues affecting Japan. Lakeland University has offered a U.S.-accredited liberal arts program in Tokyo since 1991. Lakeland’s main campus is in Wisconsin, USA and was founded in 1862.