

## **“Constructing Japanese in Contemporary Japan”**

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This proposed research is a full study to investigate transforming Japan in the context of globalization and post-Fukushima Japan. To be more specific, I would like to investigate how contemporary Japanese people construct their national and cultural identities of being Japanese in this particular historical moment, and how non-Japanese people think about the ways that Japan and Japanese people are changing.

With the economic decline since the 1990's Japan seems to have been going through an extended “identity crisis”. Moreover the national disaster that hit Japan in March 2011 left an enduring scar in the nation's psyche. So how do these recent events and the constant challenges of globalization shape the perception of Japanese people's sense of themselves? How do non-Japanese people (who are often seen as the outsiders of the society) think about changing Japan?

This research will be conducted as a part of the projects during the Education Leave that I was granted, which starts from January 2013 and ends in December 2013. I will be living in Kyoto, Japan for the first half of my education leave (January to July 2013).