Lunch Seminar on Japanese Economy and Society

With the generous support of the French Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Japan (CCIFJ).

Friday November 17th, 2017
12:30 - 14:00  room 601  in English (no translation)

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What is the Lunch Seminar at MFJ?
This event has been organized at the Maison franco-japonaise (Nichifutsu Kaikan) since 2004. It offers a presentation followed by a discussion dedicated to a specific issue of the time and aims to bring about a better understanding of Japanese economy and society.

This is a brown bag lunch seminar, please bring your bento or sandwiches.

Coffee available.

How to attend the Lunch Seminar?
Participation in the Lunch Seminar is free but registration is required. Please apply via our website (from the event page in the Agenda):

www.mfj.gr.jp

The Politics of Japan’s Soft Power

Speaker  WATANABE Yasushi (Keio University)
Moderator  Rémi SCOCCIMARRO (MFJ, Umifre 19)

Summary

During the G7 summit in May 2016, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and President François Hollande agreed to hold a large-scale event showcasing Japanese culture in Paris and other French cities in 2018, a year that marks the 160th anniversary of Japan-France diplomatic relations.

Entitled Japonismes 2018, this major event will take place around France, with a concentration in Paris, from July 2018 to February 2019. Planned exhibitions include: art from the Jomon period, seen as representing the origins of Japanese culture; works by the painter Ito Jakuchu; Rinpa School paintings; and the latest media art, anime and games. Performing arts will range from Kabuki, Noh, Kyogen and Gagaku to contemporary theater and Hatsune Miku. There will also be many cultural exchange programs highlighting Japanese life and culture, including cuisine, traditional festivals, Zen, martial arts, tea ceremony, and ikebana.

Nevertheless, this kind of cultural event represents only a fragment of Japan’s current engagements with soft power. This presentation aims to address the wider historical, political and geopolitical milieu in which Japan’s soft power is defined and projected, along with other recent initiatives.

Profile
Watanabe Yasushi is a professor of anthropology at the Graduate School of Media and Governance at Keio University. Highly interested in the relationship between culture and politics, he has published several books and articles, including Rethinking of “Culture”: On the Concept of Cultural Security (Iwanami Shoten, 2015), Culture and Diplomacy: The Age of Public Diplomacy (Chuo Koron-Shinsa, 2011), and Soft Power Superpowers: Cultural and National Assets of Japan and the United States (University of Michigan Press, 2008). He has served on the Advisory Committee on Public Diplomacy at the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the International House of Japan. He was also chair of the Advisory Panel on NHK World and co-chair of the Japan Advisory Council of the Salzburg Global Seminar. He received the Japan Academy Prize in 2005.