

Defining Refugees: Tatar Muslims in Prewar Japan

避難民の成り立ち—戦前日本におけるタタール系イスラーム教徒の受け入れについて

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ZOOM PRE-REGISTRATION LINK

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This presentation concerns the history of Islam in Japan, and particularly the question of how Tatar Muslims from Central Russia were received as refugees by the Japanese state in prewar Japan. For the Japanese state, I argue, it was ideology (shisō) that determined whether and how a given refugee group would be received in Japan. When Tatar Muslims fled to Japan from the former Russian Empire in the wake of Revolution, then, Japanese officials sought ways to use them on account of their commitment to the transnational religion of Islam and at the same time placed them under surveillance because of their potential affiliation with Soviet Communism. In this talk, I attempt to show an aspect of how in the 1920s and 1930s, how global movements of ideologies, religions, and refugees affected the way in which Japanese officials determined acceptable ways of being refugees in Japan.

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