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Constructing Images of the ‘Other’: Media and Society in Japan

Image construction of ‘the other’ is inevitable whenever we face different cultures, societies, or groups that are not similar to us. Image construction of ‘the other’ is also inevitable whenever we do not want to face inconvenient social issues that need to be addressed but remain not. Such image construction, however, is dangerous, not only for the fact that it controls perspectives, but also because it divides societies. Our session aims to illustrate three types of image creation occurring in Japan: this of ‘intercultural others’ with the example of ‘*hafu*’,(transnational children); this of weaker social groups – with the example of the new poor generation and its representation in popular and alternative media; and this of a foreign culture – the representation of Japan in English-language magazines. Our discussion will focus on the way those three groups have been addressed in media and society– what has been told, what has been hidden and what remains to be addressed.