



INTERDISZIPLINÄRES  
ZENTRUM FÜR  
OSTASIENSTUDIEN



# Toward Post-domestic Normality? Animal Protection Legislation in Japan

Public talk by Prof. Dr. Hans Martin Krämer  
(Heidelberg University, Japanese Studies)

The weakness of legal protection for animals in Japan is often pointed out both by outside observers and Japanese animal-rights activists: A comprehensive animal protection law was only enacted in 1973, penal measures provided for by the law in theory are toothless, and the law is hardly ever applied in practice. Given that the major religious traditions of Japan are usually characterized as “nature friendly,” a cultural explanation of the lack of an effective legal protection of animals is not easily obtained. In this respect, the recent attempt at explanation by Richard W. Bulliet, who argues that Japan’s difference stems from the fact that it did not historically go through a domestic phase, is suggestive. Setting out from Bulliet’s theory, this presentation will look at how history has shaped current human—animal relations in Japan, and how very recent social changes might force us to reassess the state of animals’ legal protection in Japan today.

Wednesday, January 21, 2015, 18:00 (c. t.)  
Campus Westend, PEG building, room PEG 1.G 131

The lecture is part of the Wednesday Evening Lecture Series within the IZO’s research project “Protecting the Weak. Entangled Processes of Framing, Institutionalization and Mobilization in East Asia” funded by the Volkswagen Foundation.

**Hans Martin Krämer** is professor for Japanese Studies (History/Society) at Heidelberg University in Germany. He studied History, Japanese Studies, and Philosophy at Heinrich Heine University (Düsseldorf, Germany), Sophia University (Tokyo, Japan), and Ruhr University (Bochum, Germany). After research stays at the University of Tokyo, Harvard University, and the International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Kyoto, Japan), he was assistant professor for Japanese Studies in Bochum. His work has appeared in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, *Monumenta Nipponica*, *Social Science Japan Journal*, and a number of other German-, Japanese-, and English-language venues.

After publishing his first book on the reform of higher education in Japan between the 1910s and 1950s, Krämer’s second book on the reconception of religion in modern Japan will come out with Hawai’i University Press in 2015. A more recent research interest is in man and nature in Japanese history, especially the relationship between humans and animals from the early modern period to present times.

Contact person: Prof. Dr. Iwo Amelung, FB 09, Sinology  
Email: amelung@em.uni-frankfurt.de