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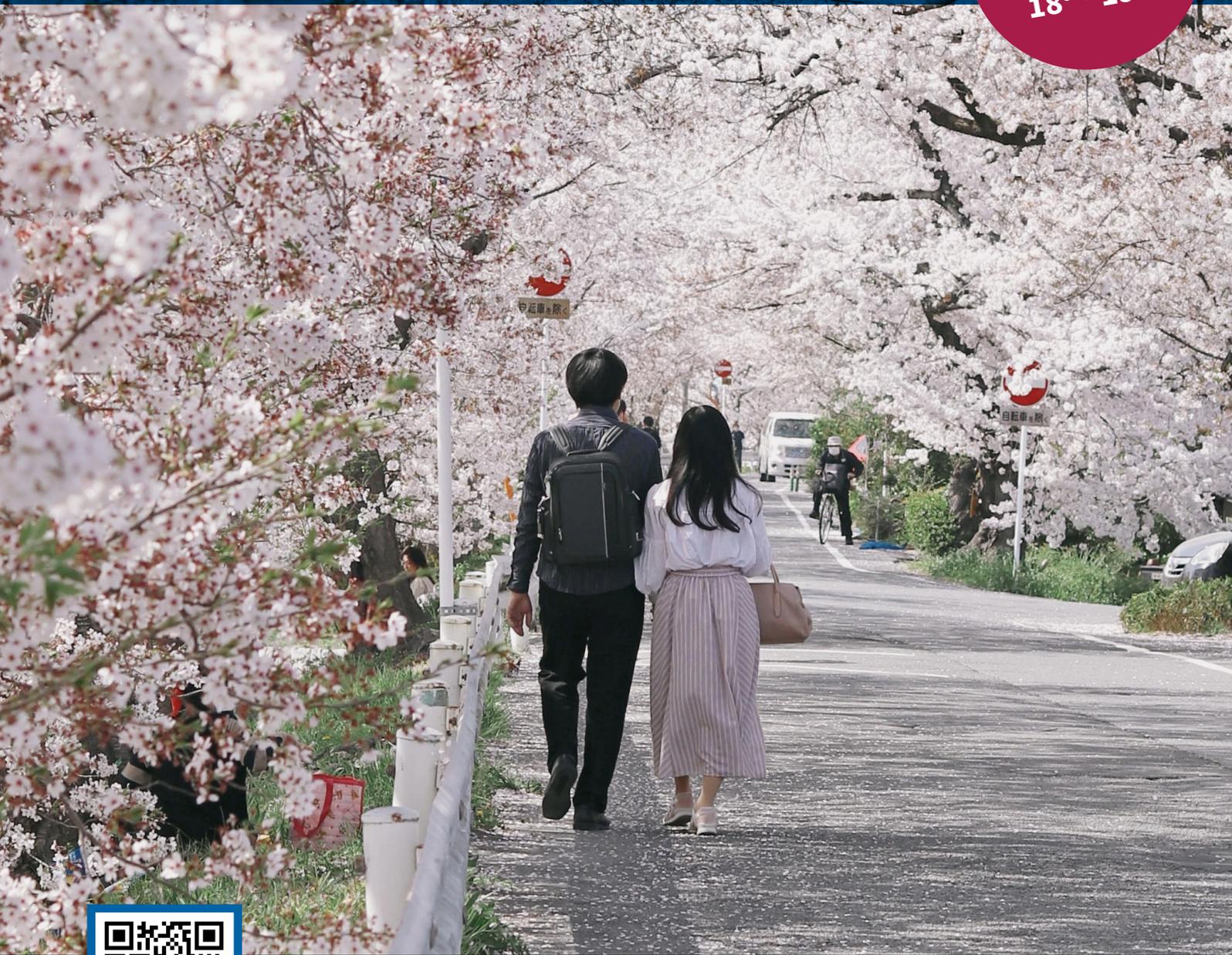
Department of  
East Asian Studies  
Japanese Studies



# „I am too tired to have sex“: A case study of sexless relationships in contemporary Japan

A hybrid *u:japan* lecture by Alice Pacher

Thursday  
2024-03-21  
18<sup>00</sup>~19<sup>30</sup>



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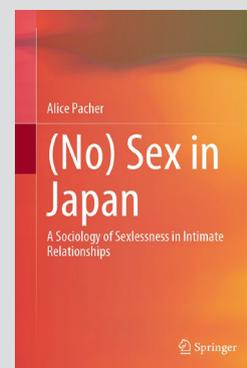
In recent years, the phenomenon of sexual inactivity, so called sexlessness among (married) couples has become a central issue in Japan. Psychiatrist Teruo Abe (1991) initially defined ‘sexless couples’ as following: “without any special circumstances, do not engage in consensual sexual intercourse or sexual contact for more than a month, with an even longer period expected”. Previous research indicates a significant increase of sexlessness among married couples, rising from 31.9% in 2004 to 51.9% in 2020 and 64.2% in 2024 (JEX Sex Survey 2020, 2024). The reasons for being in a sexless relationship are multicausal, with common factors including childbirth, overtiredness from work, and the perception of sex as something bothersome. Although sexlessness among (married) couples has been increased in these recent years, there is a lack of research on this topic.

Therefore, this lecture will focus on interview research from the recent publication “(NO) Sex in Japan”. The book examines the causes of sexlessness in Japanese couple relationships, emphasizing: 1) the meaning of sexuality for individuals, 2) the meaning of sexuality within the partnership, 3) how sexual consciousness and behaviors can change through certain life events (e.g., before and after being in a relationship, marriage, and childbirth), as well as their chronological processes, considering past experiences in (sexual) relationships. Overall, this study seeks to obtain a deep understanding of the concepts of sexuality, love, intimacy and relationships both within and beyond Japan.



### Alice Pacher

is a lecturer at Meiji University, Musashi University and a visiting research scholar at Sigmund Freud University, Vienna. She obtained her Ph.D. degree in sociology from Meiji University in 2020, with a dissertation on the Japanese sexless phenomenon. Her doctoral thesis was published as monographs ‘(No) Sex in Japan’ (Springer) and ‘Shitaikedo Mendokusai’ (Koyobosho)



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[ujapanlectures.ostasien@univie.ac.at](mailto:ujapanlectures.ostasien@univie.ac.at)