



CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF GLOBAL JAPAN PRESENTS

Japan as a 'Normal Country'? Retrospect and Prospect

JAPAN NOW LECTURE SERIES

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4:00 – 6:00 PM**

**THE VIVIAN AND
DAVID CAMPBELL
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THERE IS AN ONGOING DEBATE about whether Japan is — and if not, whether it can or should become — a “normal country.” For decades the received wisdom has been that Japan — at least in its international presence — lacked something vitally necessary for it to be taken seriously and treated with the respect befitting a country of its size and sophistication.

Despite the general sense that Japan was not a “normal” country, neither the Japanese people, nor their leaders and officials, have been able to agree on the nature of the problem and the appropriate solution. In fact, it has been a matter of some debate whether there is even a problem to fix. In what sense, if at all, is Japan an “abnormal” country? What would it mean for it to become normal?

In 2011, the University of Toronto Press published a collection of essays on this theme.¹ The purpose of this panel discussion is to look back on the analysis in that volume to see how well it has stood up in the intervening tumultuous years, and what, if anything, we can learn from that exercise to inform Japanese policy and Japan’s regional and global role in the next several years to come. In addition, in view of the fact that this year marks the 90th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Canada and Japan, what role might Canada play as a constructive partner?

1. Yoshihide Soeya, Masayuki Tadokoro, and David A. Welch, eds., *Japan as a 'Normal Country'? A Nation in Search of Its Place in the World*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011.

SPEAKERS



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CONCLUDING REMARKS



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