

# SEMINAIRE DE LA FONDATION FRANCE-JAPON DE L'EHESS

## Capturing Contemporary Japan

**Glenda S. Roberts**  
(Waseda University)

Thursday February 27, 2014 - 7:00pm to 8:30pm  
EHESS, 105 bd Raspail 75006 Paris, Salle 7  
The Conference will be held in English.



### □ **SUMMARY**

What are people's life experiences in present-day Japan? How are they coping with the nation's growing instability and widening income disparity? *Capturing Contemporary Japan* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2014) addresses these and other questions important to understanding Japan in the first decade of the twenty-first century. Its chapters, all authored by established anthropologists, collectively reveal a questioning of middle-class ideals once considered the essence of Japaneseness. In the postwar model household a man was expected to obtain a job at a major firm that offered life-long employment; his counterpart, the "professional" housewife, managed the domestic sphere and the children, who were educated in a system that provided a path to mainstream success. The past twenty years, however, have seen dramatic challenges to realizing the stability, security, and enduring social ties embodied in these ideals. Japanese society has seen a sharp increase in precarious forms of employment, higher divorce rates, and a widening gap between haves and have-nots. In addition to the upheaval and difficulties brought on by recent natural disasters, individuals and families must now grapple with these new economic and social realities while forging their futures.

### **PRESENTATION OF THE SPEAKER**



Glenda S. Roberts is Professor and Director of the International Studies Program at the Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies (GSAPS), Waseda University in Tokyo. She holds a PhD from Cornell University in Anthropology. Together with Mike Douglass, she edited *Japan and Global Migration: Foreign Workers and the Advent of a Multicultural Society* (Routledge, 2000 and University of Hawaii Press, 2003). In 2006-07 she spent a sabbatical year at the Department of Anthropology, Yale University. She is the founder of the Japan Migration Research Group at GSAPS.

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