

# Japanologie Frankfurt am Main

Vortrag Prof. Dr. Christian Galan (University of Toulouse-le Mirail, CEJ-Inalco): "Some images of the 'new children' of the Meiji era: home vs school vs work"



The young Japanese nation of Meiji is a nation of young people. As a consequence of the demographic growth, **the child becomes concretely visible** while childhood becomes a **central aspect of the paradigm of modernity**. The status of the child evolves, and one often refers to the Meiji era as being the age of the advent of the child-schoolboy (and girl). Without contesting this view of the Meiji era as a whole, however, we will see in this presentation, how it was opposed, in the real life. At the heart of the opposition can be found, in the first years of Meiji, the **redefinition of the status of the family** which conferred to the parents an educational function at least as important as the one allotted to the school. Furthermore, the success of the child-schoolboy (and girl) motif was impeded for a longer period of time – until the beginning of the XXth century – by the inability of a great number of children to attend school, mainly because due to the need to work or because of poverty.

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