

Revised 9/2/2025

ERIN L. BRIGHTWELL

Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, University of Michigan, 202 S. Thayer St., Ste. 6111
Ann Arbor, MI 48104-1608 elbright@umich.edu

CURRENT POSITION

Sept 1, 2021 –

Associate Professor of Asian Languages and Cultures
University of Michigan, Department of Asian Languages and Cultures

PREVIOUS POSITION

Sept 1, 2015 – August 31, 2021

Assistant Professor of Asian Languages and Cultures
University of Michigan, Department of Asian Languages and Cultures

August 1, 2014 – July 31, 2015

Associate Professor (fixed term, special appointment) of Comparative Studies of Japanese Culture
Hiroshima University, Department of Integrated Humanities

EDUCATION

September 2007 – June 2014

Princeton University, East Asian Studies (Classical Japanese Literature)

PhD (Thomas Hare, advisor)

Doctoral Dissertation: *The Mirror of China: Language Selection, Images of China, and Narrating Japan in the Kamakura Period (1185-1333)*

September 2004 – June 2007

University of Washington–Seattle, Asian Languages & Literature (Chinese)

MA (Zev Handel, advisor)

MA thesis: *Confronting the Strange: Narrative and Exposition in Ren Fang's Notes Relating the Extraordinary*

September 2001 – May 2004

University of Washington–Seattle, Asian Languages & Literature (Japanese Linguistics)

BA magna cum laude

September 1991 – May 1995

Smith College, German Studies

BA cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa

PUBLICATIONS

Monograph

2020 *Reflecting the Past: Place, Language, and Principle in Japan's Medieval Mirror Genre*
Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center.

Major Articles & Book Chapters (* indicates peer reviewed; † indicates invited)

2026 “Dispassionate Time-Keeping: *Ima kagami* and the Tales it Isn't” for inclusion in edited volume on time and emotion in medieval Japanese literature (*in progress*).†

- 2023 “Timeless Today’s in a Changing World: A Translation of Fujiwara no Nobuzane’s *Ima monogatari*.” *Monumenta Nipponica* 78.1 (Summer 2023): 1-89.*
- 2021 “Unsought Knowledge: Japanese Contributions to National Socialist Writing.” In *Wissen über Wissenschaft: Felder, Formation, Mutation*. Manshu Ide, Haruyo Yoshida, and Shizue Hayashi, eds., 169-181. Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag.†
- 2021 Making Meaning: Lexical Glosses as Interpretive Interventions in the *Kakaishō*. *Journal of Japanese Studies* 47.1 (Winter 2021): 91-122.*
- 2017 Constructing the China Behind Chinese in Medieval Japan: *The China Mirror*. In *Nihon bungaku no tenbō o hiraku 日本文学の展望を拓く*, Komine Kazuaki, ed., 412-430. Tokyo: Kasama shoin. †
- 2015 Refracted axis: Kitayama Jun’yū and writing a German Japan. *Japan Forum* 27.4: 431-453. Awarded the Ian Nish Prize (2015).*
- 2014 『唐物語』と『唐鏡』に於ける「唐」の様相：中国故事の基礎知識 [‘China’ in ‘China Tales’ and ‘The Mirror of China’: The Basics of Ancient China]. *Rikkyō Daigaku Nihon bungaku: Komine Kazuaki kyōju teinen ki’nen-gō* (111): 216-225.†
- 2012 Discursive Flights: Structuring Stories in the *Shuyi ji*. *Early Medieval China* 18: 48-68.*
- 2005 Analyzing Gender: Wang Xi-feng and the Shrew. *Tamkang Review*. 36.1 – 2: 67-87.*

Smaller Publications & Reviews

- 2022 “Translation as Intervention: Primary Sources in Colonial Taiwan.” *Studies on Asia* 7.1 (2022): 123-126. Permanent link: <https://studiesonasia.scholasticahq.com/article/36730-translation-as-intervention-primary-sources-for-colonial-taiwan>.
- 2021 *Flowering Tales: Women Exorcising History in Heian Japan*. By Takeshi Watanabe. [Review] *Journal of Japanese Studies* 47.2 (Summer 2021): 524-528.
- 2019 Response to Noreña: “Sinicization” in the New Middle of Everywhere. *Fragments: Interdisciplinary Approaches to the Study of Ancient and Medieval Past* 8: 33-40. Permanent link: <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.9772151.0008.002>.

Translations

- 2024 “Translation as Intervention II: Primary Sources from Imperial Japan—Akutagawa’s *Momotarō*.” *Studies on Asia* 9.1 (2024): 64-70. Permanent link: <https://studiesonasia.scholasticahq.com/article/118955-resource-notes>
- 2018 Ō Chōyū’s “The Torrent.” *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* 16.1.3 (January 1, 2018): 1-25. Permanent link: <https://apjif.org/2018/01/o> Awarded the Kyoko Selden Memorial Translation Prize (2017).

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

- 2025-26 Michigan Humanities Award, University of Michigan (1 semester)
- 2025-26 CJS Member Scholarly Leave Grant, Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan (1 semester)
- 2024-25 Associate Professor Support Fund, University of Michigan
- 2022 Summer Faculty Fellow, Michigan Institute for the Humanities
- 2021 Faculty Instructional/Course Development Seed Grant, Center for Japanese Studies
(For use developing ASIAN 442/3: Literature of Empire)
- 2018-19 Hakuho Foundation Research Fellowship (12 months, Kyoto University)
- 2018-19 Japan Foundation Research Fellowship (10 months, declined)
- 2017 Kyoko Selden Memorial Translation Prize (unpublished translator category)
Ō Chōyū's *Honryū* 奔流 (The Torrent)
- 2015 Ian Nish Prize for "Refracted axis: Kitayama Jun'yū and writing a German Japan"
- 2011-12 Japan Foundation Doctoral Fellowship (6 months, Rikkyō University)
- 2011-12 Short-Term Social Science Research Council /Japan Society for Promotion of Science (SSRC-JSPS) Doctoral Fellowship (6 months, declined)
- 2010 David and Mary Hyde Summer Research Fellowship (Academia Sinica, Taiwan)
- 2008-09 College Women's Association of Japan Scholarship to the Inter-University Center for Japanese Language Studies (IUC)
- 2007 Turrell V. Wylie Memorial Scholarship (Japanese)
- 2006 Summer FLAS fellowship for Chinese Language Studies (IUP)
- 2005 Summer FLAS fellowship for Chinese Language Studies (IUP)
- 2004-06 Two-year recruitment fellowship to University of Washington, including 2004-05 Top Scholar Award
- 2003 Henry S. Tatsumi Scholarship (Japanese)
- 1995-96 Austrian-American Educational Commission/Fulbright Commission Teaching Assistantship to Austria
- 1995 Anita Luria Ascher Prize in German

INVITED TALKS & PRESENTATIONS

- 2026 “Seeds of Conflict: Japan and China.”
University of Alaska – Fairbanks, April TBD.
- 2026 “Surviving the Japanese Empire.”
Oakland University, February 17 (*tentative date*).
- 2025 “Seeds of Conflict: Japan and China.”
Arizona State University, December 3 (*date to be confirmed*).
- 2025 “Dispassionate Time-Keeping: *Ima kagami* and the Tales it Isn’t.”
Time and Emotion in Medieval Japanese Literature
University of Zurich, August 25-26.
- 2023 “Literature of the Japanese Empire: Imagined Geographies and the Taiwanese ‘Subject-Son.’”
University of Wisconsin – Whitewater, April 13.
- 2021 “Reflecting the Past: Place, Language and Principle in Japan’s Medieval *Mirror* Genre.”
CEAS Humanities Colloquium. University of Pennsylvania (book talk), February 18, (*remote*).
- 2020 “Reflecting the Past: Place, Language and Principle in Japan’s Medieval *Mirror* Genre.”
Centre for Japanese Research, University of British Columbia (book launch), October 15
(*remote*).
- 2019 “Making Meaning: Reading China Onto *The Tale of Genji* in Medieval Japan.”
University of Hyogo (兵庫県立大学), July 9.
- 2019 “Rule of (Cosmological) Law: the Rhetoric of Authority in Japan’s Medieval *Mirrors*.”
Kyoto Lectures Series. École Française d’Extrême-Orient/Italian School of East Asian Studies,
April 18.
- 2019 “Now Isn’t the End: A Medieval Experiment in Re-writing Mappō and Violence..”
IMAP/IDOC 2018–19 Distinguished Lecture Series. Kyushu University, January 17.
- 2018 “Wellspring and Warning: Essential Chinas in Medieval Japan”
CEAS Japan Colloquium Series. Yale University, February 12.
- 2016 “Tailoring the Continent: Chinas to Suit Medieval Needs.” (guest speaker)
Japan: Pre-modern, Modern and Contemporary.
“Dimitrie Cantemir” Christian University, Bucharest, September 1 – 3.
- 2016 “Downward Spin on the ‘Rising Sun’: Processing the Past in the Wake of the Genpei War.”
Loose Canons: Value and Valuation in Japanese Engagements with Chinese Writing II
University of Southern California, April 29.

SELECTED CONFERENCE & WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS

Papers Presented

- 2023 “Unmoored Selves: The Dissolution of Identity in Long Yingzong’s Wartime Prose Fiction.”
Japan: Pre-modern, Modern and Contemporary. Bucharest University of Economic Studies.

- Bucharest (Romania), Sep. 1-3.
- 2020 “The One About the Flatulent Priest: Getting a Laugh in Medieval Japan.”
Association for Asian Studies Conference (AAS). Boston, March 19-22. (*conference cancelled*)
- 2019 “A-/Un-/Re-dressing the Third Princess: the *Kakaishō*, *Yūsenkutsu* and the *Genji*.”
Modern Language Association Convention (MLA). Chicago, Jan. 3-6.
- 2017 “The Past in *Mirrors*: Crafting Continuity in Transitional Times.”
European Association for Japanese Studies (EASJ). Lisbon, Aug. 30-Sep. 2.
- 2016 “Reflecting Authority: Mobilizing Traditions in Medieval Discourse on the Past.”
Asian Studies Conference Japan (ASCJ). Tokyo, July 2-3.
- 2016 “The Cosmos or the Continent? Claims to Knowledge in Medieval Japan.”
Kyoto Asian Studies Group. Kyoto, June 13.
- 2016 “Deviant by Design: the Power & Politics of Multilingual Writing in Medieval Japan.”
Language, Power and Identity in Asia: Creating and Crossing Language Boundaries.
International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), Leiden, March 14-16.
- 2014 “Triangulating Traditions: Cultural Synthesis in Japan’s Medieval *Mirrors*.”
Japan: Pre-modern, Modern and Contemporary. A Return Trip from the East to the West.
“Dimitrie Cantemir” Christian University, Bucharest, September 1 – 3.
- 2014 “Speak Knowledgeably and Carry a Big Sword.”
Association for Asian Studies (AAS). Philadelphia, March 27 – 30.
- 2013 “Classical China to Go.”
Eighth International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS). Macau, June 24 – 27.
- 2012 “Translated Visions of a Japanese Reich.”
British Association for Japanese Studies (BAJS). University of East Anglia, Norwich,
September 6 – 7.
- 2012 “A Multi-faceted Mirror: *Kara kagami* and Creating Hi/stories.”
Asian Studies Conference Japan (ASCJ). Tokyo, June 30 – July 1.
- 2011 “Aberrant Eating.”
Legacies of Taste: An International Conference on Food Narratives in China.
University of Hong Kong, December 15 – 17.
- 2011 “Captured Again: Wang Zhaojun in Barbarian Drama”
Japan: Pre-modern, Modern and Contemporary. A Return Trip from the East to the West—
Learning in, about and from Japan.
“Dimitrie Cantemir” Christian University, Bucharest, August 30 – 31.

Roundtables

- 2026 “Fact, Fiction, and the In-Between: How Japanese Studies Can Foster Student Literacy in an Age of Dis- and Misinformation.” (Organizer and presenter.)

- Modern Language Association Convention (MLA). Toronto, Jan. 10. (*remote*)
- 2023 “The Conditions of Work Today (and Tomorrow): Pre-1900 Japanese Literary Studies in the Digital Age.”
Modern Language Association Convention (MLA). San Francisco, Jan. 7.
- 2019 “Japan in the (English-language) World.”
Japan in the World and the World in Japan: A Methodological Approach
Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures, February 16 (*remote*).

Discussant

- 2025 Panel discussant for “Ways of Self-Fashioning: Mimetic Twists, Turns, and Tactics in Japanese Literary History.”
Association for Asian Studies (AAS). Columbus, March 13 – 16.
- 2025 Panel discussant for “The Rhetoric of Annotation in Premodern Japan.”
Association for Asian Studies (AAS). Columbus, March 13 – 16.
- 2024 Panel discussant for “Subverting Social, Political, and Gender Hierarchies in Medieval Japan.”
Association for Asian Studies (AAS). Seattle, March 14 – 17.
- 2017 Panel discussant for “Flesh and Stone.”
Non/Human Materials Before Modernity. University of Michigan, October 2 – 3.
- 2016 Discussant for paper “Romanization in the Middle of Nowhere.”
Fragments Workshop. University of Michigan, October 20.
- 2016 Panel discussant for “Cross-Cultural Engagement: Appropriation of Chinese Literature in Early Modern Japan and Korea.”
Association for Asian Studies (AAS). Seattle, March 31 – April 3.

MEDIA

- 2025 “Revival: COVID changed how we gather.” Interviewed by April Baer. *Stateside*. Michigan Public. March 25.
<https://www.michiganpublic.org/podcast/stateside/2025-03-25/revival-covid-changed-how-we-gather>
- 2021 “Reflecting the Past: Place, Language and Principle in Japan’s Medieval *Mirror* Genre.”
New Books on Japanese Studies podcast. Recorded March 3.
<https://newbooksnetwork.com/reflecting-the-past>

CAMPUS & DEPARTMENTAL TALKS & EVENTS

- 2022 “Citizen/ship” Session for Critical Conversations (roundtable participant)
February 18.
- 2020 “Rethinking Medieval Narratives Beyond the Canon—On Ordering the Past.”
CJS (Center for Japanese Studies) Noon Lecture Series. November 11.

- 2020 “Unsought Knowledge: Japanese Contributions to National Socialist Writing.”
Asian Languages & Cultures Departmental Colloquium. November 6.
- 2020 “Reflecting the Past: Place, Language and Principle in Japan’s Medieval *Mirror* Genre.”
MEMS (Medieval and Early Modern Studies) Faculty Showcase: East Asia Series 1.
October 19.

TEACHING & RESEARCH INTERESTS

Medieval Japanese Thought, Classical Japanese Prose, Colonial Japanese Fiction, Medieval Chinese prose, Comparative Literature, Critical Theory, Japanese History

TEACHING & RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

September 2021 –

Associate Professor, University of Michigan, Department of Asian Languages & Cultures
Courses taught to date: *Introduction to Japanese Civilization* (200); *Seeds of Conflict in Japanese Literature* (244); *Strange Ways: Literature of the Supernatural in Pre-modern Japan & China* (314); *War Tales: Histories of Violence in Medieval and Early Modern Japan & China* (322); *Senior/Junior Research Colloquium in Asian Studies* (381); *Introduction to Classical Japanese Grammar* (433); *Literature of Empire* (443); *Introduction to Asian Studies* (550—Graduate Seminar); *Dissertation Writing Colloquium* (MEMS 898).

September 2015 –August 2021

Assistant Professor, University of Michigan, Department of Asian Languages & Cultures

August 2014 – August 2015

Associate Professor (fixed term), Hiroshima University, Department of Integrated Humanities
Courses taught: *Classical Japanese Literature and its Afterlives* (in Japanese); *Literature of Empire: Japan, the Colonies, and Germany 1895-1945* (in Japanese); *Introductory Lecture in the Humanities: Cultural Encounters* (in Japanese); *Medieval Japan Writes Asia* (in Japanese); *Japan in the World* (in English).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (SELECTED)

- 2024 “Japanese Studies: Dreams and Realities of Cross-cultural Encounters” (panel presentation)
Education without Frontiers for a Sustainable Future, University of Hyogo, March 22 (*remote*).
- 2024 A Brief Introduction to Language Program Evaluation: Facts, Myths and Resources
Confirmation
ACTFL-CARLA WEBINAR, January 23 (*remote*).
- 2022 Exposing the Hidden Curriculum: Cultivating Structural and Systemic Change for Mid-Career
Faculty Advancement (*webinar*)
National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity (NCFDD), October 19 (*remote*).
- 2022 Teaching Classical Japanese: A Practitioner’s Workshop II
Hosted by DEALL / East Asian Studies Center
The Ohio State University, August 4 (*remote*).

- 2021 Creating Climates Resistant to Sexual Harassment (*workshop*)
University of Michigan, November 16.
- 2021 Teaching Classical Japanese: A Practitioner's Workshop
Hosted by DEALL / East Asian Studies Center
The Ohio State University, August 6 (*remote*).
- 2020 Strategies and Tactics for Recruiting to Improve Diversity and Excellence (STRIDE)
workshop: Faculty Recruitment (*workshop*)
University of Michigan, October 12.

THESIS COMMITTEES (* indicates main advisor)

PhD Dissertation

Todd Maslyk (PhD German Studies, projected 2026; Co-Chair)*
Esther Ladkau (PhD History, 2022)
Susan Dine (PhD History of Art, 2021)
Vincent Chan (PhD History, 2020)

MA Thesis

Elinor Lindeman (MA, 2021)*
Yutang Sheng (MA, 2016)

BA Honors Thesis

Ruthie Dignan (BA Honors, Comp Lit, 2025)*
Lillith Jackson (BA Honors, 2023)*
Grace Hennigan (BA Honors, 2023)
Jiayin Yuan (BA Honors, 2020)*

SERVICE

Professional

- 2024-27 Association for Asian Studies Northeast Area Council Distinguished Speakers Bureau
(Japan)
- 2024 Concerned Asian Scholars, 55 Years Later: A Symposium (*Co-organizer*)
University of Michigan – Ann Arbor, May 10.
- 2023-28 Forum Executive Committee, “Premodern Japanese Literature Pre-1900” (MLA)
- 2021- Editorial Board, *East Meets West: East Asia And Its Periphery From 200 BCE To 1600 CE*
(Series). ARC Humanities Press.
- 2020-23 Editorial Board, *Studies on Asia* (Journal associated with the Midwest Conference on Asian
Affairs), 3-year term
- 2015-16 Japan Studies Field Editor for Dissertation Reviews

University

- 2024-25 DEI Committee, Asian Languages & Cultures (member)
- 2024-25 Language Lecturer Review Committee (member), Asian Languages & Cultures
- 2024-25 Language Lecturer Review Committee (member), Asian Languages & Cultures
- 2023-25 Director, Medieval and Early Modern Studies Program (one term)
- 2021-25 Associate Chair, Asian Languages & Cultures (two terms)
- 2021-25 Executive Committee, Asian Languages & Cultures (two terms, ex officio)

2021-25 Language Program Committee, Asian Languages & Cultures (two terms, ex officio)
 2024 MICHHERS (Michigan Humanities Emerging Research Scholars Program) Seminar, May 31
 2021-23 Executive Committee, MEMS (Medieval and Early Modern Studies)
 2023-24 Faculty Mentoring Committee (member), Asian Languages & Cultures
 2023-24 Modern Chinese Culture Search Committee (member), Asian Languages & Cultures
 2022- Contexts for Classics, Steering Committee (member)
 2022-24 DEI Committee, Asian Languages & Cultures (co-chair)
 2022-23 Tenure Review Panel (member), Asian Languages & Cultures
 2021-23 MICHHERS (Michigan Humanities Emerging Research Scholars Program) Liaison
 2021-22 Language Lecturer Review Committee Chair, Asian Languages & Cultures
 2021-22 Language Lecturer Review Committee (member), Asian Languages & Cultures
 2021-22 Faculty mentoring committee (member), Asian Languages & Cultures
 2021 MICHHERS (Michigan Humanities Emerging Research Scholars Program) Seminar, June, 10
 2020- Mentoring committee (PhD student), Asian Languages & Cultures
 2020 MICHHERS (Michigan Humanities Emerging Research Scholars Program) Seminar, June 16
 2020 Faculty Search Committee (Japanese Language Program Director)
 2019-22 Executive Committee, Center for Japanese Studies (5 semesters)
 2019-20 Graduate Program Committee (3 semesters), Asian Languages & Cultures
 2018 MICHHERS (Michigan Humanities Emerging Research Scholars Program) Faculty Mentor, June
 2017-18 Ad Hoc Faculty Governance Committee, Asian Languages & Cultures
 2017-18 Language Lecturer Review Committee (member), Asian Languages & Cultures
 2017-18 Steering Committee, MEMS (Medieval and Early Modern Studies)
 2016-18 Curriculum Committee, Asian Languages & Cultures
 2016-18 Faculty Research Grant Committee, Center for Japanese Studies
 2015-16 Language Lecturer Review Committee (member), Asian Languages & Cultures

REVIEWER/REFEREE

University of Hawai'i Press (2025)
Journal of Japanese Studies (2023, 2024)
Speculum: A Journal of Medieval Studies (2024)
Hualin International Journal of Buddhist Studies (2024)
 Swiss National Science Foundation (2022)
International Journal of Asian Studies (2021)
Japan Forum (2021)
 Institute of East Asian Studies, UC Berkeley (2019)
Journal of the American Oriental Society (2019)

LANGUAGES

Modern Japanese (fluent)
 Classical Japanese (fluent reading)
 German (fluent)
 Mandarin Chinese (advanced)
 Classical Chinese (highly proficient)
 Modern & 17th-century Dutch (reading)
 Spanish (reading)
 French (reading)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Association for Asian Studies

European Association for Japanese Studies

Modern Language Association