

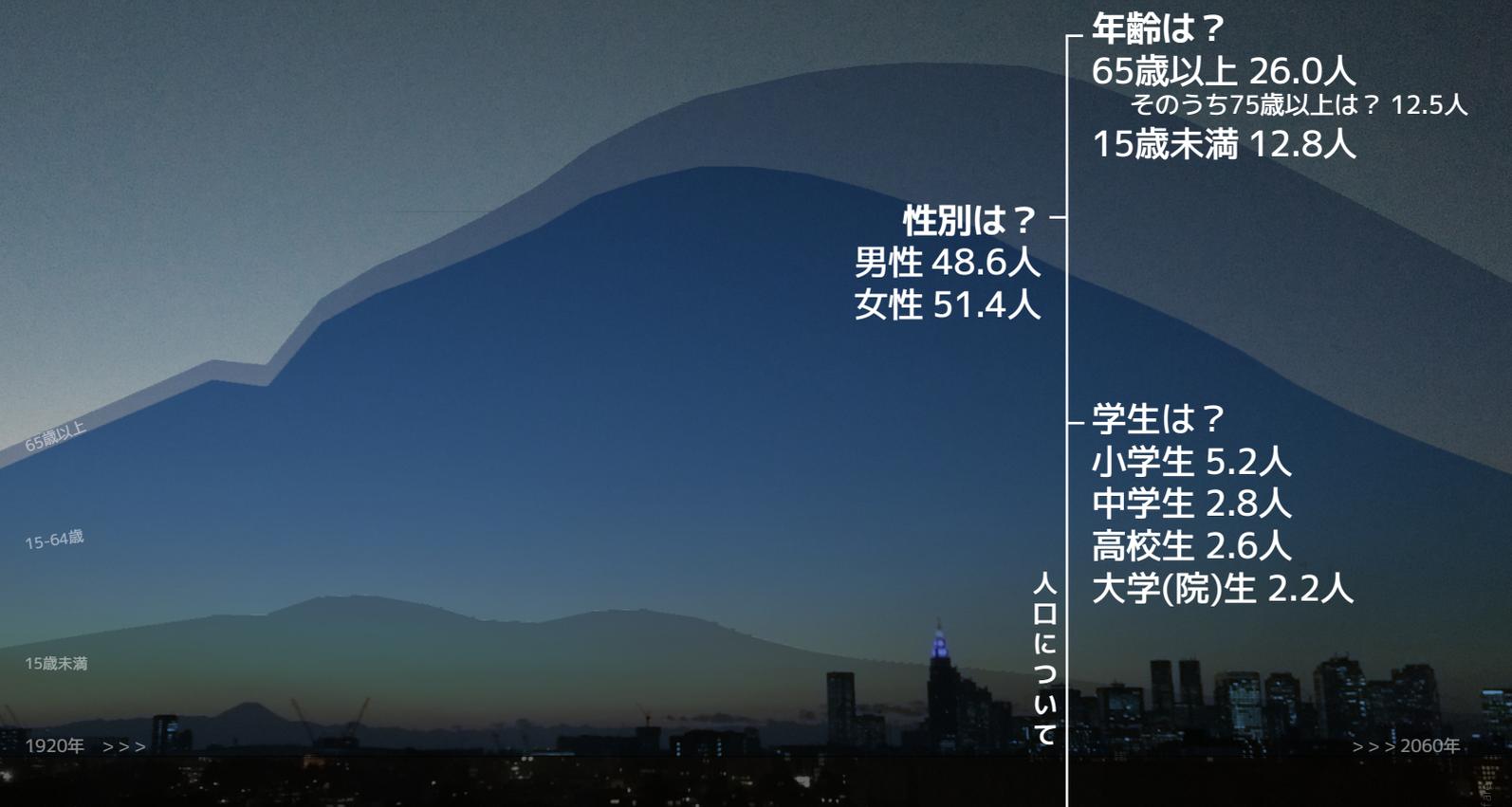


Science for Governing Japan's Population

A virtual *u:japan* lecture by Aya Homei

Thursday
2021-05-06
18:30~20:00
online

100人でみた日本



日本を100人の国に例えてみました。
それぞれの直近の数字である。
(平成22年~平成26年)

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In Japan and elsewhere, population is seen as a fundamental index for a nation's political economy. Also, the demographic knowledge is regarded as key to understand the societies that comprise the nation. For this reason, population issues such as ageing population and low fertility have been a matter of concern for the government for long, and

reviewing the medico-scientific fields and practices emerged in Japan between the 1860s and 1950s that were mobilized by the concept of population. I show how the notion of population we are familiar with today – in Japanese, *jinkō* – and the fact that population became a natural object of state inquiry and policy, are both a product of the political transformation of Japan into a modern nation state and an empire in the latter half of the nineteenth century and the development of modern science and medicine that kept a symbiotic relationship with the political change.



Aya Homei is Lecturer in Japanese Studies at the University of Manchester. She has been studying the politics and practice of reproduction and population in modern Japan, and more recently, family planning, development politics and health diplomacy in northeastern Asia. Among her recent works include the special issue she co-edited with Professor Yoko Matsubara at Ritsumeikan University (“Critical approaches to reproduction and population in post-war Japan”, *Japan Forum*, 2021). Currently, Aya is preparing a monograph, *Science for Governing Japan's Population*.

policymakers have collaborated with population experts to come up with solutions to these problems.

But where do these assumptions about, and political actions for, the population come from historically? What role has the science of population played in the governing of Japan's population? In this presentation, I will tackle these questions by

By showing the symbiotic relationship between science and the state's effort to govern Japan's population, I argue that the science of population was directly shaped by the ideologies, institutional agendas and socio-political conditions that surrounded the science, and that the official policies established as a result of this symbiotic relationship ultimately became somewhat detached from the demands of people's everyday lives.

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