

Forschung und Lehre

Japanese Foodscapes in Berlin: Teaching Research Methods Through Food

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Summary

This paper introduces research and fieldwork methods education for Japanese Studies students at Freie Universität Berlin. It aims to support training in research design, research methods and fieldwork in and beyond Japan in order to respond to the increasing demand for systematic and transparent research practices in Japanese Studies and Area Studies communities. Drawing on Berlin's vibrant Japanese foodscape this course provides students with opportunities to plan and conduct research projects on various aspects of Japanese food. Students present their research results and reflections on methods and fieldwork in video tutorials online through the course blog. Based on my experiences with teaching this course for four years, I suggest that in order to teach a successful method course in Japanese studies programs, it is important to 1) inspire students to conduct their own fieldwork, 2) provide opportunities for students to actively participate in the course and decision-making processes with regard to the syllabus and 3) make students' results visible in order to build a body of knowledge other students can draw on. In doing so, the course contributes to a more systematic method training in Japanese Studies through continuity.

Keywords: Japanese foodscapes, Berlin, qualitative research methods, video tutorial, teaching research methods, culinary globalization

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