



Università
Ca'Foscari
Venezia

PROJECT ACRONYM AND TITLE: YTOPIA - Yamatology of the Axis. Japan as a Nazi-Fascist Utopia of Political Renewal

FUNDING PROGRAMME: HORIZON 2020

CALL: H2020-MSCA-IF-2020 – Marie Skłodowska-Curie Global Fellowship

DESCRIPTORS: Modern and contemporary history, Colonial and post-colonial history, Global and transnational history, Entangled histories, Political theory, Political thought, Political philosophy, ideologies, Cultural History, History of collective identities and memories

HOST DEPARTMENT: Department of Asian and North African Studies

SCIENTIFIC RESPONSIBLE: Miyake Toshio

FELLOW: Bassoni Nicola

FINANCIAL DATA:

Project total costs	Overall funding assigned to UNIVE
€ 258.498,24	€ 258.498,24

ABSTRACT:

After his arrest for mass murder, the Norwegian terrorist Andres Breivik declared “that a Japanese would understand him a lot better than any European would”, because “the Japanese understand the idea and values of honour”. Shortly before committing suicide in the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris on 21st May 2013, the French new right thinker Dominique Venner wrote a book in which he depicted himself as a ‘samurai’ who fought in defence of European identity. These are just two of the many examples of the role played by a certain image of Japan in far-right imagination of our time. This project investigates the origins and development of the political discourses on Japan – something that can be called ‘yamatology’ instead of japanology – by focusing on the historical moment in which they reached its wider dissemination and became integral parts of far-right ideologies. The aim of this project is, therefore, to analyse comparatively the discursive construction of the image of Japan in Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. Instead of offering an overview on the European representations of Japan or focusing on a national case study, this project will carry out a detailed analysis of Nazi-Fascist yamatological representations, by considering them as result of a dialogical interaction between European and Japanese actors, as well as a constituent element of the Axis’ cultural policies closely related to many of the ideological features shared by both Fascism and Nazism. The project’s ultimate goal is to highlight the utopian dimension of yamatological representations, in which Japan – just like it did for Breivik or Venner – became the projection surface for far-right values and political aspirations. In doing so, this project allows re-thinking of the nature of fascism, both stressing a substantial similarity between Nazism and Fascism, and revealing the influence of non-European models on ultra-nationalist and Eurocentric world views.

Planned Start date	Planned End date
1 st May 2022	30 th April 2025

PARTNERSHIP:

1	Kyoto Sangyo University	Kyoto (JP)	Coordinator
2	Università Ca' Foscari Venezia	Venice (IT)	Partner