

In early modern Japan, upper status groups coveted pills and powders made of exotic foreign ingredients such as mummy and rhinoceros horn. By the early twentieth century, over-the-counter-patent medicines, and, more alarmingly, morphine, had become mass commodities, fueling debates over opiates in Japan's expanding imperial territories. The fall of the empire and the occupation of Japan by the United States created conditions favorable for heroin use, followed, in time, by glue sniffing and psychedelic mushroom ingestion.

By illuminating the neglected history of drugs, this volume highlights both the transnational embeddedness and national peculiarities of the "politics of consumption" in Japan.

Contributors are: Anna Andreeva, Oleg Benesch, William G. Clarence-Smith, Hung Bin Hsu, John Jennings, Miriam Kingsberg Kadia, William Marotti, Koji Ozaki, Jonas Rüegg, Jesús Solís, Christopher W.A. Szpilman, Judith Vitale, and Timothy Yang.

Judith Vitale, Ph.D. (2007) is a lecturer in history at the University of Zurich. She is the author of *The Historical Writing of the Mongol Invasions in Japan* (Harvard University Asia Center, 2023).

Oleg Benesch, Ph.D. (2011), University of British Columbia, is Professor of History at the University of York. He is the author of *Inventing the Way of the Samurai: Nationalism, Internationalism, and Bushido in Modern Japan* (Oxford University Press, 2014) and, with Ran Zwigenberg, *Japan's Castles: Citadels of Modernity in War and Peace* (Cambridge University Press, 2019).

Miriam Kingsberg Kadia, Ph.D. (2009), University of California at Berkeley, is Professor of History at the University of Colorado Boulder. She is the author of *Moral Nation: Modern Japan and Narcotics in Global History* (University of California Press, 2014) and *Into the Field: Human Scientists of Transwar Japan* (Stanford University Press, 2020).

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Judith Vitale, Oleg Benesch
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