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# Defining Wild: Japanese Primatology and Monkey Parks

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## Abstract

Session: Playing by their own rules: marginality and heterodoxy in modern science (Ayako Sakurai, Takashi Ito, Akinobu Takabayashi, Akihisa Setoguchi) Since their encounter with modern science, Japanese scientists have tried to catch up with Western science. However, primatologists at Kyoto University in the 1950s were different. Although they tried to publish their papers in English, for international academics, they willingly distinguished their methods from the Western style. This paper discusses why Japanese primatologists pursued two contradicting paths: internationalization and marginalization. In 1952, primatologists at Kyoto University, led by Kinji Imanishi, succeeded in feeding Japanese monkeys (*Macaca fuscata*) at Koshima and Takasakiyama, which made long-term observation of these monkeys possible. Afterward, some wild monkey parks were designated for public leisure. However, there were some critics against feeding, claiming that it altered the behavior of wild monkeys. Primatologists defended feeding method, stating that it was the Japanese way of confronting nature, which obscures the boundary between human and animal. Monkey parks entertained a vast amount of tourists until the 1970s when younger generations of primatologists began to criticize them. This paper will show how Japanese primatologists defined a border between artificial and wild nature, using self-orientalism to attract the attention of the lay public and international academics.

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