

Séminaire « Cinema, Environment and Visual Culture »
Coordonné par Sarah Leperchey
Master « Cinéma, esthétique, création »
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**THE “INTER-DISASTER” IMAGINATION AND ETHICS IN RYUSUKE HAMAGUCHI’S
FILMS SINCE THE 2011 GREAT EAST JAPAN EARTHQUAKE**

In March 2011, Japan experienced a magnitude 9.0 earthquake, a massive tsunami, and the subsequent Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant accident. This “triple disaster,” commonly referred to as the Great East Japan Earthquake, primarily affected the Tohoku (northeastern) region, claiming approximately 20,000 lives and causing widespread radioactive contamination. Fourteen years on, reconstruction remains incomplete, while natural disasters—heavy rain, typhoons, floods, earthquakes—continue to strike this disaster-prone archipelago. Sociologists use the term “inter-disaster” to describe the condition of living in the “interval” between recurring catastrophes, in

which anyone could potentially become a victim. In this presentation, I explore how cinematic works depicting this inter-disaster society articulate inter-disaster imaginations and ethics concerning the relationship between humans and nature. I examine Japanese director Ryusuke Hamaguchi's *Asako I & II* (2018), *Drive My Car* (2021), and *Evil Does Not Exist* (2023). Before turning to these three films, I consider how the Tohoku Documentary Trilogy (2011–2013), co-directed by Hamaguchi and Ko Sakai and built around interviews with survivors of the 2011 disaster, served as a foundation for the directorial approach in Hamaguchi's later fictional works. Next, I analyze how the director portrays geographical and temporal continuity across disaster-stricken places in *Asako I & II* and *Drive My Car*. Finally, I compare the post-pandemic regional revitalization policies depicted in *Evil Does Not Exist* with the social issues that emerged after the 2011 disaster. Ultimately, my analysis shows how Hamaguchi's films embrace an ethics of ambiguity surrounding the questions of what constitutes "disaster" and what "coexistence with nature" truly means.

Aya Motegi est doctorante en études cinématographiques à l'Université Paris Cité. Elle rédige une thèse intitulée « Slow Violence and Eco-cosmopolitanism in Contemporary Japanese Cinema », sous la direction de Martine Beugnet.

