# The 121st ASC Seminar

Meeting of Kanto Branch of Japan Association for African Studies

Pre-Register

# “Rethinking zoonotic risk from local perspectives: Wild meat, human–animal relations and local knowledge in the Congo Basin”



## 2026 12/ 9 (Wed)

【Venue】Hybrid

Onsite: Room103・Online: ZoomMeeting

(TUFS Research and Lecture Building 1F / Fuchu campus)

Language: English・Admission: Free

Time：17:40 ～ 19:10 (JST)

In cooperation with: the Research Institute for Humanity and Nature (RIHN), FASHLOKS Project

## 【Speaker】Dr. Romain Duda

Visiting Research Fellow, RIHN,
and Researcher at French National Center for Scientific Research

Romain Duda is a CNRS researcher in anthropology and ethnoecology at the Centre for Functional and Evolutionary Ecology (CEFE, Montpellier, France). His research examines local knowledge, practices and values at the human–animal interface in Central African rainforests, with a focus on hunting, wild meat and zoonotic diseases (Ebola, mpox). He has worked with Baka, Bayaka, Twa and Teke communities in Cameroon, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Central African Republic. He is currently a visiting researcher at the Research Institute for Humanity and Nature (RIHN) in Kyoto, in the FASHLOKS project led by Dr. Shun Hongo.

## 【Abstract】

The Congo Basin is often described as a “hotspot” where hunting and wild meat threaten global health. Based on fieldwork in several countries in Central Africa, this talk proposes an anthropological perspective on this bushmeat narrative and the culturalization of risk, starting from the perspective of local knowledge. What is framed as risky human-animal contact is also part of broader configurations of kinship, sharing, and locally situated understandings of human-animal relations. Forests and their human and non-human inhabitants are also products of long-term processes: colonial extraction, logging, urban demand and economic crises have intensified hunting and transformed land use, depleting wildlife and shifting diets from large game to rodents. Finally, during Ebola and mpox outbreaks, people mobilised their own theories of misfortune and decline, which deserve to be taken seriously. As zoonotic risk is historically produced and socially distributed, I argue that an anthropology of zoonoses informed by local knowledge is critically needed to better understand disease emergence.

Keywords: One Health ; social sciences ; emerging infectious diseases; human-animal relations ; bushmeat ; local representations

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