



European Research Day 2017

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T03 - Dr. Maia ROOTS, Assistant Professor, Estonian Tohoku University, Graduate School of Law

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My research project:

My area of research is civil law, more specifically family law. In addition to researching Japanese law, I have also been conducting comparative research, including Japanese, German and English law. My main focus is on the parent-child relationship after the divorce of the parents, and, more recently, the law concerning stepfamilies. I have published some papers in Japanese¹, and have also presented at the conference of the International Society for Family Law. More recently, I have been asked to be country reporter for Japan for the next Congress of the International Academy of Comparative Law. My task is to report on the current state of multi-cultural challenges in family law in Japan.

My career path:

I received my Master and Doctorate of Law from Tohoku University (TU), where I am now an assistant professor. I have minimal teaching load and can spend considerable time doing research, although I am occasionally required to do odd jobs for more senior professors. On the whole, it is a good position. I am not encumbered with administrative duties like most academic staff at Japanese universities. I receive an individual Kakenhi grant, and am included in a bigger grant led by a professor from TU. TU has an expanding support system for promoting the research and careers of female researchers (especially those, like myself, with families), from which I have greatly benefitted. TU Graduate School of Law is not very international, and I am expected to adapt to the Japanese way of working, exclusively in Japanese. I believe making an effort to adapt and mastering the language is a good way to go. For now I intend to pursue an academic career in Japan.

My relation to Europe:

I received my Bachelor's degree from Tartu University (Estonia). As I do a lot of comparative law research, and as there is increasing interest in Japanese law in Europe, I have formed ties with researchers from Europe for joint projects. For example, at the moment I am part of an international panel for gender and law in Japan, and we hope to present about our research at a conference in the UK next year. Visiting scholars from Europe spend time researching at our graduate school, and faculty members from Tohoku University quite often spend extended periods of time studying abroad and doing research in Europe. There are scholarships available for this, and the person researching abroad naturally receives their regular salary during this period as well. I hope to take advantage of this in the future, hopefully researching or perhaps getting an additional degree in some European country.

¹ ローツ・マイア「面会交流と子供の立場—ドイツでの子供の交流拒否をめぐる議論を中心に—」『法学』第77巻第3号150頁-185頁（2013年）

ローツ・マイア「父母の別居・離婚後の親子関係—面会交流における「子の利益」を中心に(1)・(2)」『法学』第80巻5号60-85頁（2016年）、第81巻3号26-75頁（2017年）