

Alphard, Brevis, Chariot

On the Names of Japanese Cars

by Jürgen Stalph

What's in a name? That which we call a rose / By any other name would smell as sweet. This is how Juliet, only child of the Capulets, enemies of the House of Montague, consoles herself, and sweet-heart Romeo, before joyfully changing names – Romeo My Love instead of Romeo Montague. Such consolation is appealing, because a rose is in fact a rose; it does little to alter the pleasure that it owes its name, purely etymologically, not to its scent, but to its thorns, nor does the small imprecision that Juliet commits: she calls both the word and the proper noun a name.

The rose is so much a rose that it defies embellishment. No packaging required. Unless, of course, it is dealt with as a specific object. Or sold. Then it must, as everything else that constitutes a commodity, be differentiated in its details; it must have a label that can be classified, elaborated, and praised. Thus the rose, when red, is presented as an Asja or a Black Madonna, as Moonlight when yellow, and as Virgo or Bianca when white. Mere alphanumeric designations that the majority of screws, hooks, splints, and a refrigerator or two must content themselves with are scorned when names for flowers are coined – and this is increasingly true of cars as well, provided that they do not bear the family name of Daimler, or BMW.

Those who take notes on the streets are amazed; just about anything seems possible. In fact, however, creativity is limited. In addition to legal considerations, euphony and meaning are to be taken into account, and where possible from an interlingual perspective. A new car that is called *Nova* (Lada, and formerly Chevrolet) will appear to a German as little more than 'new', while a Spaniard may harbor fears that it won't go (*no va*). Similarly, in Romance language-speaking countries, the *Laputa* (Mazda) will be met with only little adoration; the name *Opa*

(Toyota) might raise objections in Argentina (*opa* 'mentally retarded'), in Germany perhaps, too (*Opa* 'grandpa'); and only someone with no knowledge of the Spanish language will drive his Mitsubishi *Pajero* without a second thought. Even abbreviations may lose their innocence in foreign phonetics: the sporty MR2 (Toyota) sounds like *merdeux*, or *emmerde(r)* in French.

In this way, one of the major sources of human diversion, i.e., the linguistic awareness that the moon and *la lune* are two completely different things, can at the same time give rise to considerable uneasiness. Yet, of greater onomastic interest than this or the other mishap is the question of which name is acceptable where, and why. In the case of models produced primarily or exclusively for the domestic market, Japanese carmakers show a strong preference for names based on Latin-Roman, Greek, English, or German words and morphemes. Japanese words are seldom used and then most often in foreign disguise. Phonetically, or rather graphically – since the katakana translations that they owe their own language sometimes convey quite different values – A (a) and R (r) predominate, with three out of four car names hosting at least one of these letters. The remaining vowel-signs follow in popularity, with the exception of the markedly less common U, and then the upper and lower case N, S, T, L, and C. At the start of a name, the explosive P is frequently used, and thanks to Toyota's *Verossa*, *Vista*, *Vitz*, *Voltz*, *Voxy*, the classic V for Victory seems to be gaining in popularity despite its handicap of having to transform into a Japanese *bui*, a *b*, or a diacritical U.

Semantically, Mr. and Mrs. Automobile are not necessarily called by their right names. But since words are linked or supposed to be linked with essences, name-giving is naturally governed by that which "is esteemed to be beautiful, grand, honorable"

(Goethe) (which is why the aforementioned *Vitz*, derived for whatever reason from German *Witz* 'joke; wit', was given a less perilous alias in Germany, where it is known as *Yaris*).

In the beginning, however, there is the manufacturer who, in Japan and elsewhere, likes to refer to himself (*Haribo* < Hans Riegel, Bonn; *Adidas* < Adi Dassler; *Audi* < Latin *audire* 'to listen' < August Horch [German *horchen* 'listen']; *Bridgestone* < Ishibashi; *Honda* < Honda Sōichirō). This is true for brand as well as product names. Associations with the splendid, great, sublime are in this case not *de rigueur* (VW *Lupo* < Latin *lupus* 'wolf' as in the city of Wolfsburg; VW HQ), but of course welcome. Japanese examples of such derivatives *in nomine* are the *Alcyone*, the *Diamante*, the *Sunny*: *Alcyone*, the brightest star in the Pleiades points directly to the producer Subaru (Japanese for 'Pleiades') which has incorporated the six more visible of the "seven stars" into its logo; *Diamante* alludes to the stylized diamond decorating all Mitsubishi products and originating from the three (*mitsu*) lozenges of the *Trapa japonica* (*hishi*; English 'water nut'); and *Sunny* is related to 日産 not only through the sun, but also phonetically-anagrammatically by the reading: Nissan.

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Reaching for the stars – and beyond – is a popular practice anyway. To name but a few examples, there are the Mazda *Capella* (Alpha Aurigae), Toyota's *Alphard* (Alpha Hydrae), *Carina* (Keel of Boat), and *Cygnus* (constellation Swan), Isuzu's *Gemini* (constellation Gemini), Daihatsu's *Mira* (Red Giant in the constellation Whale) and Nissan's *Regulus* (Alpha Leonis). *Aero Star* (a Mitsubishi bus) and *Starlet* (Toyota) shine in a more generic manner. In their midst, Nissan's *Pulsar* beats out a rhythm while the gods dance above: *Gaia* (Toyota), the mother of heaven, the mountains and the seas (with the serendipitous additional meaning in Spanish of 'joyful'), her son *Chronos* (Kronos; Mazda), his granddaughter Artemis *Orthia* (Honda) and, in masculine disguise, 'the carrier of light' *Lucina* (Nissan's *Lucino*). The Toyota *Celica* (< Spanish *celica* 'heavenly, divine') adjectively joins the ranks.

Terrestrial names, accordingly, must come with royal connotations. For some time now Toyota has been varying the theme of "wreath and crown": *Camry* (< Japanese *kammuri/kanmuri* 'crown'), *Corolla*, *Corona*, *Cresta*, *Crown*; the regalia being completed with *Scepter*, *Regius*, *Majesta*, and *Royal*. Taking into account the L/R-shift, the *Lexus* and *Legnum* (Mitsubishi) probably also belong in this category. Nissan offers an athletic crowning with *Laurel* and *Laurel Medalist*, throwing in along the way the Little King *Regulus* mentioned above. Mitsubishi has a large bus *Aero Queen*, and alongside their *Diamante* we may file Nissan's *Presea* (< Spanish *presea* 'treasure, jewel').

Less royal, but just as dignified, awe-inspiring, or at least lofty, are Nissan's *Cima* (< Spanish *cima* 'summit, ridge, completion') and *Skyline*, and the Toyota limousines *Altezza*, *Aristo*, *Celsior* (< Latin *celsus* 'high, sublime'), *Emina* and *Estima*. These are joined almost seamlessly by a host of cars claiming general excellence and supremacy, *Numeri 1*, as it were: *Premacy* (Mazda), *Premio* (Toyota), *Primera* (Nissan), *Prius* (Toyota), as well as *Caldina* (inasmuch, as ascertained, from the Roman *cardinal[e]*), *Hiace* (< English *high* + *ace*) and *Supra* (all from Toyota). The word 'high' is incorporated into the names of Toyota's *Hilux* pick-up trucks and the *Hilux Surf* as well as Daihatsu's *Hijet* small truck. Others carrying greatness in their names, straightforwardly, *en passant*, or as part of the article designation, include the *Grandis* (Mitsubishi *Chariot*), the *Elgrand* (Nissan), the *Gran Turismo* (Nissan *Gloria*) and *Grand Escudo* (Suzuki), the *Lagreat* (Honda), the 659 ccm small *Max* (Daihatsu) and the

trucks *Forwardmax*, *Giga*, *Gigamax* (all Isuzu) as well as the *Super Great* (Mitsubishi) and *Titan* (Mazda). Besides, we find functional greatness, in case of Toyota in customary multiple form (*Platz*, *Raum*, and *Spacio*).

Otherwise, just about anything goes that seems desirable. Examples include compact smallness (Mazda *Demio*, Nissan *Hypermini*, Mitsubishi's *Minica* and *minicab*, or Suzuki's *Kei* and Mitsubishi's *ek* that derive from the Japanese *kei-jidōsha*, meaning small vehicles with an engine displacement of less than 660 ccm); names that draw inspiration from fauna (Mitsubishi's *Colt*, Toyota's *Harrier* [a species of falcon, and otherwise used as a label for fighter jets] and *Lapin* [< French *lapin* 'rabbit'], Nissan's *Bluebird* [*Salia*; at the same time a direct reference to Maeterlinck's *Blue Bird* which is surprisingly present in the Japanese consciousness]); or, to name a semantic field which is also commonly tapped elsewhere, the wind (Nissan *Cefiro* and *Mistral*; VW *Passat*, *Scirocco*, *Vento*). In addition there are many names reminiscent of forward movement or motion in general: *Avancier* (Honda), *Avenir* (Nissan), *Corsa* (Toyota), *Cruze* (Suzuki-Chevrolet) and *Land Cruiser* (Toyota), *Forward* (Isuzu), *March*, *Mobilio*, *Move* (Nissan, Honda, Daihatsu), *Progrès* (Toyota), *R'nessa* (Nissan), *Vamos* (Honda). The remainder – if the vehicles are not just called what they are (Mitsubishi *Chariot*, Nissan *Vanetto Van*, Suzuki *Wagon R*) or what they drive on (Toyota *Granvia*, Nissan *Camino*) – the remainder of names refer to status, hopes, desires, and volition.

For the attentive road user the canonymy of the great and small, the noble and functional, the funny and fervent has a pleasurable additional effect – it offers live entertainment that easily outdoes children's number plate games: here, amidst the teeming masses, we come across a 6 feet 2 inch (1.88m) high *Scrum Wagon* (Mazda). There, on the side of the street, we see a silver grey *Odyssey* (Honda), whose driver is consulting the navigation system. At the lights a *Bighorn* (Isuzu) honking a filthy *Fun Cargo* (Toyota) through the intersection. In the drop-off zone at the train station three Dames, *Nadia* (Toyota), *Silvia* and *Serena* (Nissan), are waiting impatiently alongside *MeLady Carol* (Mazda) and a *Cavalier* from Nagoya for a sleeping *Galant* (Mitsubishi) in the opposite lane to, at long last, allow a heavily laden *Rosa* (Mitsubishi) to turn. A three-liter *Brevis* (Toyota) is trying to squeeze its 14 feet 11 inches (4.55m) into the last free spot of the No Standing area in front of the department store, while a

well-behaved Honda trio, *Integra*, *Insight*, and *Accord*, is properly queuing up at the car park entrance; and so on and so forth. *Chasers*, *Sprinters*, *Soarers* on Toyota family hunt, a thundering *Trueno* from the same stable rushing after them; an old Nissan *Cedric*, steered by little Lord Fauntleroy, driving by far too fast; a seldom seen *Ardeo* (Toyota) pair, kissing on red; a jumble of palindromically worthless *Civics*, of *Fit* (Honda), *Swift* (Suzuki), *City* (Honda), *Life* (Honda), and foreign *Vitas* (Opel), sovereignly circumnavigated by *Dignity* (Mitsubishi), *Gloria* (Nissan) and Lord Hero of the naming trade: *Proudia* (Mitsubishi)!

What the majority of these names, as well as others unmentioned, have in common is first, their simple structure, and secondly, from a Japanese perspective, their foreign roots. Rare indeed are those whose names derive from Japanese words, as for example the *Ryoga* (< *ryōga* 凌駕 'excellence' or *ryōga* 龍駕 'imperial vehicle') and *Galue* (< *garyū* 我流 'personal style'), both produced by Mitsuoka. The foreign still carries prestige; but even more important is the fact that it, in contrast to the linguistically familiar, creates a semantic safety distance. For this reason, the own is almost always disguised: *Galue* instead of 我流, *Camry* instead of *Kanmuri*, *Kei* instead of 軽. For the same reason – since as *la lune* the moon is a tourist and has to shine only in second place – cars in Japan may even appear as *Laputa*, *Naked* (Daihatsu), or *Scrum*. There is only one thing they, nominally, may not: fade away into nothingness.

Quotes from Goethe are taken from *Faust I* and the *Italian Journey*. The ending is owed to Arthur Schnitzler's *Buch der Sprüche und Bedenken* (Book of Aphorisms and Doubts).

DIJ EVENTS

Conference

Individual Responsibility vs. Social Solidarity – Current Economic and Legal Issues Concerning Social Policy in Japan and Germany
(Tōkyō, September 10–11, 2002)

The topic of this conference, sponsored by the Univers Foundation, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, the France Bed Medical Home Care Research Subsidy Foundation, and the German Embassy in Tōkyō, was recent social policy changes in Japan and Germany.



Both countries have been facing very similar challenges: aging populations, changing employment structures, long-lasting economic stagnation, and globalization, all of which threaten existing social security arrangements. The focal point of this conference was the question whether and to what extent both welfare systems, which have often been described as “conservative-corporatist” regimes, are converging to more liberal modes of welfare capitalism. The organizers Harald Conrad (DIJ) and Arai Makoto (University of Tsukuba) brought together sixteen speakers and nine discussants to analyze, from a legal and economic perspective, recent changes in pension policy, income distribution, and long-term care, as well as age- and gender-specific issues in social security and the changing role of the non-profit sector.

The main results of this conference can be summarized as follows: Although there seems to be, at least on a very general level, a move toward more liberal models in almost all social policy areas, for example, the introduction and increasing importance of private pension provisions, there are also new measures which tend to strengthen existing redistributive elements. Thus, what we are witnessing appears not to be a real shift in paradigm. The same is true for changes in the social insurance of women. Whereas, for example, Germany has introduced an extension of leave schemes for care work, an improvement of social security for family caregivers and increasing bonuses for child-raising in women’s pensions, and thereby improved the social security of women, these elements have at the same time strengthened the male bread-winner model stressing the existing conservative attitude of the German welfare state. In Japan, signs for a more liberal approach in women’s social security are also rather mixed, and the same can be said about the growing role of the non-profit sector in both countries. Whereas the role of this sector has indeed largely gained in importance, existing infrastructure and modes of provision, for example in the care sector, have not changed dramatically by these developments.

With the planned publication of the conference papers we hope to present some interesting case studies into the dynamics of “conservative-corporatist” welfare regimes.

Symposium

Japan and Korea on the Road to a Common Future: Perspectives and Tasks

(Brühl, September 25–27, 2002)

The DIJ hosted an international symposium from September 25 through 27, 2002, with the title “Japan and Korea on the Road to a Common Future: Perspectives and Tasks.” The conference was held jointly with the German Federal Agency for Civic Education and the Japanese Cultural Institute, Cologne, and in cooperation with the Chair for East Asian History at the University of Erfurt and the Japanese-German Center Berlin (JGCB). The conference was supported by the Japan Foundation. Some eighty listeners attended the conference, which was translated simultaneously (German-Japanese, German-Japanese).

The escalation of Japanese-Korean frictions in 2001 due to a renewed debate about Japanese history textbooks seemed to threaten recent rapprochement and even the smooth hosting of the FIFA World Cup in 2002. With this background in mind, Japanese, Korean and German researchers discussed the present state of Korean-Japanese relations in three panels; these were held in the East-West College of the Federal Agency for Civic Education in Brühl. Following the conference, a public panel discussion was hosted by the Japanese Cultural Institute, Cologne, which was chaired by Christoph Müller-Hofstede from the Federal Agency for Civic Education and opened with an introduction by Hartwig Hummel (University of Düsseldorf) and Sven Saaler (DIJ).

In the first panel, “A New Political and Economic Framework for Japanese-Korean Relations: Interdependence and Regionalism,” papers were given by Izumi Hajime (Shizuoka Prefectural University, Japan), Kim Hoesup (Chung-Ang University, Korea) and Hartwig Hummel (University of Düsseldorf). The panel was chaired by Wolfgang Brenn (JGCB). In the presentations, positive developments in recent Japanese-Korean relations, especially in the fields of security and economic policies, were stressed, but it was felt that the mutual mistrust that is still prevailing could lead to dangers in the future.

The second panel, “State and Perspectives of the Japanese-Korean History Debate: The Legacies of the Past,” chaired by Reinhard Zöllner (University of Erfurt), addressed the main obstacle for Japanese-Korean rapprochement – the debate about history between Japan and Korea. In this panel, papers were given by Sakai Toshiki (Tōkyō Gakugei University), Chung Jae-jeong (University of Seoul) and Sven Saaler (DIJ). The papers covered attempts on the Japanese side to sanitize history and utilize it for political means, as well as Korean attempts to manipulate history for the sake of national integration.

In the third panel, “Civil Society and Cultural Initiatives: New Approaches in Japanese-Korean Relations,” also chaired by Reinhard Zöllner, papers by Cho Kyu-cheol (Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Seoul), Kohari Susumu (Shizuoka Prefectural University) and Isa Ducke (DIJ) were given. The three presenters all welcomed the future prospects for cultural exchange between Japan and Korea,



At the symposium “Japan and Korea on the Road to a Common Future”



especially by non-governmental representatives, since these have led to a considerable rapprochement at the grassroots level during the last years.

In the discussions after the panels and in the final discussion, nationalism in general and the manipulation of history and its utilization for political means was repeatedly identified as a major obstacle for Japanese-Korean rapprochement. As became clear in the discussion, this did not only mean attempts on the Japanese side to sanitize national history, but also attempts by Korea to manipulate history for the sake of national integration. However, it became clear that on the Japanese side, there is at present not the political will to ignore sectional interests for the sake of Japanese-Korean rapprochement.

Overall, the conference not only built on the already excellent rapport between Japanese and Korean social scientists, but also contributed to an improvement in understanding of East Asian affairs amongst the participants, and, it is hoped, adjusted the often stereotypical image of Japanese-Korean relations prevailing in Europe.

Lecture Events

Japanese Corporations Between Structural Reform and Internationalization

(Düsseldorf, October 7, 2002; Hamburg, October 9, 2002)

Last October, two DIJ lecture events on "Japanese Corporations Between Structural Reform and Internationalization – Challenges and Changes for the German Economy" were held in Düsseldorf and in Hamburg.

The event in Düsseldorf – organized by the "Industrie-Club e.V." – took place on October 7, 2002, at the Industrie-Club conference room. Approximately one hundred representatives from different corporations and institutions in North Rhine-Westphalia followed the invitation extended by the Industrie-Club and the Deutsch-Japanischer Wirtschaftskreis. The moderator, Dr. Ruprecht Vondran from the Deutsch-Japanischer Wirtschaftskreis, opened the Düsseldorf event, and the first speaker, Hanns Günther Hilpert (German Institute for International and Security Affairs), delivered an overview on the current situation of the Japanese economy. Hilpert's main question, i.e., whether an end to the economic crisis can be expected soon, is difficult to answer. Nonetheless, Hilpert did show that reforms in Japan

are quite necessary and that impressive examples of change and development are already underway. Andreas Moerke (DIJ), who spoke on the "New Structure of the Financial Market – Market Entry Potentials for German Corporations," paid special attention to the question of how the banking sector is changing. He was able to show that bad loans are a heavy burden for the banks in Japan. Nevertheless, financial institutions from the U.S., Britain or France have demonstrated more initiatives in respect to market entry in Japan than their German counterparts. The comments made by Consul Shinyo Takahiro stressed that the Koizumi cabinet is quite anxious to realize reforms in this sector.

The second part of the event dealt with areas where chances for market entry are even more visible. In his paper, René Haak (DIJ) dealt with "New Marketing Concepts for Consumer Goods – the Break-up of the Traditional Structures," revealing thereby how Japanese firms are able to compensate the loss in the middle price segments by using innovative marketing concepts. It was emphasized that – especially for premium products – the Japanese market still allows a good profit margin. The potentials of one special market segment – the "silver market" – were shown by Harald Conrad (DIJ) in his paper titled "Ambitious and Financially Sound – Japanese Senior People as a New Target Group." Conrad highlighted that in various market segments – be it care, health, leisure, media or finance, but also real estate or the job market – new market chances can be found. Harald Dolles (DIJ) was the last speaker at the event with his paper "Trust and Control in German-Japanese Cooperations." Using the results of his empirical study, Dolles could show the importance of trust in business relations – especially for small- and medium-sized firms.

The second lecture event addressing the same issues was held on October 9, 2002, in Hamburg at the Chamber of Commerce. The speakers were introduced by Tim Goydke (Regional Manager Japan and Korea at the German Asia-Pacific Business Association) who also moderated the discussion. Given the space constraints at the Chamber of Commerce only twenty listeners were able to attend the lecture, but the relatively small number was compensated by even more intensive discussions.

The lecture events turned out to be of great interest for a large number of people. The talks are scheduled to be continued in spring 2003.

Conference

Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History: Colonialism, Regionalism and Borders

(Tōkyō, November 29–30, 2002)

Throughout the year 2002, new developments towards regional cooperation and integration could be observed in East and Southeast Asia. Until quite recently, the process of regional integration in Asia was limited to Southeast Asia, but since the emergence of the "ASEAN plus 3" concept (i.e., ASEAN plus China, Japan and Korea), all of East Asia must be taken into consideration. The rapprochement of China and ASEAN has made clear for Japan that only an active participation in the integration process can, in the long run, help avoid Japanese isolation in Asia. Prime Minister Koizumi Jun'ichirō on January 14, 2002, demonstrated the awareness of this situation in Japan, when he called for the creation of a "regional community in East Asia" during a visit to Singapore.

Even though regional integration in East and Southeast Asia still faces many problems, the dynamics of integration are no longer limited to the economy. Against this background, on November 29–30, 2002, Sven Saaler organized an international conference in Tōkyō on "Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History" with the aim of exploring the ideology of Pan-Asianism (or Asianism) as a predecessor of Asian regionalism, thereby bringing historical perspective to bear on approaches to regional cooperation and integration, as well as to analyze various utilizations and manifestations of Pan-Asian ideology in modern Japanese history. While Pan-Asianism is mostly connected to Japanese expansion and aggression in Asia, there is more to Pan-Asianism than this very common yet one-dimensional interpretation of self-interested political utilization. Thus, this conference addressed questions of Pan-Asian thought in modern Japan from the 1880s until the post-World War II era.

A recurring question in the sixteen presentations was what does "Asia" actually mean. A European concept originally, the term "Asia" was used in Asia only after the arrival of the European colonialist powers. In Japanese politics as well as in intellectual discourse, the term "Asia" was extremely ambivalent: it was used as a value-free, but frequently redefined geographical term; as a political term; a term representing "the other" when defining Japanese identity; as well as a term hinting at the origin of Japan's traditional





The speakers of panel five at the conference "Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History"

"Asian identity." The conference consisted of five panels. The first panel (Harald Kleinschmidt, Romano Vulpitta, John Kim, and Rolf-Harald Wippich) addressed comparative aspects and general questions of regionalism. The presenters of the second panel (Kuroki Morifumi, Katō Yōko, Li Narangoa, and Sakai Tetsuya) threw some light on the necessary factors for the creation and the construction of a regional identity. The third panel (Christopher Szpilman, Michael Schneider, Dick Stegewerns, and Sven Saaler) analyzed tensions of Pan-Asian discourse with regionalism, nationalism and ethnocentrism. In this panel, the development of Pan-Asianism during the 1920s and early 1930s stood at the center of attention. Panel four (Roger Brown, Kevin Doak, Gerhard Krebs, and Hatano Sumio) dealt with the utilization of Pan-Asian ideology for the legitimization of Japanese colonial rule in Asia. The presentations of panel five (Victor Koschmann, Hatsuse Ryūhei, Oguma Eiji, Kristine Dennehy, and Fujiwara Kiichi) addressed changes in Pan-Asian discourse from wartime to postwar Japan. In doing so, continuities and discontinuities could be discovered, but in the first place it was emphasized that Pan-Asian discourse continued to play an important role in Japan even after 1945 and obviously until the present day. Miwa Kimitada (professor emeritus, Sophia University) provided the closing remarks to the conference. The complete program of the conference, including the titles and abstracts of presentations, can be found on the DIJ homepage. The Japan Foundation and the German Embassy, Tōkyō, supported the conference. Seventy-five people attended the conference as listeners, proving there is a wide interest for historical topics that are connected to contemporary prob-

lems in the economy, politics, and diplomacy. The results of the conference will be published at the end of 2003.

Symposium

Globalization and the Definition of Identity in East and Southeast Asia (Berlin, December 10, 2002)

Does globalization inevitably signify Americanization, as is customarily assumed in Japan? Or can it also mean the worldwide dissemination of, say, Korean culture, as Lee Eun-Jeung (University of Halle-Wittenberg) argued? This was just one of the many issues discussed at an all-day symposium held at the Japanese-German Center Berlin (JGCB), which acted as cohost to the event alongside the German Institute for Japanese Studies. Further topics of debate included the political situation in East and Southeast Asia, the role of Islam and other religions as well as the function of intellectuals. In their welcoming addresses, the Secretary General of the JGCB, Angelika Viets, and her colleague from the German Institute for Japanese Studies, Irmela Hijiya-Kirschner, shared the task of sketching the framework for the following inventory of the joint research project "Assertions of Cultural Uniqueness in Asia" (see conference report in this Newsletter), to which the papers presented during the morning session were dedicated. Under the title "Aestheticism Between Anti-Hegemonic Critique and Cultural Self-Assertion," Mishima Ken'ichi (Ōsaka University) analyzed in a historical case study from the periods between the two World Wars the formative phase of such a discourse in the philosophical writings of the Kyōto School,

whose retrospective, selective and essentialist ideas have permeated "even the micro cells of daily life" in contemporary Japan. Michael Lackner (University of Erlangen-Nuremberg) supplemented his remarks on the methodology and aims of the project with a typological characterization of modern Chinese discourses of self-assertion, which he differentiated according to patterns of argumentation as well as strategies of dichotomization and universalization into types such as "We've already got that," "We have the real thing" or "We will give you something." Lee E.-J. expanded upon this concentrated retrospective with comments on the Confucian cultural discourse in Korea. An audience of about seventy individuals, from Berlin and beyond, representing academia, government ministries, the economy, administration and politics participated in the lively discussions concluding this session which was moderated by Steffi Richter (University of Leipzig). During the afternoon session, which was devoted to a podium discussion moderated by Irmela Hijiya-Kirschner, contributions from the audience became even more engaging. The podium discussion was primarily aimed at expanding the horizon of the project's current emphasis on China, Japan, and Korea to include South and Southeast Asia, thus also touching upon aspects of self-assertion in Islam. Judith Schlehe (University of Freiburg), Claudia Derichs (University of Duisburg) and Vincent Houben (Humboldt University Berlin) drew attention to the peculiar features of the relationship between religion and politics in the region, e.g., in Indonesia or Malaysia, and highlighted the dynamism and the constant changes in the debates on self-assertion there, as seen, for example, in the continuous negotiation of stereotypes and projections between the generations or within one person in various life stages. Intraregional aspects emerged repeatedly, for example, with regard to the idealization of Japanese women by Balinese men (Schlehe) or in discussions of the nationalist elites in Southeast Asia who look to Japan as a role model for their search of national independence (Houben). In the ensuing discussion, which frequently returned to the role of religion, Lee recalled that it was not Confucianism but rather shamanism that was regarded as indigenously Korean, and Lackner stated the presence of Muslim inhabitants in all Chinese cities, a fact that is given little attention within the country due to everyday suppression. Houben pointed out that in multiethnic and multireligious societies such as



Indonesia, national institutions for the regulation of conflicts have been developed. Thus, the symposium which was voluntarily designed in the format of a brainstorming directed by a set of guiding questions, contributed to furthering our understanding of the region as well as some aspects of inter-continental relations. As a result of the regional and disciplinary enlargement – this was the first time anthropological approaches were introduced – the discussions opened new perspectives and offered many suggestions for the ongoing project on assertions of cultural uniqueness in Asia.

Third Symposium „Assertions of Cultural Uniqueness in Asia“ (“Asiatische Selbstbehauptungsdiskurse”)

(Erlangen, December 12–14, 2002)

As a follow-up to symposia held at the German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ), Tōkyō, in the fall of 2000 (cf. Newsletter 12) and at the Goethe-Institute, Seoul, in November of the following year (cf. Newsletter 15), the third symposium on “Assertions of Cultural Uniqueness in Asia” was held at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg from December 12 through 14, 2002. The initiators of these conferences were Mishima Ken’ichi (Ōsaka), Michael Lackner (Erlangen), and Irmela Hijiya-Kirschner (Tōkyō). This latest and to date most extensive symposium was organized by the Chair of Chinese Studies of the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg (M. Lackner) in cooperation with the Zentralinstitut für Regionalforschung. It was entitled “The Omnipresence of Assertions of Cultural Uniqueness in Asia: Chinese, Japanese, and Korean Perspectives” (“Die Allgegenwart von Selbstbehauptungsdiskursen in Ostasien: Chinesische, japanische und koreanische Perspektiven”), thus reflecting the enhancement of themes, dimensions, and goals of cultural self-assertion. In eight panels dealing with typologies, revisions, art and aesthetics, language and poetry, martial arts and sports, gender, interregional perspectives, and intercultural communication, a wide variety of discursive forms of self-assertions was presented and discussed. The panels were highly informative and well organized by Iwo Amelung (Erlangen) and Joachim Kurtz (Erlangen/Princeton). Contributing to the panel “Martial Arts

and Sports,” Isa Dücke (DIJ) gave a presentation on “International Sports Events: A Playground for Nationalism or a Starting Point for Regional Self-Assertion?” Dücke discussed the question to which degree international sports events such as the Asian Games or the Soccer World Cup 2002 contributed to the formation of a regional Asian identity. As part of the panel on gender-related issues Andrea Germer (DIJ) gave a presentation on “Gender and Nation: Feminism and Nationalism in War-Time Japan” arguing for historical connections in the formation of national and gender identities. She also highlighted how emancipatory thought, aiming at the participation of women in public decision-making, turned into collaborative forms of participation in ultra-nationalist discourses of cultural uniqueness.

In the closing discussion of the symposium, chaired by I. Hijiya-Kirschner (DIJ) the panelists discussed chances and problems of this third symposium’s enhanced thematic spectrum. The consideration of so-called “endogeneous” discourses of self-assertion (W. Schwendtker, Ōsaka), whose actors and goals were located on a subnational level, was seen to be a productive tool. However, the diversity of presentations and the variety of meanings associated with the terms self-assertion or assertions of cultural uniqueness strained the possibility of deepening the argument. Participants stressed the need for closer definition of terminology as a basis for future discussions. A time and place for a follow-up conference has not yet been decided. The publication of selected contributions to the previous symposia is scheduled to appear in 2003.

DIJ PUBLICATIONS

Japanstudien – Jahrbuch des Deutschen Instituts für Japanstudien der Stiftung Deutsche Geisteswissenschaftliche Institute im Ausland, vol. 14. Munich: Iudicium, 2002, 402 pp. (ISBN 3-89129-377-1)

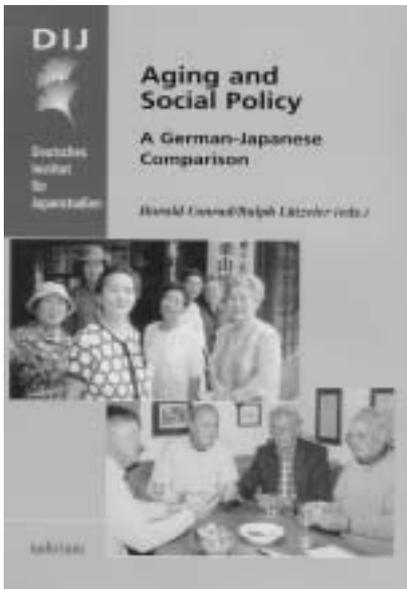
In December 2002, volume 14 of the DIJ yearbook *Japanstudien* [Japanese Studies] was published. This year’s volume focuses on the topic “Japan in a Paradigmatic Perspective.” Japan seems to be of special interest for studies in the humanities, the social sciences and economics; it has been one of the most frequently used countries for

comparative studies over the past decades. In the past, when it was time to create and formulate general notions, theses and theories in the above-mentioned disciplines, the point of reference taken was the so-called “Western” example. In that sense, the underlying question in the new DIJ yearbook is whether and to what degree Japanese studies, i.e., research on Japan, can contribute to the development of the humanities and social sciences and the general formation or modification of models and theories. In addition to ten essays contributing to the main focus of this volume from the perspective of sociology, anthropology, history, political science, law, economics, cultural studies and gender studies, linguistics, and literature studies, there is one miscellaneous article as well as ten reviews of recent books published in English, French, German, and Japanese.

CONTRIBUTIONS: I. Hijiya-Kirschner: Vorwort [Foreword] · I. Günther, I. Hijiya-Kirschner, M. Koch: Japan als Fallbeispiel in den Wissenschaften – Eine Einführung [Japan in a Paradigmatic Perspective – An Introduction] · J. P. Arnason: Is Japan a Civilization *Sui Generis*? · R. Grew: Comparing Modern Japan: Are There More Comparisons to Make? · S. Saaler: Japan in der internationalen Militärforschung [Japan as a Case Study in International Research on Militarism] · P. Kevenhörster: Japan: Politische Entscheidungsstrukturen im Spiegel politikwissenschaftlicher Deutungen [Japan: Political Decision-Making Structures in the Mirror of Political Science Interpretations] · W. Möschel: Japanisches Kartellrecht – von außen gesehen [Japanese Antitrust Law – Revisited from the Outside] · F. Waldenberger: Japan als Gegenstand komparativer Analysen in den Wirtschaftswissenschaften, dargestellt am Thema “Corporate Governance” [Japan as a Subject of Comparative Analyses in the Economics, Exemplified by “Corporate Governance”] · C. Schröppel, Nakajima M.: The Changing Interpretation of the Flying Geese Model of Economic Development · Mae M.: Öffentlichkeit und Privatheit im japanischen Modernisierungsprozeß [The Public and the Private in the Japanese Modernization Process] · G. Wienold: Linguistische Typologie und Japanisch [Linguistic Typology and the Japanese Language] · J. Walker: The Uniqueness of the Japanese Novel and Its Contribution to the Theory of the Novel · H. Meyer: Pioneer of “Taishō Democracy”: Abe Isoo’s Social Democratic Idealism and Japanese Concepts of Democracy from 1900 to 1920 · Rezensionen [Book Reviews]



Harald Conrad, Ralph Lützeler (eds.): *Aging and Social Policy – A German-Japanese Comparison*. Munich: Iudicium, 2002 (= *Monographien aus dem Deutschen Institut für Japanstudien*, vol. 26), 353 pp. (ISBN 3-89129-840-4)



In recent years, Japan and Germany have been facing very similar challenges: aging populations, changing employment structures, long-lasting economic stagnation, and globalization, all of which threaten existing social security arrangements. In a number of respects, both countries are more socially and politically regulated, and in this sense less liberal, than the Anglo-American economies. Nonetheless, during the last couple of years several important social policy reforms have been implemented. A comparison of these reforms may thus provide valuable insights into the changing character of “conservative” welfare states.

This volume concentrates on two fields of social policy: long-term care insurance and public pensions. These social insurances are at the center of current public debate in both countries because an aging population translates immediately into a higher demand for care for the elderly and old age security. The contributions range from demographic and policy implications of aging through detailed analyses on the different reform measures to specific aspects such as bioethical or regional policy considerations. This volume is intended not only for experts specializing in social policy research, but also for policy-makers as well as the general reader interested in the current debates centering on the “restructuring of the welfare state.”

CONTRIBUTIONS: I. Hijiya-Kirschnerreit: Preface · H. Conrad, R. Lützeler: German and Japanese Social Policy in Comparative Perspective: An Overview · Arai M.: The Aging Society and the Social Security System in Japan · Kojima H.: Population Aging and Living Arrangements of the Elderly in Japan · K. Veith: The Aging Process in Germany and Implications for a Needs-Oriented Social Policy · P. Talcott: The Politics of Japan’s Long-Term Care Insurance System · G. Naegele, M. Reichert: Six Years Long-Term Care Insurance in Germany: An Overview · I. Knüver, M. Merfert: Long-Term Care Insurance in Germany: The Role of the Federal States · T. Klie: Long-Term Care Insurance in Germany and Japan: A Comparative Comment · J. C. Campbell: How Policies Differ: Long-Term Care Insurance in Japan and Germany · H. Conrad: Old Age Security in Japan: The Implications of Recent Public and Occupational Pension Reforms · W. Schmähl: Pension Policy in Germany – Major Postwar Reforms and Recent Decisions · H. Rothgang: Long-Term Care in Germany: Projections on Public Long-Term Care Insurance Financing · R. Lützeler: Demographic and Regional Aspects of Aging and Long-Term Care in Japan · S. Frühstück: The Rhetoric of Reform: On the Institutionalization and De-Institutionalization of Old Age · Kimura R.: Bioethical Public Policy and the Making of the 1997 Japanese Long-Term Care Insurance Law.

REPORTS ON CONFERENCES

The Peace Boat’s 38th Voyage: Korea and Kuril Islands

(August 15–30, 2002)

The Japanese NGO “Peace Boat” was founded in 1983 to promote international exchange and understanding in East Asia. Since then it has organized several educational voyages every year onboard a passenger ship. Lectures and seminars in the ship, as well as exchange programs in the ports, aim to promote peace and exchanges at the grassroots level. The 38th cruise, between August 15 and 30, 2002, took 537 mostly Japanese passengers to Wönsan and P’yöngyang, Pusan, Sakhalin and to the Kuril island of Kunashiri.

The voyage thus included visits to all the so-called “close, but distant neighbors” of Japan – North and South Korea as well as Russia – with which bilateral relations are still under considerable stress. Even though the year 2002 was the “Japan-South Korea Friendship Year” and the cohosting of the FIFA World Cup was anticipated to bring an improvement in bilateral relations between Japan and South Korea, latest opinion polls show that a lot of mistrust still prevails, due to the history textbook problem as well as frequent visits of Japanese politicians to the Yasukuni Shrine. Relations between Japan and North Korea also suffer from these two issues. As for Japan and its closest neighbor Russia, disputed sovereignty of the Kuril Islands remains a thorny issue and has so far prevented the conclusion of a peace treaty fifty-seven years after the end of World War II.

Notwithstanding these political problems, Peace Boat had organized this voyage to improve understanding between the people involved. The visits included exchange programs, home stays and cultural study tours in each of the ports so as to offer participants and local people the opportunity to come together and share opinions. Sven Saaler from the DIJ was invited as a guest speaker and gave lectures on the “History and Present State of Russo-Japanese Relations” as well as on the current history textbook problem and its impact on Japanese relations with both Koreas. Further guest speakers included Maeda Tetsuo (Tökyö International University and independent journalist), Takahashi Kazuo (The University of the Air), Ogata Ken (professor emeritus, Hösei University), Uchida Masatoshi (lawyer), Kim Yon (Döshisha University), Kawabe Ichirö (Aichi University), Kamata Satoshi (freelance writer), Terada Tatsuo (freelance journalist).

The voyage started in Köbe and reached the North Korean port of Wönsan on the east coast of the Korean peninsula on the third day. Participants were then taken across the Korean peninsula to P’yöngyang in buses. The four-day program included visits at the North-South border in P’anmunjöm, at the P’yöngyang University of Foreign Studies, as well as several seminars with North Korean social scientists on topics such as “History Textbook Problem,” “Korean Unification,” “North Korean-Japanese Relations,” and “A Nuclear-Free Zone in North-east Asia.” After a two-day visit in Pusan, South Korea, the voyage continued and reached Korsakov (former Ödomari) in Sakhalin. In both stops,





On the way to the Kuril islands



Old branch office of the Hokkaidō Takushoku Bank in Korsakov (former Ōdomari)



Visit at the P'yŏngyang University of Foreign Studies; right, Sven Saaler (DIJ)

home stays and exchange programs were organized with local partner organizations. The last stop was the Kuril island of Kunashiri. Since the southern Kuril islands (called “Northern Territories” in Japan) are disputed territory between Japan and Russia, it is normally difficult to visit the islands. As an international NGO, however, Peace Boat could get visa-free access for the participants of the voyage. It was the first time such a large group of Japanese visitors had visited the islands since the end of the war (although Peace Boat had organized a trip to the Kuril islands in 1991 with a smaller group).

Intensive media coverage accompanied the 38th voyage of “Peace Boat,” particularly the visits in North Korea, where economic reforms were introduced just weeks previously, and on Kunashiri. Correspondents from the Japanese daily newspaper *Asahi Shinbun*, *Time Magazine*, *The New York Times*, *The Sakhalin Times* and the German weekly *Der Spiegel* accompanied the cruise.

The 12th German-Language Conference on Japanese Studies

(Bonn, September 30 – October 3, 2002)

The conference was held in September/October 2002 in Bonn, and organized by the Department of Japanese Studies at the University of Bonn (whose director, Josef Kreiner, incidentally, was the first director of the DIJ). More than three hundred participants attended the conference from many countries, including Germany, Austria, and Switzerland as well as Japan.

Several speakers in the introductory session noted that in spite of continuing good bilateral relations between Japan and Germany, interest between the respective countries is declining, and that exchange between both countries should be increased. In this context, the various speakers in the introductory session stressed the importance of the FIFA World Cup and the related visit of German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder to Japan.

The conference even featured a special panel on the World Cup, in which DIJ researcher Isa Ducke talked about the Japanese-Korean relations. This panel was one of twenty-one special sessions of the conference, comprising panels, workshops and discussion

groups on specific topics. Another DIJ researcher, Andrea Germer, contributed a presentation on the development of feminist historiography in Japan to a panel titled "Globalization and the Change of Gender Relationships" (special session no. 13).

In addition to the special sessions, there were some seventy individual papers grouped into sessions on history, art, religion/history of thought, economics, literature, language, law, and society/politics. Researchers from the DIJ gave a number of papers in these sessions. In the society/politics session, Matthias Koch talked about Japan in a paradigmatic perspective, while Sven Saaler addressed the current textbook debate in Japan. In the economics session, Harald Conrad discussed the future of pension systems in Japan. Ando Junko, in the history session, offered a paper on the debate over a revision of the Japanese constitution. A number of former researchers and scholarship holders at the DIJ also gave papers at the conference. Details can be found on the conference's web site, www.japanologentag.uni-bonn.de.

Early publication of the papers presented at the conference is planned. No decision was made as yet regarding the venue of the next conference, but the final session offered some recommendations for future organizers. Several participants asked that the next conference should be shorter than this one. There was also some discussion about the status of special sessions versus normal, single discipline sessions. While some welcomed the interdisciplinary possibilities offered by the special sessions, others complained that the relatively free timetabling of the panels made it more difficult for the audience to switch sessions and to pick individual presentations they wanted to attend.

The Ninth Kyushu International Cultural Conference

(Fukuoka, October 30–31, 2002)

The Ninth Kyushu International Cultural Conference was held on October 30–31, 2002, in Fukuoka on the occasion of the fifty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Fukuoka UNESCO Association. With an audience of more than one hundred listeners, the conference – which focused on "Japan's Choices in the 21st Century and the World" – was very well attended. On

the first day keynote speeches were given by Ronald Dore (University of London) on "Recapitulating the Twentieth Century, Reflecting on the Twenty-First" and Katō Shūichi on "Japan's Choice at the Beginning of the Twenty-First Century." Moderators at the conference were Romano Vulpitta (Kyōto Sangyō University) and Anwei Liu (Tōkyō Institute of Technology).

On the second day papers about the state of affairs of Japanese Studies in their respective countries were presented by seven researchers: Xu Yiping (Beijing Center for Japanese Studies), François Lachaud (Centre de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient, Kyōto), P. Abraham George (Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi), Choi Jae-chol (Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Seoul), Alexandre A. Dolin (Tōkyō University of Foreign Studies), David Howell (Princeton University), and Sven Saaler (DIJ). The discussants were Tzvetana Kristeva (University of Tōkyō), Okuno Masamoto (Kwassui Women's College) and Jerry K. Fischer (Macalester College). Tsurumi Shunsuke provided the closing remarks.

In the following discussions, problems of Japanese Studies in the various countries were addressed, but the central aspect of the conference, i.e., "Japan's Choice in the Twenty-First Century" was once again examined. Notwithstanding different situations in various countries, the similarities in the development of Japan-related research became obvious during the discussion, and especially the similarities in terms of contents of research, but also in terms of methodology, i.e., the development from "traditional" Japanology to a supposedly more modern approach of Japanese Studies in the field of social sciences, and again to a post-Japanese Studies approach. Moreover, practical questions were addressed, such as the problem of research funding, as well as the task of justifying Japan-related research and transmitting the results of research into society. Naturally, the latest developments in international politics, a central aspect of the conference, "Japan's Choice in the Twenty-First Century," ignited some controversy, for example, the question of whether Japan may have to choose in the future between continuing to rely heavily on the United States in international politics, or to make a conscious decision to rejoin Asia and build closer relations with China, or, indeed, whether Japan has a choice at all.

Conference

Historical Consciousness, Historiography and Modern Japanese Values
(Banff, October 31–November 3, 2002)

This conference was organized by the Nichibunken, Kyōto, in cooperation with the University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada, and held in the impressive setting of the Canadian Rocky Mountains. Thirty-nine researchers from Japan, Canada, USA, and Germany worked through a tightly packed three-day conference program. The diversity apparent in the conference title was also reflected in the variety of panels ranging from Japanese historiography in the twentieth-century Japan to historical fiction to historiography in visual materials as well as in the cinema and theatre, to aspects of nature/science, philosophy and ideology in a historiographical perspective, to representations of gender and childhood in history writing. The panel on "Historiography, Gender, and Modern Japan: Presentations and Representations of Women," was lively chaired and brilliantly commented by Barbara Molony (Santa Clara University), and Patricia Tsurumi (professor emerita, University of Victoria). This panel was one of the most thematically well-rounded as it included the presentations by Kathleen Uno (Temple University) on children's history, Barbara Hamill-Sato (Seikei University) on the history of love and marriage, Ulrike Wöhr (Hiroshima City University) on ethnicity and gender, and Andrea Germer on "Women's History in Japan: The Case of Takamure Itsue." Germer introduced the pioneering accomplishments of Takamure Itsue in the field of women's historiography in Japan, while at the same time focusing on the theoretical premises and political implications of Takamure's historical writing in the light of her cultural nationalism in wartime Japan. Irmela Hijiya-Kirschner (DIJ) chaired and commented the last panel of the conference dealing with "History and Historiography in the Cinema and Theatre." As diverse as the individual presentations were, e.g., with video samples of contemporary theater (Cody Poulton, University of Victoria), and of the Tōkyō Olympics (Sharalyn Orbaugh, University of British Columbia), and a highly theoretical and beautifully eloquent presentation on "The Literature of Cinematic Experience and Historical Consciousness in Interwar Japan" by Thomas LaMarre (McGill University), these presentations certainly formed one of the highlights of this conference.



Humboldt Symposium

Potential for Democracy in East Asian Societies

(Kyōto, November 18, 2002)

In Kyōto, home of the philosophical school whose culturalist and essentialist thought reminiscent of Martin Heidegger continues to throw long shadows until today, intellectuals from Japan, China, and Korea met with German colleagues in November 2002 for a conference that was novel in many respects. Here, at the Goethe-Institut Inter nationes, the social philosopher Mishima Ken'ichi (Ōsaka University) convened a "Humboldt Kolleg" devoted to the "Potential for Democracy in East Asian Societies – as Seen from the Perspective of Critical Theory." Together with Xue Hua (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences), Han Sang-Jin (Seoul National University) and Chon Song-U (Hanyang University), he assembled a circle of renowned academics, including several Humboldtians, and young researchers from East Asia who engaged in a four-day marathon meeting with three guests from Europe.

As the organizer indicated in his introductory remarks, the conference was not intended to review the "heroic" era of critical theory in the 1930s and 40s. Rather, the papers set out to explore possible applications and modifications of the impulses that for many generations have emanated from the critical social theories of the Frankfurt School.

Axel Honneth, a Frankfurterian in a twofold sense, opened the discussions with a lecture on his thoughts about "History as an Education Process Gone Wrong. Reflections on the Legacy of Critical Theory." Honneth outlined the abysmal chasm of alterity that separates contemporary intellectuals from the premises of the Frankfurt School, starting with the idea of reason as the driving force of history that hardly seems to make sense in an age characterized by the well-accepted plurality of cultures and political movements. Yet, according to him, critical theory insists in a unique way on the mediation of theory and history. Within this context of thought and practice, the idea of a social pathology, inspired by Freud's psychoanalysis, plays a key role in conceptualizing human suffering that calls for healing or the liberation from social evils. Despite all differences within the Frankfurt School, this idea of an emancipatory interest, an interest in reason born from suffering,

embodies the common point of reference for critical theory as well as its specific potential for the future.

The nineteen papers and two workshop reports – one by the director of the German Institute for Japanese Studies who introduced the research project "Assertions of Cultural Uniqueness in Asia" – that were presented at the conference offered many evocative examples of social pathologies as well as culturally specific traits of the concept of reason. One connecting thread in this respect was Confucianism, as shown, for instance, in Lee Jin-Woo's (Keimyung University) inquiry into the question "Is Democratic Universalism Able to Include the Other? Modernity and Post-Modernity in a Post-Confucian Society" or in Han Sang-Jin's analysis of Korean policies as a test case for the democratic potential of critical theory in East Asia. Different authors found different, or even opposing, effects of Confucianism as a source for political culture in East Asia. To some it appeared as an obstacle on the path to parliamentary democracy, others saw it as a supporting element in this process. Characteristically, it was the Chinese and Korean participants who confirmed Confucianism's continuing power to influence political developments, while it was scarcely used as an argument from the perspective of their Japanese colleagues. The different assessments reflect the different significance that was historically attributed to this teaching in the respective societies.

In addition to decisively theory-based presentations, some papers attempted to rethink political and social practices in light of critical theory. Ōnuki Atsuko (Gakushūin University), a scholar of German Studies, offered a fascinating analysis of the argumentation strategies employed by the authors of the controversial revisionist history textbooks for Japanese schools and their feminist critics. Doctoral candidate Miyamoto Shin'ya (Ōsaka University) suggested that the phenomenon of *hikikomori*, or social autism, that received much public attention in the 1990s, could be interpreted as a case example of a social pathology.

The second member of the Frankfurt School present at the symposium was Klaus Günther whose lecture on "The Role of Law in a Global Civil Society" opened a panel discussion devoted to "Law as a Medium for Integration." In his paper, Günther outlined with much emphasis how globalization and its accompanying conflicts are beginning to change laws as well, with the most obvious changes occurring in discussions on human

rights where in the eyes of the global public the sovereign national state collides more and more often with international law. Moreover, areas such as cyber criminality or e-commerce call for transnational regulations, too. The implications of this development for our concept of law as well as for citizens in modern democracies with constitutional governments and the relation between deliberative and direct democracy – an example from Japan presented by Mori Tōru (Kyōto University) – were discussed in the concluding part of the symposium.

But why should we look to East Asia at all? This question was addressed by Johann Arnason (La Trobe University, currently at the European University, Florence) in his paper on the democratic potential of East Asian traditions from a comparative perspective. It was Arnason who reminded the participants in the closing discussion that the Frankfurt School had formulated their ideas with reference to the socialist model as an alternative variant of modernity. Now, after the fall of the Soviet Union, however, the competition between these alternative variants is nowhere more obvious than between China and Japan. Moreover, it remains a fact of global history that among the high cultures of the old world East Asia has always been the ultimate "other" of the West. In no other part of the world has Western modernity been "reinvented" in so many and so consequential ways.

BOOK REVIEW

Michiko Yusa: Japanese Religions. London: Routledge, 2002, 128 pp. (ISBN 0-415-26284-4)

"Japanese Religions" is a volume from the series "Religions of the World," which is intended to provide basic knowledge to the "informed citizen or student" rather than to an exclusively academic audience. History, teachings and the practice of "the major faiths" shall be illuminated in their interaction within the respective social and political context.

In addition to its function as a historical survey on Japanese religions, the present volume offers some additional "tools." Set out in a chronological table, Yusa parallels events of the religious history of Japan and the world with the political history of Japan. Of course a table ranging from the



twelfth century B.C. until today can only include a limited and arbitrary selection of events. Further reference aids include a helpful glossary, a guide to pronunciation, a list of major festivals and holidays, an annotated bibliography, and an index. The transcription of Japanese or Sanskrit names and terms in the glossary, however, is far from consistent.

In the main part of the book, Yusa deals chronologically with the appearance and development of several religious traditions: Shintō, Buddhism, Confucianism, Christianity, and new religious movements. She does not limit her descriptions to their institutional and doctrinal history, but gives credit to the interaction among the religions themselves and inquires into their relation to the State (or its predecessors), as well as their impact on art. As a result, Yusa explains the historical and mythological background of the close connection between Shintō and the imperial family, introduces the main concepts underlying the fusion of Shintō *kami* with Buddhas or Bodhisattvas, indicates the meaning of Buddhist teachings and practices for the ruling class as well as for the non-aristocratic population at different times, hints at the role played by Buddhism in the suppression of Christianity and introduces the Neo-Confucian schools that have become popular in early modern Japan, and then presents an example of the fusion of Shintō with Confucian ideas. Yusa finally considers the politicization of Shintō in pre-war Japan and tries to explain the rise of new religious movements since the beginning of the nineteenth century.

This well-balanced historical survey does not fail to include the perspective of women. Thus, Yusa contrasts the male exclusivism of the Buddhist Tendai and Shingon schools in the Nara period (710–784) with the more positive attitude toward women that she regards as a common characteristic among the Buddhist schools of the Kamakura period (1192–1333). According to her, the latter elevated the status of women by promising them an equal chance of salvation and encouraging their religious practice. However, she does ignore the fact that in the related teachings and scriptures, salvation for women often necessitates a “change to males” (*henjō nanshi*). Finally, she dedicates a subchapter to the impact Confucian morality had on the “subservient” social status of women.

Some doubts are permissible concerning Yusa’s depiction of the characteristics of Japanese religions (pp. 16–18). Under this heading, she postulates a specific Japanese religiosity. She re-

gards one of its traits in the world-affirmation of Shintō, as expressed by its appreciation of health, wealth, and happiness. To this basic “Shintō mentality” Buddhism has added a “sense of morality” and a “spiritual awareness.” She agrees with Luis de Almeida, a sixteenth-century Jesuit in Japan, that Shintō is mainly appreciated for its provision of worldly benefits like a long and happy life, while Buddhism is valued as a means for “religious salvation.” This distinction does not take into account the services Buddhist temples offer for those seeking divine protection, health, and success in the form of charms and amulets, ritual prayers, or horoscopes. She also ignores the consensus among many scholars that salvation in Japanese religions is quite often understood in a practical and this-worldly sense.

Moreover, in describing Shintō as “native Japanese religious practices and religious sentiments, ancient in origin and still prevalent within the deep recesses of the Japanese psyche as a sort of cultural and spiritual matrix” (p. 17), Yusa comes close to claiming a specific religiosity as one element of a unique Japanese identity and risks supporting essentialist clichés.

Apart from this reservation, Yusa’s book is a recommendable survey on Japanese religions.

(Monika Schrimpf)

OTHER MATTERS

Notification

The Philipp Franz von Siebold foundation was dissolved on August 31, 2002, and, from September 1, the DIJ became part of the newly established Stiftung Deutsche Geisteswissenschaftliche Institute im Ausland (Stiftung D.G.I.A.). The new foundation, which is governed under public law and directly responsible to the federal government, promotes research in history, cultural studies, economics and social science in selected countries and enhances the understanding between Germany and these countries. The foundation presently consists of seven institutes abroad and a head office in Bonn.

Personnel News

Since the summer of 2002, Dr. Harald Conrad has been part of an internation-

al team of researchers, coordinated by the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research (Shakai Hoshō Kenkyūjo). The team analyzes current pension reforms in Germany, France, Great Britain, USA, and Sweden, in order to develop, among other things, reform scenarios for the next overhaul of the Japanese pension system in 2004. The first results of this research are expected to be available in the summer of 2003.

Dr. René Haak, head of the Business and Economics Section, was appointed deputy director of the DIJ in August 2002.

In September 2002, Dr. Monika Schrimpf joined the German Institute for Japanese Studies as a research fellow. She read Japanese Studies, History and the Study of Religions at the University of Bonn. She spent one year as foreign student at Kyūshū University in Fukuoka where she studied Japanese language and history. From 1995 to 1999 she conducted her Ph.D. studies in a research group on intercultural studies on religions and religious history at Bonn University. It was here that she received her Ph.D. in Japanese Studies with a doctorate thesis on the encounter of Buddhism and Christianity in Meiji Japan. Following this, she worked at the Institute for Japanese Studies at Bonn University in the research project “Iwakura-Mission,” which translated a part of Kume Kunitake’s travel diary from that mission. After one year as assistant at the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) in Düsseldorf, she took on a position at the Department for the Study of Religions at the University of Marburg. Within a research project on the concepts of fate in contemporary Japanese religions she studied notions of fate and ways to influence it in present-day Buddhism. At the DIJ, Dr. Schrimpf will continue her studies on religious life in contemporary Japan with a special focus on new religious movements.

In January 2003 Dipl.-Bibl. Ursula Flache M.A. became head librarian of the DIJ library. In 1991 she began her professional training as a librarian for research libraries. In the course of this training, Ms. Flache underwent one year of practical work at the Stuttgart University Library and two years of studies at the Fachhochschule für Bibliothekswesen (college for librarianship) at Stuttgart. After working at Konstanz University Library for two years she took up studies in winter semester 1996/97 at Tübingen Universi-



ty. Her majors were Japanese Studies and English Literature. Ms. Flache spent one semester at Dōshisha University in Kyōto and two semesters at Hiroshima University. In November 2002 she graduated as Magistra Artium. Among her research interests are the fields of religion (especially Shintō), architecture (especially shrines and temples), and librarianship in Germany and Japan.

Matthias Hoop, DIJ librarian from October 2001 to December 2002, was assigned the task of academic editor at the DIJ in January 2003.

Dissertation Fellows

Eva Kaminski, Japanese Studies, History of Art, Slavic Studies, Ph.D. candidate at the University of Hamburg: "Reception of Japanese Culture in Germany since the 1970s: Ceramics as a Case Study" (October 2002 – March 2003).

Mark S. Manger, Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of Political Science, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, Canada: "Binding Commitments and the Protection of FDI" (October 2002 – March 2003).

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Published by: IUDICIUM Verlag GmbH, Hans-Grässel-Weg 13, D-81375 München. Printed by: Strauss Offsetdruck GmbH, Robert-Bosch-Str. 6–8, D-69509 Mörlenbach. Publication dates: each June, October, February; not on sale in bookshops.

