

Cars for Gran and Grandpa = Cars for everybody?

The automobile industry's responses to the aging populations of Japan and Germany

By Andreas Moerke and Simon Kamann

Both Japan and Germany are experiencing a demographic development that is posing challenges for all areas of society. In the next few years Japan's population will rapidly age beyond proportion: while in the year 2005 the number of people aged over 65 years made up approximately 20% of the population, this figure will increase to 26.3% in the year 2015 and to approximately 39% in the year 2050 (IPSS 2000). Germany is facing a similar fate: the number of over sixty-year olds will increase from 28% in the year 2001 to an estimated figure of approximately 49% in the year 2050 (Federal Statistical Office Wiesbaden 2003: 31).

Both countries are traditionally "car countries", with the automobile industry making a decisive contribution to gross domestic product. The added value created by the automobile industry in Japan in the year 2004 was about 40.4 billion Yen or approximately 14% of the entire manufacturing industry; in the same year in Germany 18% of turnover in the industrial sector was from the automobile industry. Japan, with its production of 10.3 million cars, is the second largest producer in the world, followed by Germany with 5.5 million units (JAMA 2004; VDA 2004). Thus, the automobile industry is faced with similar challenges in both countries – but how is each country responding to these challenges?

The point of departure is the same: aging hinders driving capability and reduces physical capacity. Decreases in driving capability include the more common symptoms of restricted vision and hearing as well as a slowing down in the ability to respond. One indication for a lower physical capacity is becoming tired quicker, but medical reports also point to a higher rate of accidents due to decreasing bone density and bone mass. Car manufacturers and suppliers around the world are now

beginning to respond. They are paying more attention to a clear layout of the car's interior and creating more enhanced and contrasting indicators, they are improving the ergonomics of seating and developing new technologies. These include:

- Driver's assistance systems such as "Blind Spot Detection" (to detect vehicles on the blind side);
- Lane assistance;
- Headlights that follow steering direction;
- Night viewing instruments such as "Head-up Displays" (systems that project information such as speed limits or directions on to the wind-screen);
- Seat-belt strength restrictor and active head protection for passive security.

Manufacturers are, however, not only interested in integrating these technical systems, rather they are seeking to integrate them in a way that does not make it too obvious that the driver may be of advanced years. Thus, although – in particular older – customers are demanding greater comfort, user-friendliness and security, they do not want to be wooed as "old". One solution to the dilemma is "universal design", which is understood as more user-friendly design without direct reference to any age group. Japan is most active in this area. It has an "International Association for Universal Design" and of course all Japanese automobile producers are members of this association either directly or through a subsidiary company. The orientation toward older drivers can also be seen in the production: all manufacturers are producing vehicles with higher seats to make it easier to get in and out of vehicles and provide better circumferential vision or with wide-opening or sliding doors – a trend that the German manufacturers are also implementing. In other

words: wagon-type vehicles such as the A and B Class from Mercedes-Benz, the Agila and Meriva models from Opel or the Golf-Plus from VW in Germany are, insofar as they relate to older drivers, very similar to Japanese models such as, for example, Daihatsu Move and Boon, Honda Stepwagon and That's, Mazda AZ Wagon and Verisa, Mitsubishi Dion and eK Classy, Nissan Cubic and Otti, Subaru Pleo and Subaru R2, Suzuki Wagon R or Toyota Isis, Porte and Raum.

Differences are more obvious in other market segments: Japan is clearly more active than Germany in developing mobility assistance vehicles for the disabled sector (*fukushi sharyō*). According to the Japan Automobile Manufacturers' Association approximately 37,000 vehicles for the disabled sector were sold just in the past year. This figure may appear to be incredibly small in comparison to the 4.77 million passengers cars sold in 2004, but in view of demographic developments it is obvious that this market will continue to grow. As a consequence, no Japanese car manufacturers want to miss out on this market segment, and thus at the Tokyo Motor Show 2004 almost a

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Pivotal, adjustable seating at Mitsubishi, Mitsubishi "Hearty Run"-Showroom



Vehicle for a Wheelchair user to drive, Toyota Showroom

quarter of the vehicles on display were so called "barrier-free vehicles". Common to all of these vehicles is how they are decisively aimed at older or physically challenged individuals. Basically, they all incorporate fundamental technology:

- Sliding doors or doors that open wider;
- Pivotal and adjustable automotive seating; or
- Equipment to enable wheelchair users to get in and out more easily (ramps, track equipment, automatic storage of folded-down wheelchairs within vehicle).

While German manufacturers, at least on their homepages and in their brochures, offer only a bit of information on these special groups of automobiles, Japanese manufacturers have begun their own advertising campaigns and shows aimed at this market. The cars are called:

- *Welcab* (a fusion of "Welfare/Well(being)/ Welcome" and "Cab-in") at Toyota;
- *Life Care Vehicle* at Nissan;
- *Hearty Run* at Mitsubishi Motors.

They have their own homepages, their own newsletters and at Toyota and Mitsubishi they have their own showrooms for these models. Once again the industry leader Toyota has "a nose out front": in addition to already existing universal design showrooms Toyota has established presentation rooms for *Welcabs* in eight cities across Japan that are called "Toyota Heartful Plaza". In two other showrooms *Welcabs* are displayed with other conventional vehicles. At Mitsubishi these models are called *Hearty Run*, borrowing from the slogan of their "Heartbeat Motors" advertisement. And although these models are sold at all dealers, Mitsubishi has only established two designated showrooms: one in Tokyo and the other in Osaka. Nissan does not have any special showrooms for the *Life Care Vehicles*, but the company has developed a "Life Care Vehicle Qualified Shop System" where the showrooms are barrier-free designed. Sales personnel have been sensitized to the limitations that old age brings by having to wear "aging costumes" and are trained to speak about the solutions offered by the *Life Care Vehicle-Program*.

In sum, the view toward Japan and more specifically its car industry makes us realize that it is responding with creativity to the demands of an increasingly aging society and that companies are using these opportunities to win over new market segments – from which the German automobile industry could learn a thing or two.

DIJ EVENTS

International Conference

Demographic Challenges for Human Resource Management and Labor Market Policies – A German-Japanese Comparison

(Tokyo, October 5–6, 2005)

Among industrialized countries, Germany and Japan have especially rapidly aging populations. By the year 2025 the ratio of the population aged over 65 is expected to reach 24% in Germany and 29% in Japan. This demographic development will have huge consequences for the private and public sectors. Since the labor population is shrinking in both countries, the efficient utilization of human labor will

become a particularly important challenge.

How have labor market policies and human resource management in Germany and Japan reacted to this challenge? This question was the focus of an international conference organized by Harald Conrad (DIJ), Viktoria Heindorf (Japan Center at the Ludwig Maximilian's University Munich) and Shin'ichi Warizawa (School of Engineering, The University of Tokyo), together with Germany's Friedrich Ebert Foundation. The conference was supported by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Japan Foundation. Over two days, scientists from various disciplines and company representatives discussed the implications of demographic changes on labor markets and human resource management from a comparative perspective.

Following keynote speeches by Franz Waldenberger (Ludwig Maximilian's University Munich) and Yoshio Higuchi (Keio University), the first panel discussed recent changes in labor market policies for older workers. It became clear that both countries are currently working hard to improve their institutional frameworks to foster the employability of older workers. Until the 1990s, Germany pursued an early retirement strategy which put immense financial pressure on public social security systems and did not – contrary to a widely held belief – result in an increase of employment of younger workers. This approach has recently been replaced by active labor market policies which aim to extend individual working careers with training programs, part-time arrangements and partial public wage subsidies for elderly workers. In Japan, raising or abolishing the mandatory company retirement age (*teinen*) is widely regarded to be a *conditio sine qua non* to foster employment among aging workers. Following recent legislative amendments, companies are now being pressured to raise their mandatory retirement ages in the coming years.

The second panel of the conference dealt with the challenges of demographic change for production and innovation systems and the implications for a successful human resource development. The presentations of this panel focused on the necessity and strategies to adapt production systems to the needs of an aging workforce (for example through ergonomic adjustments) and on the question of how the aging society influences innovation processes. Although there is no scientifically

proven correlation between aging and the ability for innovation, some industries like semiconductor and software seem to be affected. However, in these industries it is not so much individual cognitive abilities of the aging workforce, but rather the increasing complexity of the innovation systems and the seniority-oriented structure of company hierarchies that seem to have a negative impact on innovation ability and national competitiveness.

The implications of demographic change on companies' human resource management were the focus of the third panel. Here, two questions were discussed in detail: How can seniority-oriented remuneration systems be reformed? And, secondly, how can companies ensure the transfer of know-how and technical abilities to their younger workforces?

Following this panel, the fourth part of the conference discussed how the systems of industrial relations have reacted to the aging of company workforces. In this respect, one difference between Japan and Germany is especially noteworthy: whereas Japanese labor unions have, since the 1970s, continuously demanded an increase in the mandatory retirement age, German labor unions have until recently favored an early withdrawal from the labor market. However, after a paradigmatic change in perceptions, German labor unions are now acknowledging the need for longer individual working careers.

The conference closed with a panel of German and Japanese company representatives, who commented and discussed some of the theoretical insights from a more practical point of view. In their presentations company managers focused on the most immediate problems in their respective companies and the strategies of how to overcome them. However, during subsequent discussions, speakers from both countries stressed that these strategies are by no means sufficient to deal with problems of the future. Consequently, companies will have to rethink their policies in the near future to be better able to cope with their aging workforces. For a detailed list of speakers and topics of presentations, please see our website at: http://www.dijtokyo.org/?page=event_detail.php&p_id=423.

A publication of the conference papers is planned for 2006.



Participants at the conference in Tokyo, October 5–6, 2005

International Symposia

"Changes and Challenges in the Japanese Automobile Industry"
(Berlin, September 5–6, 2005)

This international symposium with its focus on the Japanese automobile industry was co-organized by the DIJ, the Japanese-German Center Berlin, and INPRO, a joint company of the State of Berlin and the German automobile industry.

The symposium was opened at the Japanese-German Center Berlin with presentations of the latest changes in the Japanese economy (Werner Pascha, Duisburg-Essen University) and politics (Verena Blechinger, Free University Berlin) on the evening of September 5, 2005. The entire second day was dedicated to the automobile industry: Andreas Moerke (DIJ) gave an introduction to the recent performance of the industry, while Matsuhima Shigeru (Hosei University) presented an empirical study on the Toyota supplier network. In the next session on "Strategic Challenges", René Haak (DIJ) gave an overview on the "Toyota Way", while Roman Ditzer (Judit Consulting) elaborated on lessons from the practical implication of the Toyota Production System. Thorsten Teichert (University of Hamburg) explained patent strategies of Japanese and Western car makers, while John Benson (University of Tsukuba) spoke on Human Resource Management Strategies.

Language Regimes in Transformation. The Future Roles of German and Japanese in Science, Economy and Politics

(Tokyo, September 13–14, 2005)

Both Japanese and German belong to the select group of the world's languages that are suitable for scientific communication and, more generally, can be used in all communication domains. Whether or not it is desirable to use a single all-purpose language for the complex multiplicity of functional and symbolic communication needs is a question seldom asked, because it is taken for granted in many advanced countries. This is certainly true of Japan and the German-speaking countries. However, it is not clear that German and Japanese can sustain their full functional potential if their own speakers use these languages in certain domains with decreasing frequency. The advantages of borderless communication in a single language, on one hand, and maintaining highly cultivated all-purposes languages, on the other, are obvious. The question of whether and how they can be reconciled in the age of globalization is not. It was the leitmotiv of this symposium where it was addressed from various points of view by sociolinguists, anthropologists, political scientists and educationalists.

The symposium began with a presentation by Ulrich Ammon (University Duisburg-Essen) who raised the question whether, in the face of global English, the promotion abroad of languages such as Japanese and German is still appropriate. The cut-back of funding for foreign language education affecting both German and Japanese in one of the major English-speaking countries, the



UK, was discussed by Tessa Carroll (University of Stirling, Scotland). The need of reformulating language policy in an era of globalization was the topic of the paper by Nanette Gottlieb (University of Queensland). How ideologically charged language policies are became apparent in Patrick Heinrich's paper (University Duisburg-Essen) who discussed the controversy about English as a second official language for Japan, while Takao Katsuragi (Gakushuin University) tackled the complex interrelationship of language policy and democratic governance. As became apparent in the comments offered by Andrew Horvat, (Tokyo Keizai University) and Goro Kimura (Keio University), globalization and the global spread of English was a sub-theme of all of these papers.

A number of specific consequences of globalization on functional domain allocations of languages and national and international language regimes were addressed in subsequent papers. Both John Maher (International Christian University, Tokyo) and Florian Coulmas (DIJ) presented data-driven analyses of academic publishing in Japan, while Kiyoshi Hara (Joshibi University of Art and Design) considered the impact of the EU expansion on the relationship between national and minority languages in the EU. Elmar Holenstein (emeritus, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich) dealt with the seemingly minute, but politically highly sensitive problem of place names and their written representation on maps. From two different angles Konrad Ehlich (Ludwig Maximilian's University, Munich) and Fumio Inoue (Meikai University, Urawa/Chiba-ken) discussed the value of languages, the former emphasizing the importance of linguistic diversity as a human resource, the latter proposing a model for assessing the weight and competitiveness of individual languages in the international market place. Joseph Lo-Bianco (University of Melbourne) drew a wide canvas, calling for a new theoretical foundation of language policy that takes into account the forces acting on national language regimes from the outside.

Finally, Daniel Long (Tokyo Metropolitan University) highlighted the increasing significance of sub-national and trans-national factors that have some bearing on strictly national language regimes. While he agreed with most other participants that, due to the unchecked and often government-promoted spread of English, the nation state is weakening in areas that are crucial for redefining language regimes, it also became clear in the course of the

discussion that states continue to bear much responsibility for the communication competence of future generations as well as for the cultivation of individual languages and the linguistic heritage of the human species. The fact, examined in several papers at the conference, that Japanese and German are under pressure especially in science and economy, illustrates by way of example that economic globalization has profound consequences for the world's languages and for national and international institutions charged with the design and maintenance of language regimes.

Held on the premises of Gakushuin University, the symposium was supported by the Japan Foundation. The proceedings will be published in due course.

"The Economic Impact of Nanotechnology in the EU and Japan"

(Tokyo, September 30, 2005)

Nanotechnology is one of those fields that interact with a number of industries and other technologies – be it biology, biotechnology, material science, and others. The final economic impact of nanotechnology can scarcely be judged at the moment since the development has only started to take-off.

This symposium, the first in a row of DIJ symposia on Japan's future industries, was organized in cooperation with the EU-Japan Center for Industrial Cooperation and the consulting company AAIPIX. About 100 people from science and industry came to the Keidanren Kaikan to listen to lectures dealing with questions as to how nanotechnology can be defined, where its potentials lie, and how knowledge from research is transferred to business.

The speakers were designated specialists from the field: Tim Harper is the founder and Executive Director of European NanoBusiness Association; Teruyuki Nakazawa is a Corporate Executive Technical Advisor for the Innovation Center of Mitsubishi Corporation (MC), Jens Greiser is Strategic Marketing Manager of FEI Company, a maker of Nanotech tools and sponsor of the event. Herve Andre Durand serves as Managing Director of AAIPIX Ltd. and was Investment Associate of the Technology Team of UBS Capital. Billy Harkin is CEO of 'Science Ventures' and the author of the "Commercializing IP Commercialization" section of the UK Patent Office's "A Handbook of Intellectual Property Management 2004".

The presentations can be downloaded from the DIJ homepage (www.dijtokyo.org). For further questions, please contact Andreas Moerke (moerke@dijtokyo.org).

"Management: Japan and Germany"

(Tokyo, September 30 – October 1, 2005/Osaka, October 5–6, 2005)

This year, more than 800 events are taking place all over Japan as part of the year "Germany in Japan 2005/06". Our international symposium was one of these. It focused on the economy, corporate management and society, and renowned researchers in these areas were invited to attend the symposium. We questioned today's business management and looked at the solutions required for current problems within this context. To do so, the German and the Japanese side had agreed on two main topics: "Business Strategies and Corporate Governance" and "Competition between Companies within the EU: Mergers and Acquisitions", which were presented by several researchers from Germany and Japan.

This ambitious event – repeating the program in Tokyo and in Osaka – was realized as a cooperation project between a number of organizations: foremost the Japanese Association for Management Science, the Japanese Research Association for German Management Science, the German Association of University Professors of Management, the German Chamber of Industry and Commerce in Japan and, of course, the German Institute for Japanese Studies.

The publication of the lectures will appear soon. Further information can be obtained from Andreas Moerke (moerke@dijtokyo.org).

Panel on Japanese Economy

(Mainz, August 29, 2005)

The event – jointly organized by the German Institute for Japanese Studies, the Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, the local Chamber of Industry and Commerce and DJW – aimed to introduce the latest developments of the Japanese economy. Speakers from academe (including Werner Pascha, Duisburg-Essen University, Andreas Moerke and René Haak, both from the German Institute for Japanese Studies), consulting/supporting organizations (Kerstin Teicher, DJW, Wilhelm Wil-



helm Meemken, Ecos) and the business world (Elisabeth Stich, Reh-Kendermann) shed light on aspects of investment, consumer goods, and even the labor market in Japan.

CONFERENCE REPORTS

4th International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS)

(Shanghai, August 20–24, 2005)

According to the organizers, more than 1200 participants, half of them from Asia, had registered to take part in one of the 250 scheduled panels. The DIJ was represented by Isa Ducke, who gave a presentation on “Online and Offline Activism in Social Movement Networks in Japan and Korea” as part of a panel on “Modernization and New Social Movements in Asia.” The organizers, Iris Wiecek and Thomas Kern from the Institute of Asian Affairs (IFA, Hamburg) had not only prepared an introduction into the topic but also created a set of key questions that all participants addressed. A lively discussion of these questions was possible because all presenters kept to a strict time schedule.

While about 40% of the panels were submitted as a set, many individual papers were grouped in full-day megapanel. Some participants only met their fellow panelists half-way through their presentation – perhaps because the wonderful Shanghai Museum was only two stations away.

The next ICAS conference will be held in Kuala Lumpur in 2007.

11th International Conference of the European Association for Japanese Studies (EAJS)

(Vienna, August 31 – September 03, 2005)

This year members of the EAJS gathered for their 11th International Conference in Vienna. The meeting’s regular triennial rhythm had deliberately been cut short to ensure that the meeting coincided with the 2005 Japan-EU Year of People to People Exchanges. Expected synergetic effects could mainly be seen in the conference’s social program with the city of Vienna being a culturally attractive meeting spot for Japanologists this late summer: the Museum of Applied Arts (MAK), for example, opened its inspiring exhibi-

tion on “UAAAA!!!! MANGA” to coincide with the conference’s start.

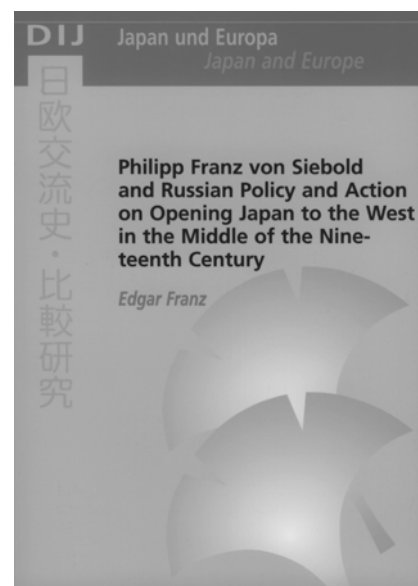
The EAJS conference’s academic program consisted of eight sections, touching upon geography, linguistics, literature, arts, sociology, economics, history and religion in some 140 panels. DIJ staff actively attended two of these sections: Andreas Moerke presented his paper on “Usability of Japanese Corporate Data for Marketing” in the section on economics and economic history. The main focus was on the question of how to use company data, released in annual reports and databases, in order to analyze structures of market development and company strategies. The section on history, politics, and international relations saw two panels organized by DIJ researchers. With her panel on “Nationalism and Gender in Japanese and German Women’s Magazines during WWII”, Andrea Germer initiated a lively exchange of views on how women were depicted in times of war. She presented her own research on this topic in a paper titled “Nippon Fujin and NS Frauenwarte: The Logic of Female Collaboration in WWII”. Gabriele Vogt’s panel on “Romantic Ryūkyū in Okinawan Politics” aimed at shedding light on the interdependence structure of history, identity and politics from an explicitly interdisciplinary point of view. She contributed to the panel with a paper on “Political Affairs and the Contemporary Use of the Myth of Ryūkyūan Pacifism”.

More details on the EAJS conference program can be found online at <http://www.eajs.org>. The EAJS 12th International Conference will be held in Lecce / Italy in 2008.

DIJ PUBLICATIONS

Edgar Franz: *Philipp Franz von Siebold and Russian Policy and Action on Opening Japan to the West in the Middle of the Nineteenth Century* (Japan and Europe. Historical Relations and Comparative Studies), Munich: Iudicium, 2005, 235 p., ISBN 3-89129-871-4, € 28.30

Edgar Franz deserves credit for having been the first to use Siebold’s private papers and manuscripts to provide a detailed analysis of his influence on Russia’s policy on opening up Japan. Franz proves that Siebold’s intimate knowledge of Japan and his sensitive attitude to the Japanese mentality were crucial to Russian negotiations. Subsequently Russia was the first foreign na-

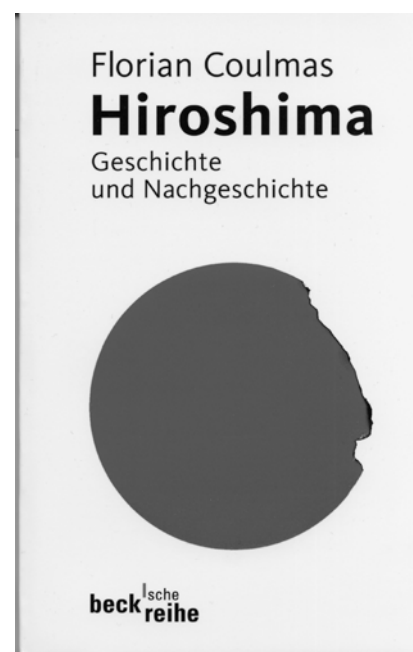


tion to succeed in concluding a treaty with Japan that included establishing trade relations between the two nations. It has been possible to verify Siebold’s significance for the modernization of Japan, the political dimension of Japan’s activities and Siebold’s great influence on the opening of Japan for trade and navigation.

Constantin von Brandenstein-Zeppelin
(President of the Siebold-Gesellschaft
Würzburg e.V.)

Florian Coulmas: *Hiroshima. Geschichte und Nachgeschichte* (Hiroshima, History and Aftermath).

München: C.H. Beck, 2005. 138 p., ISBN 3-406-52797-3, € 9.90.



Hiroshima – the name of the city became a symbol of pending destruction of humankind. Why were the nuclear bombs dropped? Who suffered? Who



benefited? And what happened to the survivors? In the face of the threat to the survival of the species these questions were pushed into the background. They are the subject of this book.

Coulmas examines the history of this human catastrophe and the myths spun around it. Expounding the moral dilemma of the deployment of the nuclear bombs, he demonstrates how U.S. censorship during the occupation after the war resulted in a one-sided remembrance of the history of Hiroshima to this very day. For reviews see www.dijtokyo.org.

WORKING PAPERS

05/1 Harald Dolles/ Sten Söderman: *Globalization of Sports – The Case of Professional Football and its International Management Challenges*.

05/2 Isa Dücke/Andreas Moerke: *Aging Population, Knowledge Spillover and Civil Society*.

05/3 Harald Conrad/Viktoria Heindorf: *Farewell to the Seniority Principle? Aging Workforces and the Restructuring of Japanese Compensation Practices*

05/4 Andreas Moerke/Simon Kamann: *Herausforderungen des demographischen Wandels: Fallbeispiel Automobilindustrie [Challenges of Demographic Change: The Automobile Industry – A Case Study]*

BOOK REVIEW

Takashi Nakanishi: *60 sai kara no bōhan techō* [Crime prevention pocketbook for the 60 plus]. Tokyo: Shueisha shinsho, 2004. ISBN 4-08-720236-4 C0236, 203 p. 660 Yen.

中西崇、『60歳からの防犯手帳』、集英社新書、2004

Can things get much worse? *Parasites*, *otaku* (freaky loners), *nīto*, and far too few babies: a society in shambles. Next year, Japan's population will peak before going on the decline. And in 2007, an unprecedented three million workers will retire; the erstwhile baby-boomers. The ranks of the elderly are swelling rapidly, posing any number of problems ranging from healthcare to

pensions and infrastructure requirements. And now this: Japan's last asset is under threat, its legendary safety.

Reduced to a legend, it is pessimists up and down the country howl with trepidation. The tip of the iceberg is called *rifōmu sagi* or home renovation scam, a new line of business that targets senior citizens who are taken in by fraudulent salesmen to sign contracts for unnecessary and overpriced repairs. In a country where old age still enjoys a measure of respect the wickedness of such crimes is keenly felt and meets with predictable indignation.

While the picture painted by some commentators who see Japan sliding down into an abyss of crime, disorder and moral decay seems a bit overdrawn, there is no denying that the drawn-out recession is taking its usual toll, a rise in crime rates of all kinds. Some observers are cashing in on the doomsday boom, Takashi Nakanishi, a crime prevention consultant of Izumi Keibihoshō Co., being one of them.

His book under review here sells quite well. It is directed at the elderly telling them what they must do if they want to avoid the many risks of falling victim to one of the thugs lurking behind every corner. Pick pocketing, bag-snatching and plain theft are just what he calls 'classical crimes,' and certainly not the most ominous. Robbery and bodily injury have increased as have various forms of fraud. Gullible old people get swindled out of large sums of money, are sold unnecessary and unwanted merchandise by hawkers, and talked into signing immoral contracts by unscrupulous businessmen. They fall prey to loan sharks and are milked by financial tricksters. Many of them don't know how to defend themselves.

The leitmotiv of Nakanishi's admonition is that people above 65 are the most rapidly growing group of crime victims because their mindset belongs to a Japan that no longer exists, if it ever did. While his recommendations often read as if they were directed at infantile simpletons, the problem he addresses is real. The number of elderly people who lose to various degrees the ability to judge everyday affairs grows steadily, and so does that of those who are ready to take advantage of them. Nakanishi also notes that there has been a sharp increase not just of the elderly crime victims but of elderly delinquents, too.

All told, this is a social problem aggravated by economically hard times. Many elderly people are lonely, out of touch, and no longer well integrated into society. Although his main concern is to counsel, Nakanishi is well aware of this fact. While some of the

precautions he advocates seem excessive, he emphasizes more than once the importance of social networks as the most effective means of crime prevention. Clearly, he has a point. Its practical value aside, Nakanishi's book calls attention to the social challenge not to let the growing number of single-person households undermine social cohesion.

(Florian Coulmas)

EXHIBITION

Opening of the "Virtual Exhibition of the DIJ's Bandō Collection" – from October 26, 2005, at <http://bando.dijtokyo.org>

As part of the initiative "Germany in Japan 2005/2006" the "Virtual Exhibition of the DIJ's Bandō Collection" opened on October 26, 2005. The opening celebration was held jointly with the opening of the exhibition "All men will be brothers... German prisoners-of-war in Japan 1914–1920" (26. 10.05–08.11.05 at the German Culture Center, Tokyo). Welcoming addresses were given by Gerhard Thiedemann, head of Cultural Affairs of the German Embassy, Professor Schepers, chairman of the OAG and Professor Coulmas, director of the DIJ. Mr. van der Laan, son of a former POW, presented an introduction to the OAG's exhibition. The DIJ's electronic exhibition was presented by Ursula Flache and Claus Harmer. Invited guests had the opportunity to view both exhibitions. The "Virtual Exhibition of the DIJ's Bandō Collection" is accessible on the Internet.

On <http://bando.dijtokyo.org> you will find:

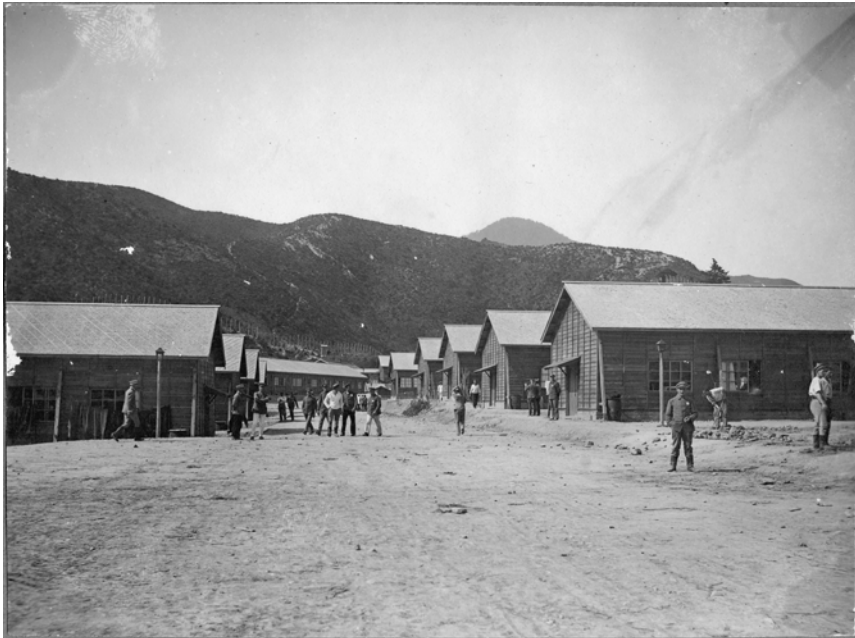
- a virtual tour of the Bandō POW camp with its barracks, restaurants and the shopping quarter "Tapautau";
- information about the theatre activities: "a stage without actresses";
- how music and gymnastics became a bridge to the Japanese population;
- who won the "camp prize" during the "Exhibition of Graphic Art and Handicraft" in March 1918; and
- a database to browse or search the whole Bandō collection.

The database and the virtual exhibition will be available in German and Japanese. The Bandō Collection held by the DIJ Library is thus made accessible to the public. We are looking forward to your visit at <http://bando.dijtokyo.org!>





Coffee break in the Bandō POW camp (picture from the DIJ Bandō Collection)



Main street in the Bandō POW camp (picture from the DIJ Bandō Collection)

Personnel News

Barbara Altmiks, M.A., joined the editorial team of the “Comprehensive Japanese-German Dictionary” in August 2005. After finishing her studies of Japanese History, Language and Literature, and German Studies at the Ruhr-University in Bochum in 1994, Ms. Altmiks first worked as a freelance translator. Previously she was employed as a librarian at the Japonicum, a department of the North-Rhine Westphalia Institute of Languages, in Bochum.

Peter Backhaus joined the DIJ Humanities Section as a research fellow in September 2005. After finishing his M.A. at the Department of Modern Japanese Studies of Heinrich-Heine-University Düsseldorf in March 2002, he was a postgraduate student and research fellow at Duisburg-Essen University, Department of Modern Japanese Studies where he completed his doctoral thesis on Tokyo’s multilingual landscape in March 2005. From August 2004 to February 2005 he was a postgraduate grant recipient at the German Institute for Japanese Studies. Contributing to the institute’s research project “Challenges of Demographic Change” Backhaus will deal with the impacts of this phenomenon on language and communication practices in Japan.

Dr. Gabriele Vogt was elected as DIJ staff council representative on July 25, 2005.

Ms. Meike Döschner-Mehrtens, who worked at the DIJ since February 2002, left the institute at the end of September 2005.

Dr. René Haak, Head of the economic section and Deputy Director of DIJ since August 2002 left the institute in October 2005 to join the Federal Ministry of Education and Research.

Dissertation Fellows

Thomas Büttner, Japanese Studies, History, History of East Asian Art, Ph.D. candidate at Heidelberg University: “Elite Competition in Authoritarian Regimes: Political Influence in the



Imperial Rule Assistance Association” (October 2005–March 2006).

Klaus-Jochem Kecker, East Asian Economy, Business Administration, Japanese History, Ph.D. candidate at the Ruhr University, Bochum: “Economic Regionalization in East Asia with Special Reference to Japan” (October 2005 – January 2006).

DIJ-Forum

Glenda Roberts (December 15, 2005)

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