

"This is a serious story!"

Religions and *Manga*

by Monika Schrimpf

Although a separate category of "religious comics" is not known to the world of Japanese *manga*, many of the comics deal with religious topics. Especially *manga* aimed at youth use motifs that recall religious myths and apocalyptic imagery, such as end-of-the-world visions, the emergence of a savior, or the fight between good and evil. Others present important figures from religious history, religious concepts, or practices. The thematic diversity reflects various intentions: *Manga* can express personal religiosity or the religio-philosophical reflections of individual artists, but they can also aim at religious education or represent a religious community. The most renowned example of the former is the *manga* created by the veteran author Tezuka Osamu (1928–1989). The stories in his *chef d'oeuvre* *Hi no tori* (The Phoenix) and the multivolume biography of the Buddha *Budda* reflect his own understanding of the historical Buddha as well as topics such as reincarnation, immortality, and the meaning of life and death. The moving biography of the crip-

ple and murderer Gao in *Hi no tori*, for instance, gives a concrete form to the fundamental Buddhist teaching that "all life is suffering" and illustrates Tezuka's personal response to the question of how one can uphold (or gain) a positive attitude toward life despite tragic circumstances.

Comics with educational or missionary intentions deal with various aspects of the teachings, practices and history of a religion. To mention just a few examples, *manga* biographies depict the life of Buddha or other exemplary Buddhists in Japanese history; introductions explain the central texts of Japanese Buddhism, such as the Lotus Sutra; self-help books illustrate the relevance of Buddhist teachings for coping with everyday life; *manga* of new religious communities describe their teachings and systems of religious practice; still others are dedicated to religious customs such as annual festivals.

The relationship between religion and caricature or illustrated stories is in no way a recent development: the earliest examples of caricature drawings have been found in Buddhist temples near Nara. Many of the scrolls thought to be the precursors to contemporary *manga* were created in a religious context or deal with religious issues. The most well-known examples of religious "cartoons" include the scrolls *Chōjūgiga* (12th century) by the monk Toba. One of the scrolls shows animals parodying Buddhist monks through their human-like appearance. Other scrolls from this period portray life in the six Buddhist worlds in a grotesque fashion, as for example, in the case of the hungry ghosts. Also the Zen Buddhist drawings created since the 17th century as well as the folkloric woodblock prints of

Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849) often strike humorous notes. This (self-)ironic approach to religion has been continued to the present day. Thus, Tezuka Osamu in his Buddha biography depicts a disappointed Buddha surrounded by crocodiles who must learn that he cannot relinquish his life for them because consuming him would inflict diarrhea and meningitis upon them (fig. 1). The comics by Ōkawa Ryūhō, the head of the new religious movement Kōfuku no Kagaku, also contain elements of humor: in *Tengoku no mon* (The Gate to Heaven) the narrator is surrounded by cherub-like beings in the chapter "Love." One of these "angels" immediately realizes the explanations of the virtue "love" in practice by beginning to wash the narrator's forehead with a tiny cloth, while another is buried under a mountain of balls with *ai* (love) written on them (fig. 2).

What makes *manga* an attractive medium as a transmitter of religious contents? And what effect does the art form have on these contents? Has only the aesthetic of the pictorial representations changed in comparison to the past by adapting to the *zeitgeist*? It seems to me that the emphasis of the messages has shifted together with the aesthetic adaptations. *Manga* mediate



Fig. 1. Not for crocodile consumption? Tezuka Osamu's disappointed Buddha. © Kōdansha

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German Institute for Japanese Studies
 Managing editor: Matthias Hoop
 3-3-6 Kudan-Minami
 Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0074, Japan
 Tel.: +81-3-3222-5077
 Fax: +81-3-3222-5420
 E-mail: dijtokyo@dijtokyo.org
 Homepage: <http://www.dijtokyo.org>





Fig. 2. In "The Gate to Heaven" angelic creatures wash the narrator's forehead and are buried under the weight of love. © Kōfuku no Kagaku Shuppan

religious messages in the form of narrations, which are focused on people and their emotions. *Manga* are therefore particularly suited for the presentation of biographies and hagiographies in particular. The specific drawing techniques of Japanese comics amplify this tendency since they focus the reader's attention rather towards individual persons than on the presentation of certain scenes. In long sequences of picture frames, "close ups" of facial expressions (fig. 3), gestures, body postures and movements are presented without accompanying text in order to build up tension or create the illusion of motion. In addition, the focus on physiognomic details lends the protagonists their dynamic-emotional expressivity, which is typical of comics. In this manner, a few pages suffice to characterize personalities and sketch emotional developments. Due to their visual qualities such images are especially easy to remember and comprehend. Biographical comics in particular offer the opportunity to emphasize certain characteristic features through their visual representation. For example, in his Buddha biography Tezuka portrays



Fig. 3. A monk accompanying Nichiren becomes aware of an enemy sneaking up. A pearl of sweat symbolizes his fear. © Kino Kazuyoshi, Shiratori Haruhiko, Nobori Ryūta, Sunmark



the historical Buddha mostly with a benevolent and acquiescent mien. This impression is reinforced by the contrast with the people surrounding the Buddha who respond to his composure with extreme emotionality: whether it is the murderer Angulimāla who cannot bear Buddha's serene expression and reacts hypnotized, scared, unsure and, finally, with anger (fig. 4), or Buddha's cholerically screaming rival Gayā Kāshyapa (fig. 5). On the other hand, the young Buddha in Ōkawa Ryūhō's *Buddha saitan* (The Return of the Buddha) appears to have a sad and wise look; his body emaciated (fig. 6). And the face of Nobori Ryūta's Nichiren in a *manga* biography published by Sunmark bespeaks tenacity and determination (fig. 7). In addition to allowing pointed characterizations of personalities, the representation of emotions such as surprise, annoyance, fear, etc., contributes to the "humanization" of the lofty protagonists, and thus to bring them closer to the reader and facilitate the reader's identification with them. In this way, the characters of Buddhist religious history become alive and receive specific personalities.



Fig. 4. Buddha defeats the murderer Angulimāla with his gaze. © Kōdansha



Fig. 5. The composed Buddha and his cholerically screaming rival. © Kōdansha

Especially in the comics created by Kōfuku no Kagaku the possibilities of visual representation are used to illustrate the teachings of the religious community. Quite often the same faces transmigrate through ages and places, e.g., from Buddha's lifetime in India to the early modern age in Europe and into contemporary Japan. This enables the author to illustrate the idea of rein-



Fig. 6. The haggard Buddha by Ōkawa Ryūhō. © Kōfuku no Kagaku Shuppan



Fig. 7. Nichiren's features are marked by decisiveness in a manga drawn by Nobori Ryūta. © Kino Kazuyoshi, Shiratori Haruhiko, Nobori Ryūta, Sunmark



Fig. 8. After her journey to the other world, a new life begins for the young Ai-chan.
© Kōfuku no Kagaku Shuppan

carnation and concurrently emphasize the claim to timelessness and universality. The diverse utilizations of the *manga* medium by this particular community indicate a tendency to illustrate abstract teachings with stories. For example, in "The Gate to Heaven" (*Tengoku no mon*) the four basic principles of "love," "knowledge," "reflection," and "further development" are explained in four stories. The chapter on love depicts how the hardened heart of a young, unfeeling woman is changed through an accident that brings her close to her death and thus to the spiritual beings of other cosmic dimensions. She learns that "to love" means not to receive love but to "give love" and she is given the chance to live a new life which she leads as a new person (fig. 8). The protagonist's attractiveness and her horror as she becomes aware of her apparent death, her gradual change of attitude under the guidance of a heavenly teacher called *Mercy* (quite possibly the god Mercury), and her happiness about returning to earth, draw the reader into the story and amplify the lasting imprint of the message.

By mediating religious beliefs and ideals in stories, religious *manga* continue an old tradition of Buddhist scriptures: both the Jātaka narratives about the previous existences of the Buddha as well as the parables of the Lotus Sutra illustrate certain virtues and ideals in the form of short and at times dramatic stories.

After all, religious *manga* remain media of entertainment. They spread a new light on legends, they captivate through their stories full of love, betrayal, horror and beauty, and they can

even make the reader laugh. But frivolity must not be allowed to get the upper hand. Because, as his rival, Gāya Kashyapa, remarks on Buddha's friendship with the crocodiles, "such a thing may happen in a *manga* for kids, but this is a serious story!"

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DIJ EVENTS

Conference

Changing Corporate Governance Systems – Germany and Japan in Comparison

(Tōkyō, February 20–21, 2004)

This two-day conference, jointly organized by the German Institute for Japanese Studies, the Japan Investor Research and Investor Support, Inc. (J-IRIS), and the Research Institute of Economy, Trade and Industry (RIETI), sought to compare structures and mechanisms of corporate governance. To our understanding, corporate governance stands for the ways and means used by investors to secure their investment in a corporation, and to influence management to act according to their interests. In the German and Japanese context, "investor" would not only mean the shareholders of a corporation, but also other stakeholders like employees, suppliers, and other groups. The research on corporate governance is still dominated by comparison between the Anglo-Saxon and other systems, whereas Germany and Japan are often seen as similar. Thus, this event is considered to be especially important since it compares two supposedly similar but in fact quite different arrangements.

The first part of the conference was a half-day symposium on the afternoon of February 20 held in the Tōkyō Chamber of Commerce and Industry. It

was aimed at providing the broader Japanese public with information on the most recent developments in the field in Germany. The keynote lecture was given by Gerhard Cromme, head of the German Corporate Governance Commission and of ThyssenKrupp's supervisory board. The lecture was followed by a panel discussion where well-known experts from the scientific community (Yoshimori Masaru, Yokohama National University) and from a multinational enterprise (Wolfgang Stegh, Representative and Managing Director BASF Japan, Ltd.) exchanged their views with Gerhard Cromme. Ogino Hiroshi, senior researcher of the daily newspaper *Asahi Shinbun* chaired the discussion.

The second day – Saturday, February 21 – was dedicated to scientific exchange and the comparison of recent developments in Japan and Germany. In a different location – the Research Institute of Economy, Trade and Industry – eight specialists on corporate governance issues, Matsuda Takeshi (Meiji University), Yoshimori Masaru (Yokohama State University), Michael Nietsch (University of Mainz), Seki Takaya (J-IRIS), Marcel Tyrell (University of Frankfurt), Miyajima Hideaki (Waseda University), Gregory Jackson (RIETI) and Kubo Katsuyuki (Waseda University), discussed with the organizers and approximately fifty participants questions relating to the role of corporate governance in different systems, legal changes, the link between financial system and corporate governance, and the linkage between corporate governance and employment.

The high number of participants and requests for further information as well as offers for further cooperation is indicative of the conference's successful approach to the topic. The papers will be published in a special issue of a corporate-governance related journal to ensure that the discussions reach a wide audience.

Workshop

Consultation, Counseling, and Healing in Japanese New Religious and New Spirituality Movements

(Tōkyō, March 13, 2004)

Many of the new religious movements in Japan offer their members individual assistance to deal with problems encountered throughout life. This support may range from moral guidance, consultation on daily affairs and individual counseling to resolve con-



flicts, to the healing of physical illness and injuries. In particular the so-called new spirituality movements (*shin reisei undō*) deal with the “spiritual” health of their clients.

The aim of this workshop was to discuss the forms, contents and intentions of religious “life assistance” from different perspectives. The papers presented several approaches to these problems as practiced by a number of religious groups. Based on the fieldwork of the speakers, the papers of the first section discussed the topic of consultation, guidance or therapeutic modes in Sōka Gakkai (Levi McLaughlin, Kokugakuin University), Shinnyoen, PL Kyōdan (Monika Schrimpf, DIJ) and GLA (Christal Whelan, Nichibunken/Boston University). McLaughlin concluded that in Sōka Gakkai, therapeutic effects depend completely upon the members’ own resources and social support at the grassroots level rather than the intentions of a religious leadership. According to Schrimpf, horizontal relationships among believers are a primary source of personal assistance in crises and conflicts also in the Shinnyoen and PL Kyōdan movements. However, equally important is the strongly moral consultation given by religious authorities who are regarded as capable of connecting with a transcendent reality. In GLA, on the other hand, actual psychotherapist techniques of introspection are practiced in which the present leader Takahashi Keiko plays a crucial role.

In addition to these empirical studies, the papers of the second section touched upon the term “spirituality” and its practical application in the field of healthcare. Horie Norichika (University of the Sacred Heart, Tōkyō) introduced the history of the term and emphasized that the term is used in different meanings in the fields of religious studies, psychology and media. Especially in the realm of new spirituality movements, the *katakana* word *supirichuaritī* is used to disassociate from *kanji* compounds using the word *rei* and its association with spirits of the dead. Practical consequences of notions of spirituality for concepts of healthcare were the topic of the paper by Furusawa Yumi (University of Tōkyō), who talked about the growing awareness of the need for spiritual care among psychological counselors in hospitals, particularly those hospitals affiliated with religious institutions. One incentive for this development is the American chaplain system. The final discussions gave careful consideration to the different motives behind consultation, healing or similar activities in religious movements.

Moreover, it was discussed whether terms like psychotherapy or counseling are appropriate to describe these activities in each respective case.

Conference

The Centennial of a Historical Watershed: Legacies of the Russo-Japanese War, 1904-05

(Tōkyō, March 27, 2004)

The foundation of the modern Japanese state was characterized by frequent warfare. However, even though the foundation of the Japanese nation-state was induced by the penetration of European and US-imperialism into East Asia, Japan, prior to 1941, fought wars mainly against its Asian neighbors. Two wars against Russia (1904/05 and 1918–1922) and a small skirmish with Germany in 1914 were the only exceptions. However, on the whole, no war was of equal significance for the future course of Japan’s development than the Russo-Japanese War of 1904/05. Japan’s victory over what had been considered the world’s leading military power demonstrated Japan’s development into a military force to be reckoned with; a force, which was soon recognized as a “first-rate power” by the imperialist countries. Japan’s victory over Czarist Russia resulted in completely new notions of Japan’s role in world politics, but also a – though short-lived – enthusiasm for Japan in many Asian countries, where Japan was considered a potential liberator from colonial rule.

The conference “Legacies of the Russo-Japanese War, 1904–05,” coorganized by Sven Saaler from the DIJ and Rolf-Harald Wippich from Sophia University, explored questions relating to the consequences of the Russo-Japanese War for Japan’s position in world politics and Japan’s ambivalent role as an emerging colonial power on the one hand, and the hopes in Asia for Japan as a liberator on the other. After an overview of the historical place of the Russo-Japanese War, given in the keynote speech by Tsuzuki Chūshichi (Professor emeritus, Hitotsubashi University), Inaba Chiharu (Meijō University), Igor Saveliyev (Niigata University) and Lee Eun-Jeung (University of Halle-Wittenberg) explored the consequences of the Russo-Japanese War for the countries involved, including Korea, whose independence was one of the main issues on the eve of the outbreak of war. In the second panel of this one-day conference, the presentations

of Enatsu Yoshiki (Hitotsubashi University), T. R. Sareen (Professor emeritus, University of New Delhi) and Selçuk Esenbel (Boğaziçi University, Istanbul) analyzed the repercussions of the war in other Asian countries. As Enatsu Yoshiki’s presentation demonstrated, the war that was led mainly on Chinese territory, triggered reforms in China that he explained by analyzing the micro level of local administration in Northeastern China (Manchuria). Sareen and Esenbel in their presentations looked into reactions in India and the Ottoman Empire, respectively, where – at least temporarily – enthusiastic hope for Japan as a potential liberator from Western colonial rule was evident. Due to the Japanese policy of colonizing and eventually annexing Korea, in a few years, however, enthusiasm waned, and disillusionment with Japan soon set in. In Japanese historiography, these later developments are paid little attention, and thus the Russo-Japanese War is still overwhelmingly judged as positive in present-day Japan, as one commentator from the floor noted. The lively discussion demonstrated that these kinds of political-historical questions, which also make up the background of the ongoing history textbook controversy, are still topical issues that generate much interest.

DIJ PUBLICATIONS

Peter J. Hartmann: Konsumgenossenschaften in Japan: Alternative oder Spiegelbild der Gesellschaft? Entwicklungen und Strukturen am Beispiel der Präfektur Ōsaka [Japanese Co-ops: Alternative or Mirror of Society? Its Development and Structure Exemplified by a Case Study of Ōsaka]. Munich: ludicum, 2003 (Monographien aus dem Deutschen Institut für Japanstudien, vol. 29), 628 pp. (ISBN 3-89129-507-3)

Japanese Co-ops are providers of safe food to millions of housewives organized in small groups. They perceive themselves as “schools of democracy,” “the housewife’s window to society,” and “instruments for the creation of new local communities”; in short, an antithesis to industrial society – at least, this is what Japanese research would have liked us to think in the past.

The reality, however, is quite different: almost completely ignored by researchers, from the beginning Japanese





Co-ops extended their activities to a wide range of areas including health care, housing, insurance, etc., and their member bases, world views, aims, and strategies vary conspicuously. For the first time, the present study attempts to look at the Japanese Co-op system in its entirety and arrives at some rather less spectacular conclusions.

Isa Ducke (ed.): E-Democracy in East Asia? How the Internet Affects Politics and Civil Society in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. Munich: Iudicium, 2004 (Miscellanea aus dem Deutschen Institut für Japanstudien, vol. 17), 119 pp. (ISSN 0941-1321)

New technologies offer new networking opportunities that may affect the involvement of a broader audience. A workshop held at the DIJ in 2003 discussed the ways such technologies – especially the Internet – affect the political involvement of citizens in elections and local government initiatives, as well as NGOs and citizens' groups. The workshop looked at the various tools employed and how effective these are. Discussions dealt with the impact of the Internet on a variety of political actors, including political parties and candidates, mainstream and minorities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the vast majority of citizens, and small citizens' groups with special concerns.

The results of this workshop are assembled in a short collection of articles. It includes papers written by Lee Eun-Jeung ("Netizens and South Korean Politics: Citizens' Power during the Presidential Election 2002") and Chung Peichi ("The Local Dimension of Identity Construction in a Web-Based Political Organization: The Tai-

wan Independence Party") on Japan's neighbors, and several linked presentations on Japan written by Isa Ducke on "Citizens' Groups in Japan: Internet Use and 'Success,'" Iris Wiecek's article on "Can the Internet Propel the Political and Social Role of Japanese NGOs? A Case Study of Anti-Dam Activism in Japan," and Leslie M. Tkach-Kawasaki on "Japanese Candidates Online in 2001." These papers are followed by a summary of the discussions and conclusions (Isa Ducke and Leslie M. Tkach-Kawasaki).

The volume is available from the DIJ in Tōkyō.

CONFERENCE REPORTS

Annual Meeting, Association for Asian Studies (AAS)

(San Diego, March 4–7, 2004)

The Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies (AAS) held in San Diego, California, consisted of more than two hundred panels where a broad variety of topics was discussed, with "border-crossing" as the central topic uniting (or transcending) the disciplines as well as various areas of Asian Studies. Not only several of the official border-crossing sessions, but also many of the other panels dealt with questions relating to Asian regionalism or Asian diaspora, but also with topics such as "The Global Soybean."

Sven Saaler from the DIJ participated in panel 210 with the title "Japanese Views on Sino-Japanese Relations in the Early Twentieth Century: Reassessments of Japan's Pan-Asianism." The panel, organized by Itoh Mayumi (University of Nevada, Las Vegas), explored Sino-Japanese relations from the angle of Japanese Pan-Asianists, who worked for Sino-Japanese cooperation, but in historiography are usually interpreted merely as forerunners of expansionism. In his paper "Pan-Asian Societies in Prewar Japanese Foreign Relations: Uchida Ryōhei and the Kokuryūkai," Saaler tried to shed some light on the role of small political pressure groups (*seiji kessha*) in early twentieth-century Japan, of which the Kokuryūkai (Amur Society or Black Dragon Society) is probably the most notorious one, but has not yet been studied in depth, neither in Japan nor in Japanese studies. Saaler argued that

the Kokuryūkai eventually did contribute to a large degree to Japanese expansionism, but in the early years of its existence it worked intensively for Sino-Japanese cooperation against Russia. However, in the end, regionalist concepts of cooperation fell victim to the temptations of national-imperialist expansion. Similarly, Itoh Mayumi in her presentation on Tōyama Mitsuru and his relation to Sun Yat-Sen and Chiang Kai-Shek, and Dick Stegewerns (Ōsaka Sangyō University) in his presentation on Sugimori Kōjirō explored central figures in Sino-Japanese relations and their ambivalent roles, which to date have not been systematically analyzed by historical research. In the panel discussion it became clear that due to a strong emphasis on Japanese expansionism, early forms of Asian regionalism still require further consideration in historical research, and many topics appear open to discussion and systematic research.

BOOK REVIEW

Wolfgang Seifert and Asa-Bettina Wuthenow (eds.): Anbauten Umbauten: Beiträge zur Japan-Forschung; Festgabe für Wolfgang Schamoni zum 60. Geburtstag von seinen Schülern, Mitarbeitern und Kollegen [Extensions Reconstructions: Essays in Japanese Studies; Dedicated to Wolfgang Schamoni in Honor of His Sixtieth Birthday from His Students, Coworkers, and Colleagues]. Munich: Iudicium, 2003, 480 pp. (ISBN 3-89129-733-5)

Not only the essay "Ein kleines lexikographisches Ōgai-Bouquet" [A Little Lexicographical Ōgai Bouquet] (Irmela Hijiya-Kirschner and Jürgen Stalph) but also the *Festschrift* as a whole is a flower bouquet for Wolfgang Schamoni on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday. The collection of academic articles, translations, literary pieces, fieldwork reports and essays by forty authors was published to honor the accomplishments of Schamoni under whose guidance the Department of Japanese Studies at the University of Heidelberg was established in 1985. The majority of the contributions deal with Japanese literature, Schamoni's main research topic, but the volume also reflects the variety of his other interests. In its six chapters on "Literature," "Translation and Language," "Culture and Society," "Politics and History," "Language Studies and Di-



dactics of Japanese" and "Literary Attempts and Essays" we find to a lesser extent articles on cultural, social, and historical issues. Appended at the end of the collection is a comprehensive list of Schamoni's publications.

Fourteen of the forty essays are in the chapter "Literature," and six of these fourteen are translations. Special emphasis appears to have been given to translations from and discussions of the genre of *shaseibun* with writers such as Takahama Kyoshi, Tokutomi Roka, and Nagatsuka Takashi. Asa-Bettina Wuthenow's article (regrettably placed toward the end of this chapter as number 13) lucidly contextualizes this genre historically and with regard to literary studies. Further translations as well as essays that contain large portions of translations from the Meiji period until today provide insights into ethnographic fields (*Momotarō*) and present several literary figures (Hotta Yoshie, Mori Ōgai, Ikezawa Natsuki, Inoue Hisashi). The translation of Ikezawa Natsuki's "Reports of the Bus" (pp. 121–137) is particularly enjoyable. It consists of twelve "Reports," one to two pages long, about various funny, grotesque, and surprising events all related to a peculiar bus. The "Reports" are taken from the novel and political satire *Aufstieg und Fall des Macias Guili* [Rise and Fall of Macias Guili] that was translated by Otto Putz into German in 2002. (For further information on the writer and a review of the book see Lisette Gebhardt in *Japanforschung: Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft für Japanforschung*, 2002,2, pp. 28–31.) Other Japanese writers such as Murakami Haruki and Natsume Sōseki as well as discussions on literary theory and the genre of mass literature and on the development of rhetoric in Japan are also covered. Given the eminence of prize-winning female authors in modern Japanese literature, it is unfortunate that no female writer was included in this chapter.

The authors of the second chapter "Translation and Language" deal mainly with sociolinguistics and translation issues. The necessity to consider socio-political contexts is argued by Wolfgang Seifert in his discussion on the social and political term *seikatsusha*, and how the translation of the term must be very sensitive to the social and political contexts in which it is used. Further articles deal with questions of temporality, translations of names, Japanese loanwords in German and the degree to which Japanese poetry can be translated as poetry into other languages. A refreshingly provocative contribution is that of Peter Ackermann, who asks if translations may

also or should even irritate, and who warns of translations which are too engaged in smoothing out differences in form and content in order to meet the expectations of the (German) reader, since much of cultural difference is thus assimilated and lost.

In the third chapter of the book, "Culture and Society," the tendency to relate literary themes and production to social and cultural contexts is remarkable, particularly in Hilaria Gössmann's contribution on issues of identity in the autobiographic works of the Japanese-Korean writer Yū Miri, but also in an essay on the lyrics of the pop group Tōkyō Pudding (Tōkyō purin), texts that, as Manuel Metzler points out, mirror the bursting of the Japanese bubble economy. In the same chapter, librarian studies on the *Alt-Japan-Katalog* [Old-Japan Catalog] (Britta Woldering) contextualize and historicize their objects of inquiry. Lastly, an essay on the ethical issue on how to deal with cultural difference in intercultural conflicts in the workplace is presented by Akira Takenaka.

The following chapter deals with very diverse historical and political questions in Japanese studies. Temporal focus is on the Meiji period and on early Japanese socialism or the beginnings of the women's movement in Japan. The political situation of Okinawa, a historical report on Russia by Japanese who were shipwrecked in the Edo period, a German image of Japan from 1860, or the literary representation of the Japanese modernization process in depictions of the city of Tōkyō are other themes that are further elaborated. Exciting reading is Ulrike Wöhr's contribution on New Women and journalistic strategies in the Taishō period. Wöhr traces the ways women could, for the first time, establish a position as writers in the discursive public, where previously they only had been depicted as objects.

The fifth chapter "Language Studies and Didactics of Japanese" contains mainly contributions by former or present Japanese language teachers at the Department of Japanese Studies at Heidelberg University and presents practical and theoretical problems of language education. The analysis of Shōji Iijima summarizes and discusses these problems, in particular, the issue of time necessary to teach and learn the Japanese language and writing system within the context of a German university with its partly obligatory curriculum.

The last and shortest chapter of the collection presents literary experiments and essays. Original and fun reading is the "Little Texts for Wolf-

gang Schamoni," as the author Otto Putz calls his German texts inspired by Japanese *haiku*. Also amusing are his versions of Zen *kōan*, which challenge the readers philosophically: "Wie klingt es, wenn man ein Haiku in einen Teich wirft? Hängt der Klang vom Alter des Teichs ab?" [What does it sound like when a *haiku* is thrown into a pond? Does the sound depend upon the age of the pond?] (p. 469).

The collection is interesting due to its diversity. However, its strong and insightful points are in the various connections made by most authors between literature/language and the social and historical context wherein texts are produced.

(Andrea Germer)

OTHER MATTERS/ OUTLOOK

Celebrating a Change of Directorship

(Tōkyō, July 1, 2004)

Irmela Hijiya-Kirschner's eight-year term of office as director of the German Institute of Japanese Studies will come to an end on September 30, 2004. The change of directorship will be celebrated on July 1, 2004, at the Suntory Hall, Tōkyō. Detailed information will appear in the next DIJ Newsletter (number 23).

Film Presentation

"Shugen – Hagurosan Akinomine"

(June 22, 2004, 6 p.m., location: Maison Franco-Japonaise, Tōkyō)

In cooperation with the Maison Franco-Japonaise the DIJ will present the film "Shugen – Hagurosan Akinomine" (2004, 115 minutes) by the director Kitamura Minao (producer: Visual Folklore Inc.). The documentary film shows for the first time the complete ritual of the Akinomine retreat, which takes place every year at the end of August at Mount Haguro. In this nine-day ascetic practice of the Shugendō tradition (Buddhist-Shintō combinatory mountain cult), the participants ritually experience death and the ten worlds of existence such as hells, hungry ghosts, beasts, humans, Bodhisattvas, Buddhas, etc. The film is in Japanese. Handouts in English will be



prepared and Gaynor Sekimori (University of Tōkyō), who has participated in this ritual several times, will give a short introduction in English. After the film there will be an opportunity for questions and discussions. The film will be shown in the auditorium of the Maison Franco-Japonaise.

For more information see <http://www.dijtokyo.org> or <http://www.mfj.jp/index.html>.

Symposium

Takeuchi Yoshimi – Thinker of a Different Modernity in East Asia?
(Heidelberg, September 7–11, 2004)

This international symposium on the Japanese Sinologist, translator, thinker and cultural critic Takeuchi Yoshimi (1910–1977) will be the first one held in a Western country (the conference languages will be English and Japanese). It is jointly organized by the Department of Japanese Studies, University of Heidelberg, and the DIJ. Takeuchi's merits in research on modern Chinese literature are uncontested. A new reading of his interpretation of the writer Lu Xun (1881–1936) is gradually making itself heard. The main reason for the newly awakened interest in Takeuchi, however, is that his historical thought gives important impulses to the present debate on regionalism in East Asia. The topic of Takeuchi's reflections is the tension between Japanese nationalism and "Asianism" emerging in modern Japanese history, a tension which is usually dismissed by other Japanese intellectuals. The symposium in Heidelberg will attempt to critically reconstruct some elements of the referential framework for an East-Asian regionalism as developed by Takeuchi, to "translate" them for the Western world and thus create an ideal-historical foil to evaluate present cultural-historical legitimations of "East Asia." Each of the four conference days is dedicated to a special aspect: "The Thinker Takeuchi Yoshimi," "Takeuchi Yoshimi as Sinologist," "Contributions of Takeuchi to Historiography" and "Legacy and Perspectives."

Call for Papers

Japanstudien: Jahrbuch des Deutschen Instituts für Japanstudien

Japanstudien is a peer-review journal published once a year by the German

Institute for Japanese Studies, Tōkyō. This journal includes articles on the culture, economy, society and politics of modern Japan as well as Germany-Japan relations. Contributions on these topics are welcome from scholars in any academic discipline. Most issues of *Japanstudien* focus on a particular topic. The subject of volume 17, which is expected to be published by autumn 2005, is:

Germany in Japan

On the occasion of the initiative "Germany in Japan 2005/2006" the next volume of *Japanstudien* will be dedicated to the relations between Japan and Germany in the modern era. Since the Meiji period both countries have enjoyed continuous periods of contact that have led to processes of mutual reception and cooperation in culture, science, economics, and politics. This volume shall seek to shed light on the historical background of these processes on the Japanese side by examining the changes in interactions with Germany in modern day Japan. The primary aim of the book, however, is to document current foci of cooperation and interaction in Japan. In which areas of culture or science can we observe conscious or subconscious dealings with Germany? In which sectors and in what forms does the Japanese economy seek exchanges with Germany? Which areas of German politics attract attention in Japan, and in which fields are cooperation and dialogue sought? Who are the agents maintaining these relationships, and what are their motives?

A further topic to be addressed is the Japanese perceptions of Germany that have shaped the diverse processes of reception and cooperation. The volume will examine the reasons for the popularity of certain aspects of German culture, science, politics, economics, and technology. To what degree is this popularity influenced by certain images of Germany, and what effect do national stereotypes have? What are the roots of such stereotypes, and how did they evolve into their current form? Thus, the papers in this volume shall also address the changes in Japan's understanding of Germany. Finally, the analysis of how Japanese agents situate themselves and their country in relation to Germany in the above mentioned fields will provide insights into the construction of Japanese self-images.

Manuscripts should not exceed 10,000 words. **Abstracts** (of about 400 words) together with a short bio of the author are to be submitted electronical-

ly to the institute by **August 15, 2004** (editor: Monika Schrimpf). Accepted **manuscripts** should arrive by **December 15, 2004**. Articles previously published or submitted for publication cannot be accepted.

Details of previous issues as well as contents and articles of *Japanstudien* can be found on our homepage (<http://www.dijtokyo.org>). For further information on volume 17, please contact Monika Schrimpf (schrimpf@dijtokyo.org).

Dissertation Fellows

Claudia Christ, psychology, Japanese studies, German as a foreign language, Ph.D. candidate at the University of Trier: "Differential Terror Management Effects on Just-World Belief, Draconity, Self-Esteem and Religious Attachment among Religiously Active and Non-Active People in Japan and Germany" (March 2004–February 2005).

Viktoria Heindorf, Japanese studies, business administration, ethnology, Ph.D. candidate at the University of Munich: "Performance of Qualification Systems in Phases of Rapid Technological and Structural Change: How the Challenges of the Second IT Revolution Are Met in Japan and Germany" (April–June 2004).

Hsiu-Jane Chen, biology, history of science, Ph.D. candidate at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin: "Scientific Transfer between Germany and Japan? Japanese Medical Students and Experts in Germany between 1865 and 1914" (May–December 2004).





On April 23, 2004, Antje Vollmer, vice-president of the German Bundestag, visited the German Institute for Japanese Studies. During her visit Ms. Vollmer was able to gain some insights into the work done at the DIJ, she listened to several presentations on ongoing research and discussed topics relating to the field of Japanese religions, Japanese foreign relations with China and Korea, as well as controversies surrounding the history textbook issue in Asia with the DIJ research fellows.

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