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Thoughts on a Theory of Japanese-Western Cultural Contacts

by Stefan Höpfe

There comes a time when habitual modes of thinking and perception become obsolete, giving way to new modes which may not necessarily be any better. Since Edward Said published his book *Orientalism*, the given wisdom in intellectual circles has been to reject all forms of the exotic and instead to look closely at the nature of the rose-tinted glasses which once made the other seem different

and exotic. For good reasons, the idea of the "end of exoticism" has even been raised. Today the "other" is so clearly internalized, to the extent that it can no longer be located externally; and anyone who still tries to find it on the outside ends up only gazing into a mirror from which his own self grimaces back. The de-alienation of the other coincides with the de-alienation of the self because we live in a world which has

lost its dimension of beyond or the other. This other, the once threatening difference that pervaded the familiar world of the self from the position of an impregnable realm beyond, has been transformed to being just an abstract, general sense of longing or fear, and in this pacified form it is the subject of countless seminars, workshops and symposia. It is potentially familiar and it practically embraces hermeneutic approaches, no longer offering any resistance.

A new ideological battle cry has recently been allied with the wish to keep the form of the other as abstract as possible. This is the concept of "globalization", which now threatens to take over from the idea of the "end of exoticism". "Globalization" is the new magic formula because it bids farewell to colonial man and sets up a post-colonial view that now recognizes only one single colony: the world as a whole. Whereas colonial thinking was ethnocen-

tric and suffered a growing guilty conscience in the process, post-colonial thinking works in terms of an imaginary center of world events which allows all the other, regional centers to appear decentralized. All of these centers are held together by international political and economic structures and are subsumed into the global body, and a regional center is only permitted to exist in so far as it does not hinder the functioning of the global body to which it belongs. At the same time the mass media guarantee that the whole world is always present at any given place. Now Zimbabwe can be adjacent to Cambodia and the Japanese archipelago can be directly in the Gulf of Mexico. The order in which the regions are presented to the viewer in a television program, for example, takes precedence over their real geographical location. In reality there is now only the panoramic whole and the perception of the one individual who is in a position to be Eurocentric, Japanocentric, Arabocentric or all of these together just as he pleases. From the point of view of the individual the other is read-



Ipposai Yoshifuji, 1861: A Sumo wrestler in Yokohama defeats a foreigner who claimed to be invincible.

Source: Dambmann, Gerhard: *Wie Japan den Westen entdeckte: eine Geschichte in Farbholzschnitten [How Japan Discovered the West: a History in Woodblock Prints]*. Stuttgart, Zürich: Belsler Verlag 1988, p. 53.

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ily available, and it is a matter of personal taste or interest as to what concrete shape of the other is bestowed on the acts of understanding, penetration or embodiment.

The arbitrariness of the concrete other is evident both in the multiculturalism debate and in textbooks on world economic relations, and it derives from an individualization of the act of understanding the other. Today the view is no longer towards the difference of the other but rather towards the emotional make-up of one's own culture or person. The hermeneutic structure of an understanding of the other has become something of a categorical imperative as a result of the educational work done by the cultural sciences, and particularly by ethnologists, and it now substantially determines real-world encounters with the other beyond any ultra-nationalist grudges. But this approach is gradually being replaced by another, the approach of tourism, which is the basis to the way in which the mass media and the advertising industry deal with the other. Tourism has transformed the other into the goal of a journey and has turned the concrete forms of the other (indigenous peoples, traditional non-European art, ethnic customs etc.) into tourist attractions in which what was once autochthonous has been reduced to just a superficial stimulus for the paying onlooker. Yet the mass media and tourism have also opened up an awareness of the variety of peoples and cultures to a public which extends far beyond the specialist. It is no longer necessary to undertake time-consuming travel or reading in order to bring the "exotic" (that was once a privilege) into closest proximity. The other culture is no longer separated from one's own culture by its difference that resists easy understanding, but now only by no more than a spatial distance which can be readily overcome by buying a flight ticket or a television set. Whether this paradigmatic shift is seen to be unfortunate or not, it is necessary to do justice to it in theoretical analysis. This involves a theory of understanding the other which takes the concept of cultural contact as its starting point.

In contrast to the hermeneutic discourse on the other, which follows a logic of polarization and appropriation, an anti-hermeneutic approach would have to take account of the fact that a complex network of traffic and communications is increasingly linking every place in the world with every other place. The particularity of the

single destinations is giving way to the routes and passages between them via which the individual reaches them. The vanishing point of this kind of anti-hermeneutic discourse would be the concept of cultural contact – a contact which is created by these passages and for which the passages themselves become an immediate substitute.

If cultural contact is defined as the mediation between two (or more) geographical locations in the cultural realm, then an irrevocable break divides the signifier of a culture (e.g. Japan) from its mental representation (whatever is "Japanese") – the two factors that the hermeneutic discourse brought together, critically revealing in its heyday the structural prejudice inherent here. Now, on the one hand, there is the empty geographical name, no longer understood as a real entity, and, on the other hand, there is the threatening or seductive attraction of the other which the name also expresses, which is always a precondition for any contact taking place. Thus whatever is "Japanese" does not exist beyond the geographical location of this name, unless it is mediated and decontextualized. Nonetheless the name "Japan" is without doubt accompanied by a whole corona of images which point back to the previous event of direct contact with the "Japanese". The concrete character of the first direct encounter with the other, "Japanese", cannot be regained retrospectively. This is the hidden origin of all those traces that have been left behind by cultural contact to this day, and also of the hollow vestiges of a utopia which underlay later attempts to give the geographical name "Japan" a significant background and to make use of it as a term denoting the aura of national or cultural particularities. What remains afterwards is only the staging and restaging of this "first time", when the other was still unmediated and unfamiliar. What remains is an ever more complex series of mediations of the supposedly different with what is supposedly one's own. It is necessary to deconstruct this staging and restaging and this series of mediations by means of texts and historical facts. At the same time a perspective on the history of the media and of perception requires an investigation of the laws and rules to which Japanese-Western cultural contact adhered at a given time, and also of structural changes which can be observed over time. One of these changes concerns the increasing absence of the other, its de-alienation.

Cultural mediators such as Engelbert Kaempfer (1651–1716) or Philipp Franz von Siebold (1796–1866) brought knowledge of Japan to Europe even during the period of national seclusion, and knowledge about Europe reached Japan as a result of trade relations with Holland, and thus both a Western image of Japan and a Japanese image of the West clearly existed. The first Japanese-Western cultural contacts after 1853, however, were not influenced by any such prior understanding and were thus not correspondingly reflected upon. Rather they took place as a direct experience. The other was suddenly there, and it was a shock. The fashion for Japan in the West, known as Japonism, had its counterpart in Japan in a fashionable enthusiasm for everything Western. People dressed like the exotic other and assumed its lifestyle, becoming surrounded by the accessories of the other everyday culture. This was cultural contact as *crossdressing*. "Exoticism" initially means no more than the wish to move beyond oneself and to change into something different – at the level of fashion just as at the level of knowledge and learning. Mimicking the other is probably the most obvious attempt to tame the difference of the other. The disparagement of exotic behavior comes only with a much later stage of reflection on the cultural contact, when what was once different has become a firm cliché and has entered into opposition, or even into irreconcilable distance, to the clichés of the own self; cultural contact is now a question of the creation of an own identity. A striking example for this stage of reflection are the *Nihonjinron* discourses, which have led Japanese-Western cultural contact into a chain of dichotomies. The predominant concept of difference here is purely theoretical and has nothing in common with real-world experience.

The basic supposition of an anti-hermeneutic theory of understanding the other would state that *crossdressing* is historically the first stage of a cultural encounter and the reciprocal assignment of identity is the last, being the point at which the other has disappeared behind the cliché that has been made of it and is no longer present as a concrete encounter. The "presence of the other" means that the encounter still has the character of an event, albeit increasingly mediated, but the trace of that "first time", when the other still seemed unfamiliar, remains. The cliché, on the other hand, replaces direct cultural contact and makes it possible to conjure up the other with-



out having to meet it. Anyone watching a television program about Japan or eating sushi in a Japanese restaurant is dealing with something ready-made, and with quotations. This is no different for the Western tourist in Japan who looks at a Japanese temple as if it were the photograph from his travel guide. The shock of the direct encounter is missing, that direct throw of a stone into water, which leads to circles of ripples. Where the ripples come to a standstill, the quiet waters of re-presentation set in, and the event of cultural contact enters stasis and no longer deserves to be called "cultural contact". Cultural contacts must have the character of events by definition.

Between 1995 and 1998 a team from the East Asian Seminar at the Freie Universität Berlin, led by Professor Irmela Hijiya-Kirschner, produced an annotated bibliography entitled "Kulturbeziehungen zwischen Japan und dem Westen seit 1853" [Cultural Relations between Japan and the West since 1853]. I have written this article to coincide with the publication of this bibliography, with the aim of briefly sketching my thoughts on a general theory of cultural contact, and to identify two criteria which were significant for the members of the team when selecting the texts to be annotated. The question as to the degree of presence or absence of the other relates to the subject of a text, and the question as to the degree of reflection relates to the text type. As far as the first point is concerned, we included texts *about* the *Nihonjinron* discourses, but not the discourses themselves, although it would have been possible to find material on the history of Japanese-Western cultural contact there. As far as the second point is concerned, we only included texts which either describe an actual instance of cultural contact or look at general laws and habits in Japanese-Western cultural contact. Texts which themselves play a part in the event character of cultural contact (travel writing, novels etc.) were not included. Since this means that the actual core of an anti-hermeneutic theory of understanding the other, the performative nature of intercultural encounter, was not significant in our choice of texts, the bibliography contains nearly no theoretical entries. But perhaps I was able to show in this short article how necessary such approaches are and what is to be gained from making the concept of cultural contact and not the understanding of the other culture the centerpiece of theoretical considerations.

Irmela Hijiya-Kirschner (ed.): *Kulturbeziehungen zwischen Japan und dem Westen seit 1853. Eine annotierte Bibliographie [Cultural Relations between Japan and the West since 1853; An Annotated Bibliography]*. München: iudicium 1999 (= *Bibliographical Series*, Vol. 6) xxiv/1173 pp. (ISBN 3-89129-398-4)

CURRENT RESEARCH

Changes in the Japanese Pension System

Japan's social security system faces a rapidly aging population, increasing unemployment among the elderly, the individualization of life-style patterns and a ballooning public sector debt. Frequently, the "privatization of social security" is regarded as the best solution to these challenges. In light of the ongoing reform discussion, Harald Conrad from the Social Science Section at the DIJ focuses on the current changes within the Japanese pension system. The latest pension reform, which passed the Diet in March this year, and the planned introduction of new occupational 401(k)-pension plans next year will have enormous consequences for the well-being of pensioners in the coming years. In order to assess these effects, the recent pension reforms must be evaluated in terms of their impact on the sustainability of pension finances, minimum income adequacy, distributive effects and economic efficiency. The results of this research will be available in English in autumn 2000.

Alienizing Asia: Assertions of Cultural Uniqueness in Japan, China and Korea

There has emerged over the past two decades in East Asia, as well as in other regions such as the Islamic world, a tendency to assert or reassert a sense of local identity clearly demarcated from that of the West. These efforts are, without exception, bound to a notion of different values, but comparisons are normally undertaken not so much to gain

greater self-knowledge or anthropological awareness but to promote the "values" themselves. In present-day China, for example, cooperation between the Communist Party and the "Neo-Confucianists" is becoming ever closer, and in Japan, politicians, administrators, and leading intellectuals refer at their discretion to "ur-"ancient Japanese or "Asian" modes of thought. Similar developments can be witnessed in Korea. Some of the central concepts within these discourses are as follows: Asian "inwardness" versus Western "outwardness"; family orientation, filial piety and subordination within a hierarchy versus the cold functionality of Western social relationships; productive participation in a collective versus Western individualism; and closely linked to this, the teacher-student relationship as well as the structure and function of training and education as a whole. This confrontation between "Asian" and "Western" values extends into philosophical debate, especially in the context of discussions on Heidegger, as well as into the areas of differing business ethics and competing interpretations of human rights. In political terms, what is often invoked is a new age for a new century - that of the Pacific.

The project proposes to do comparative research on the above developments in various societies (beginning with China, Japan, and Korea, then possibly extending into Southeast Asia and the Islamic world). The focus will be on the various discourses of the past twenty years. How have they been construed? How are and have they been mediated through politics and the media from a purely intellectual level to that of everyday discourse? Which organizations exist or have been formed to pursue the goals of cultural self-assertion? What must also be considered is the phenomenon of the 'double audience', the different attitudes presented by certain intellectuals inside or outside their countries, as well as the interplay between defensive and offensive definitions of culture etc. Questions of methodology will also be granted particular attention.

The project, to run for four years, was devised by Michael Lackner (Sociology, Universities of Göttingen and Erlangen), Mishima Ken'ichi (Social Philosophy, University of Osaka), and Irmela Hijiya-Kirschner (Japanology, DIJ). It will be supported by a research grant from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS). The project is part of the DIJ's special research focus of "Japan in Asia".



DIJ EVENTS

DIJ Economics Workshop

Economic Relations between Japan and China: Current State and Perspectives
(Tokyo, 115 June 2000)

During a half-day workshop the DIJ Economic Section presented the initial results of this year's primary research topic: "Japanese-Chinese economic relations". The discussion addressed Japan's economic relations with mainland China. This is a very timely issue considering the expected acceptance of China as a member of the WTO. The issue also fits well into the general DIJ project of "Japan in Asia" and the ongoing research focus of the DIJ Economic Section on the internationalization of Japan's economy.

Hanns Günther Hilpert started the workshop with a macro-economic analysis of Japanese-Chinese economic relations. He demonstrated the already high level of integration and intensity of this relationship by referring to trade and investment ties. Jörg Raupach-Sumiya followed with a discussion of potential economic rivalry and increased competition between companies of both nations. He developed industry-specific scenarios for a growing Chinese competitive threat in selected industries. Tejima Shigeki, Professor of Economics at the Nishogakusha University, Tokyo, analyzed structural and regional features as well as future perspectives of Japanese foreign direct investment in mainland China in the manufacturing industries. Jochen Legewie talked about the organization and managerial coordination of Japanese subsidiaries in mainland China with a focus on human resource management. René Haak presented the results of his empirical study of Japanese-German business cooperation in third countries by using China as his case. He pointed out problem areas and future trends.

The 35 participants from the academic and the business community engaged in a lively and somewhat charged discussion that revealed the high level of interest and explosive nature of this subject. An issue that aroused particularly heated debate was the question of whether Japan and China are heading toward increasing confrontation and rivalry, or whether

the forces of growing economic integration and mutual interdependence will deepen cooperation and a wealth-enhancing division of labor.

DIJ Lecture Series

Wirtschaftsbeziehungen zwischen Japan und China: Perspektiven für die Zeit nach dem WTO-Beitritt Chinas (Economic Relations between Japan and China: Perspectives for the Period Following China's Entry to the WTO)
(Berlin, 30 August 2000)

DIJ in cooperation with the Japanese-German Center Berlin (JDZB)

China in der WTO: Strategien deutscher und japanischer Firmen im Vergleich (Doing Business in China: A Comparison of Strategies by German and Japanese Firms)
(Hamburg, 31 August 2000)

DIJ in cooperation with the German Asia-Pacific Business Association (OAV)

In these presentations, the Economics Section of the DIJ presented the results of current DIJ research on Japan in Asia that focuses on China to a broad audience in Germany. The DIJ, in cooperation with local organizations, held two half-day symposia in Berlin and Hamburg. Cooperating organizations included the Japanese-German Center Berlin (Japanisch-Deutsches Zentrum Berlin), the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce (Handelskammer Hamburg) and the German Asia-Pacific Business Association (Ostasiatischer Verein). At all events, the lectures of the DIJ researchers Jochen Legewie, René Haak, Hanns Günther Hilpert and Jörg Raupach-Sumiya were complemented by presentations by other researchers and representatives from the business community (*in Hamburg*: Tim Hüren, Bayer AG; Eugen Teske, Ernst Komrowski & Co.; *in Berlin*: Hattori Kenji, China-Japan Investment Promotion Organization; Kinoshita Toshihiko, Waseda University). In Berlin, the former German Ambassador to China, Konrad Seitz, also commented on the presentations. Different venues allowed for a different focus in each city. Also, the presenters were able to reach beyond academic circles to large regional audiences composed of people from different professional backgrounds. In Hamburg, many of the 40 people in the audience were involved with

small and medium enterprises. In Berlin, the audience (about 80 people) consisted largely of members of the scientific and political communities.

DIJ PUBLICATIONS

Junko Ando, Die Entstehung der Meiji-Verfassung. Zur Rolle des deutschen Konstitutionalismus im modernen japanischen Staatswesen. [The Origins of the Meiji Constitution: the Significance of German Constitutionalism for the Modern Japanese State]. München: iudicium 2000 (= DIJ Monograph Series, Volume 27), 273 pp. (ISBN 3-89129-508-1)



In the current debate about revisions to the Japanese constitution, references to US prescription are often made. These are reminiscent of the way the Meiji constitution has been judged to be a mere adoption of the Prussian constitution abetted by German legal advisors. The author of the above work, however, questions this generally accepted view in her analysis of the reception and assimilation of so-called German constitutionalism in the formation and later interpretation of the Meiji constitution. In her examination of the constitutional advice offered by the four most eminent German legal advisors (Rudolf von Gneist, Lorenz von Stein, Hermann Roesler, and Albert Mosse), Ando draws on sources which, in part, have hitherto received little attention from other international research. It is therefore within the context of her critique of source materials that Ando offers a reinterpretation of Roesler's draft constitution that counters previous claims by Johannes



Siemes. In addition, Mosse's contribution as an advisor during the writing of the Meiji constitution is now made explicit for the first time.

The four German advisors' interpretations of German constitutionalism reveal not only their commonality but also their considerable differences. Indeed, Roesler and Mosse held quite opposing views, with Roesler a conservative monarchist and Mosse a political liberal. This obviously allowed the Japanese insight into certain interpretative latitudes within German constitutionalism itself. Certainly, Mosse's contribution helped ensure that the Meiji constitution was more liberal than it would have been under Roesler's influence alone. In addition, Ando's work proves incorrect any notion that the Meiji constitution is simply a Prussian clone. The Japanese had to decide on one of the interpretations presented by the German advisors, and their decision was influenced by their own traditional ideas of power and how to rule: on the one hand, the Confucian concept of *tokuchi*, and on the other, the views on the nature of imperial rule (*tennoishinsei*), influenced by the Kokugaku and Mito gaku schools. This is how a constitution came to be written which in form corresponded technically to European standards but which in its interpretation was molded by two ambivalent indigenous conceptions of how to govern.

Japanstudien – Jahrbuch des Deutschen Instituts für Japanstudien der Philipp Franz von Siebold Stiftung, Band 12: "Zwischen Burger und Sushi – Essen und Ernährung im modernen Japan" [Japanstudien – Yearbook of the German Institute for Japanese Studies, Volume 12: "Between Burgers and Sushi – Food in Modern Japan"]. München: iudicium 2000, ca. 325 pp. (ISBN 3-89129-375-5)

Volume 12 of *Japanstudien* will be published in December 2000. It focuses on the subject of food in modern Japan. Apparently, eating is not about nutrition alone, rather, food and eating are – in all cultures – invested with a complex set of signifiers and symbols. Food as an expression of material culture has thus become an important research focus in cultural studies and anthropology. Also there are several important contributions from numerous fields of economic and business research. Our Yearbook *Japanstudien* 12 extends the analytical framework of food by approaching the subject in Japan from various methodological as well as interdisciplinary perspectives. The ar-



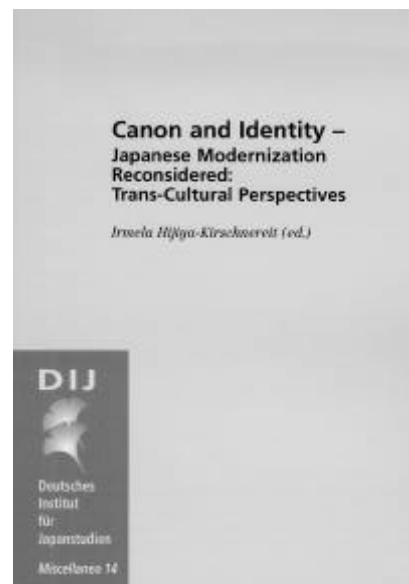
ticles that deal with this complex issue provide insights into the dynamics and diversity of the development and the current state of the complicated research subject food in Japan. Four book reviews of English and Japanese publications widen the spectrum of the themes and disciplines included in this yearbook.

CONTRIBUTIONS: I. Hijiya-Kirschner: Vorwort [Foreword] · N. Liscutin and R. Haak: Zwischen Burger und Sushi – Essen und Ernährung im modernen Japan. Eine Einführung [Between Burgers and Sushi – Food and Nutrition in Modern Japan] · K. J. Cwiertka: From Yokohama to Amsterdam: Meidi-ya and Dietary Change in Modern Japan · F. Hintereder-Emde: Erkenntnis geht durch den Magen. Wirklichkeitserfahrungen am Leitfaden des Essens in Sošekis *Wagahai wa neko de aru* [The Way to a Man's Enlightenment Is Through His Stomach – What the Role of Food in Sošeki's *Wagahai wa neko de aru* [I am a Cat] Tells us About Reality] · T. Aoyama: Literary Daughters' Recipes: Food and Female Subjectivity in the Writings of Mori Mari and Kodō Aya · K. Schmidtpott: Heilmittel, Genußmittel, Erfrischungsgetränk. Milchkonsum in Japan 1920–1970 [From Medicine to Refreshment – the Consumption of Milk in Japan, 1920–1970] · B. Quitterer: Die EBkultur als Spiegelbild japanischer Lebensrhythmen [The Rhythm of Life in Japan as Seen in its Food Culture] · S. Köhn: Gourmetcomics in Japan: Betrachtungen zum Begründer und Trendsetter *Oishinbo* [Der kleine Feinschmecker] [Gourmet Comics in Japan. Some Remarks about the Trendsetting Comic Book Series *Oishinbo* (The Little Gourmet)] · R. A. Jussaume Jr., S. Hisano, Y. Taniguchi.: Food Safety in Modern Japan · A. D. Brucklacher: Facing Glo-

balisation: Japanese Farmers' Responses to Changing Markets · H. G. Hilpert: Japans Agrarimport – ein Überblick [Japan's Agricultural Imports – An Overview] · T. Iles: *Tampopo*: Food and the Postmodern in the Work of Itami Južo 1 REZENSIONEN [BOOK REVIEWS].

Irmela Hijiya-Kirschner (ed.): Canon and Identity – Japanese Modernization Reconsidered: Trans-Cultural Perspectives. München: iudicium 2000 (= DIJ Miscellanea Series, Volume 14), ca. 200 pp. (ISSN 0941-1321)

Modernization in late 19th century Japan has long attracted world-wide attention if only to trace what is often termed a model of success – in fact, it is regarded as the only successful modernization of a non-Western nation. Whereas modernization studies until the sixties stressed Western "influence" and the role of imitation in the process of Japanese modernization, later studies have focused on its indigenous, pre-modern roots. More recent theories have drawn a more complex picture, focusing on the "invention of tradition" (Hobsbawm) and the creation of new institutions in the course of confronting the Western world.



It is in the light of these new research agendas in the humanities and the social sciences that a reconsideration of the Japanese case promises new insights. Special attention is paid to the foreign or the Other in this process. Whereas the "West" – as occident – appears to be offering the framework for new models of Japanese cultural identity, China, the perennial Other, attains a new role as well.

In the process of creating a nation-state and constructing a national identity, language and literature played an important part. In the same



way that the idea of a nation-state produced the concept of a national language, involving a policy of homogenization and the “unification of the written and the spoken language” (*genbun itchi*), literature, above all, fiction was redefined and institutionalized in new ways. At the same time literary theory and literary history were set up within the newly founded framework of academic institutions and served to formulate notions of a national cultural tradition. These new notions are also highlighted in the paradigmatic study of national religion and the formation of new media and audiences.

It is these areas of intellectual life and culture which formed the focus of attention of an international conference organized by the editor in cooperation with the Japanese-German Center Berlin as part of a research project of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences titled “Challenges of the Other” in October 1995, co-sponsored by the European Science Foundation’s Asia Committee. The majority of the papers presented on this occasion are collected in this volume to document a discussion which meanwhile may well be said to have gained momentum.

CONTRIBUTIONS: Irmela Hijiya-Kirschner: Introduction · Kamei Hideo: Western Elements in the Formation of Modern Japanese Literature: The Problem of the Protagonist and Structure · Janet Walker: Visiting Flower *Meisho* (Famous Places) and the Negotiation of Cultural Identity in Texts by Futabatei Shimei and Nagai Kafu · Michael C. Brownstein: The Study of Japanese Literature in Mid-Meiji · Wolfgang Schamoni: The Rise of “Literature” in Early Meiji: Lucky Genres and Unlucky Ones · Tanaka Katsuhiko: The Discovery of a National Language (*kokugo*) in Meiji Japan · Narita Ryuichi: The World of *Shohen Sekai* · Yasumaru Yoshio: National Religion, the Imperial Institution, and Invented Tradition – The Western Stimulus · Sakai Naoki: Translation and the Figure of National Culture · H. D. Harootunian: Enduring Custom: Memory, Repetition and Aura and the Claims of Native Knowledge.

The volume is available from the DIJ in Tokyo or from its Berlin office. The nominal fee is € 10 or ¥ 2000, payable in international reply coupons to be enclosed in the order.

REPORTS ON CONFERENCES

13th Annual Conference of the Association of Japanese Business Studies (AJBS)

(Oiso/Kanagawa, 9–11 June 2000)

This year’s annual conference of the Association of Japanese Business Studies (AJBS) took place from 9–11 June and was organized by scholars and staff of Keio University’s new Shonan Fujisawa Campus. Around 150 academics and Japan-oriented economic researchers from all over the world convened in the small Pacific coastal town of Oiso in Kanagawa Prefecture to debate developments in the Japanese economy and problems facing the Japanese corporate sector. The German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ) was represented with contributions by Jochen Legewie, who talked about the regional integration processes in Asia and the role of Japan’s automotive industry, and Jörg Raupach-Sumiyama who presented a paper on the reform of Japan’s system of corporate governance.

80 papers presented in five parallel tracks covered a wide range of issues within the field of Japanese business and economic studies. Two issues evolved as the central themes of the conference. First, will a new Japanese management model live up to the challenges of globalization in product and capital markets? And second, can Japanese companies develop a globally oriented strategy for human resource management that will overcome their deficits in respect to internationalization? The keynote speaker of the conference, Takahashi Hideaki, the Executive Vice President of Fuji Xerox Corporation, underlined in a highly impressive manner the relevance of these issues for Japan’s competitiveness from the perspective of the business community. Still, doubts remain about whether Mr. Takahashi took with him convincing solutions or concepts from this conference. Despite the large number of well-founded and empirically based analyses, path-breaking designs for a future-minded Japanese management model were in short supply. Certain deficits in the organization and conception of the tracks and individual sessions limited the possibility for discussion and exchange – quite often the themes of the papers in an indi-

vidual session were not related. Also, related papers were presented in parallel sessions. A little bit more care in respect to the composition of individual sessions would have been desirable. This notwithstanding, the annual AJBS conference again emerged as the trend-setting site for Japanese business and management studies, a site that regularly brings together experts and scholars to discuss topical developments.

Workshop on the Chinese-Japanese Relationship

Swedish Institute for International Affairs and European Institute of Japanese Studies
(Stockholm, 17–19 August 2000)

About 30 researchers of leading universities and research institutes in Europe, North America, Russia, China and Japan participated in this workshop on the Chinese-Japanese relationship organized by Marie Söderberg of the European Institute of Japanese Studies, Stockholm School of Economics. They either presented or discussed 17 papers in total that were divided into four sections covering historical concerns, external factors, security issues and economic relations between China and Japan. This wide range of academic approaches led to lengthy and fruitful discussions covering various aspects of the past, present and future of the Sino-Japanese relationship. Participants differed on the particularities but agreed that in general, relations between China and Japan will continue to be characterized by elements of rivalry and complementarity. Among the complementary elements, participants predicted that economic aspects are most likely to increase in importance and prevail in the long run. Hanns Günther Hilpert and Jochen Legewie represented the DIJ by giving two papers in the economic section.

9th International Conference of the European Association for Japanese Studies (EAJS)

(Lahti, 23–26 August 2000)

The European Association for Japanese Studies (EAJS) held its triennial



meeting in August 2000 in Lahti, Finland. The conference was co-organized by the EAJIS Headquarters and the University of Helsinki. In eight organized sections, more than 300 researchers debated new trends and developments in Japanese studies. Participants came from almost all European countries, but also from Japan, the United States, and Australia. Especially in the sections "Urban and Environmental Studies" and "Linguistics and Language Teaching", experts from Japan were numerous. As at the last EAJIS meeting in Budapest in 1997, a high number of participants came from Eastern European countries, providing evidence for an increasing regional integration of Japanese studies in Europe. The conveners of several organized sections had defined focus topics for the conference already in their Calls for Papers. Moreover, the number of panels increased, especially in the sections "Literature", "Anthropology and Sociology" and "Economics, Economic and Social History". Grouping presentations with a similar topic in panels significantly improved the quality of discussions. One unintentional side effect of structuring the conference along organized sections, however, was that many conference participants stayed within the limits of their organized sections for most of the conference. It is to be hoped that there will be improved chances for cross- and interdisciplinary exchange at future meetings.

The Literature Section was jointly convened by Richmod Bollinger (DIJ) and Ivo Smits (Centre for Japanese Studies, Leiden University). Keynote speaker was Professor Komori Yoichi from the University of Tokyo. The section came together under the overall theme of "Japan in Asia", but other topics were also represented. It consisted of four panels and a number of sessions containing independent papers; half of them were dedicated to classical subjects, while the others concentrated mainly on literature of the late nineteenth and twentieth century. Many contributions dealt with the processes of establishing a "Japanese" vs. an "Asian" identity in a cultural context, the influence of other Asian countries on Japanese literature and visual art, and the domestication of exogenous elements as part of Japan's modern cultural self image, to name just a few topics. After all panels and individual papers a lively discussion ensued. A novelty was the introduction of an informal get-together at a "Literature Lunch" on the first day of the conference which provided further opportunity for discussion and exchange of ideas.

This year's economic section organized by Ari Kokko (Stockholm School of Economics) and Franz Waldenberger (Munich University) went far beyond previous EAJIS conferences in Budapest and Copenhagen measured in both quantitative and qualitative terms. The papers covered a broad spectrum of topics and were so numerous that they forced the organizers to have parallel sections. Nearly half of the presentations were given by current (or previous) members of the German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ) and the European Institute of Japanese Studies, Stockholm School of Economics. Members of the DIJ also were responsible for the two panels within the economic section, "The Business of Families in Japan" (organized by Verena Blechinger, DIJ, and Friederike Bosse, Institute of Asian Affairs, Hamburg) and "Economic Relations between Japan and China" (organized by the economic section of the DIJ). Overall, the discussion showed that the Japanese economic and business model has lost much of its strength. Yet despite the strong need for organizational changes in Japanese firms, such changes can be seen only recently and only in some areas.

In the section "Anthropology and Sociology", Susanne Kreitz-Sandberg (DIJ) presented a paper at a panel on "Central State Control and 'Subversive' Strategies Among Children and Youths for Dealing with the Educational System and Creating Space for Themselves".

BOOK REVIEWS

Edward J. Lincoln: *Troubled Times. US-Japan Trade Relations in the 1990s. The Brookings Institutions Press. Washington, D.C. 1999, 321 pp. (ISBN 0-815-75267-9)*

This is a very important book for international trade policy, in particular for bilateral American-Japanese trade policy. The reason why the book may attract considerable attention among people looking at Japan's trade lies not only in the unemotional and comprehensive analysis of Japanese imports, of Japan's inward foreign direct investment (FDI) and of the American trade policy towards Japan, but also in the person of the author himself. Edward J. Lincoln is an old hand of the analysis of the economy and foreign trade of Japan. He has written many important books on this topic since the mid-eighties (Japan: Facing Economic Maturity

(1988); Japan's Unequal Trade (1990); Japan's New Global Role (1993)). Together with Fred C. Bergsten, Robert Z. Lawrence, Paul Krugman and Marcus Noland, he is on the top of the list of Western researchers who carried out essential macro-economic analyses of the Japanese trade and on market access in Japan in the nineties. But in contrast to the other aforementioned authors, he carries a professional Japan trade policy experience from his post as advisor for former US Ambassador to Japan Walter Mondale (1993-1996).

Lincoln analyzes the Japanese import trade and its inward FDI. In his study, his stocktaking concludes that the exceptional Japanese foreign trade structure did not change substantially since the eighties. In Japan, both the quantitative level of intra-industrial trade and the share of manufactured imports of the total GDP are markedly lower than in other industrialized countries, although a slight improvement over the last ten years can be seen. Moreover, the level of inward FDI of Japan in relation to the size of the Japanese market or compared to Japan's outward FDI remains small. According to Lincoln, the well-known structural barriers to market access are the pivotal reason for these unusual features. Therefore the Japanese market, though not closed, is an unreasonably difficult market for foreign suppliers. The common complaints by private business are essentially justified. Subsequently the reform process and the administrative deregulation of Japan in the nineties did not result in any substantial progress in Japan's import trade structure in spite of all the frequent rhetoric.

If Lincoln is correct, trade policy could do something to improve the current situation. Lincoln does admit that both the Bush and the Clinton administration did achieve some results with their active and sometimes high-pressure trade tactics. However, the benefits thus gained did not justify the costs incurred. Nevertheless Lincoln is pleading for a continuation of the American trade policy commitment towards Japan both in the multilateral and the bilateral arena. The Japanese market is of strategic importance for American business because of its market size, its comprehensive industrial structure, its highly sophisticated consumer demand and because of the well-known fact that Japan is the home market of some strong Japanese competitors which are active worldwide. Moreover, market access to Japan has an overall political meaning. First, "Japan" and its structural trade barriers should not be a pretext for protection-



ists in the US. Second, Japan's protectionist trade and industrial policy should not be an example to be followed by emerging industrial countries. Third, a more intensive integration of Japan into the world economy is of great importance for international policy.

What can be concluded for practical trade policy from this analysis? At the bottom line Lincoln is not different from other Japan trade experts. He is ultimately at a loss to explain the lack of progress. The current lengthy, tenacious and most difficult process of market opening via the WTO and by bilateral negotiations is without any realistic alternative. However, the trade policy towards Japan could be improved by hiring more experts and planning better public relations.

As a result of economic stagnation in Japan and the new strength of the US economy, bilateral trade conflicts faded in the second half of the nineties. But in a changing environment, such past conflicts may arise again quickly, particularly with record-high trade deficits with Japan in the late nineties. For this likely scenario, this study offers a precise quantitative analysis of the problems of market access to Japan. It also summarizes the basic thinking of American trade policy towards Japan. The weakness of the book is that it overlooks recent change in Japan on the micro-economic level. As the study was apparently finished in 1998, no reference is made to the current restructuring at the firm level or of the dissolution of Japanese company groups (*keiretsu*). However, industrial restructuring and the upheaval in Japan's financial markets have improved market access opportunities in Japan by means of cooperation or outright acquisition to a extent that previously could not be imagined. From the perspective of late summer 2000, Edward J. Lincoln might assess market access opportunities for foreign companies in Japan in a somewhat less pessimistic way.

(Hanns Günther Hilpert)

OTHER MATTERS/ OUTLOOK

Personnel News

Dr. Harald Conrad was born in 1966 in Monschau. He has worked as a researcher in the Social Science Section of

the German Institute of Japanese Studies since 1 July 1999. Dr. Conrad, after having finished an apprenticeship in the book retail business, studied economics from 1991 to 1996 at the University of Cologne. During this period, he spent one year on a DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) scholarship at Hitotsubashi University in Tokyo. After receiving his diploma in economics, he became a Ph.D. candidate at the Seminar for Public Sector Economics at the University of Cologne. From 1996 to 1998, he was a Monbusho scholar at Keio University in Tokyo, where he conducted research for his doctoral thesis. For this purpose, he received a three-month scholarship from the German Institute for Japanese Studies. In February 2000, the University of Cologne awarded him a doctoral degree in economics for his thesis "Reforms and Areas of Special Problems of the Public Pension System in Japan". As an extension of his doctoral research, Dr. Conrad now researches social security issues in Japan. He focuses on social security reform, international comparative social policy and social policy cooperation in Asia.

Katja Caßing, M.A., joined the Comprehensive Japanese-German Dictionary project on 1 September 2000 and will assist in editorial and organizational matters. She is a Ph.D. candidate in Japanese Studies at Trier University. The title of her dissertation is "*Enjo kōsai* [Compensated Dating]: The Representation of a Phenomenon in Japanese Print Media and Literature of the Nineties".

Dr. Harald Fuess left the German Institute for Japanese Studies at the end of June 2000 after working for five years as a Research Associate. At the Institute, he devoted his time to research projects in the field of modern Japanese social history, exploring topics in family law, divorce, father-child relations and the history of beer consumption. To encourage international academic exchange among young scholars, he organized monthly History Study Groups at the DIJ since January 1997. Dr. Fuess is now joining the Frankfurt Office of the Boston Consulting Group as a management consultant.

Prof. Dr. Irmela Hijiya-Kirschner was appointed member of the Foundation Council of the Japanese-German Center Berlin (JDZB) for a five year term beginning 1 September 2000.

Dr. Johann Nawrocki left the German Institute for Japanese Studies at the end of September 2000. During his

time as a researcher at the DIJ, Dr. Nawrocki conducted research projects on various topics within the field of history of ideas and history of law. The focus of his research was the study of the role of Shinto in Japan after the Second World War. He also studied the legal position of foreigners in Japan from the Meiji period to the present.

Dissertation Fellows

Christiane Seitz, International Relations, University of Wales, Aberystwyth: "Democracy Promotion: Japan's Official Development Aid and Political Conditionality" (June 2000 – September 2000).

Susanna Eismann, Japanese Studies, Trier University: "Training for Reading Proficiency in Teaching Japanese as a Foreign Language: The Case of Secondary Materials in Literature Studies" (July 2000 – September 2000).

Sabine Spell, Japanese Studies, University of Stirling: "Japanese Automobile Lobbying in Brussels: The Role of the Japanese Motor Car Industry in EU Policy Networks" (September 2000 – December 2000).

Silke Bromann, Japanese Studies, Duisburg University: "Japanese Supplier Networks in a Changing Environment" (October 2000 – January 2001).

Nicole Altmeier, Japanese Studies, Trier University: "Making Japanese History Visible: Japanese Government National Parks (Type B) (*rogo'no kokuei kōen*) and their Contribution to the Construction of National Identity" (October 2000 – August 2001).

DIJ International Symposium

Japan and Prussia
(Berlin, 7–8 September 2000)

Prussia, and later a German Reich dominated by Prussia, was both a model and a partner for Japan in the nineteenth century, playing a leading role in many areas of the country's ambitious modernization program. Since German reunification, there has been renewed interest in the history of Prussia and Brandenburg both within Germany and abroad. Saitama Prefecture has responded, for example, by



establishing a “twinned” partnership with the new federal state of Brandenburg. Against this background, the DIJ, together with the Japanese-German Center Berlin (JDZB), the German-Japanese Society Potsdam (DJG), and the Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation, Potsdam (KAS), will hold a two-day international symposium (7–8 September 2000) to discuss historical relations between Japan and Prussia and review the extent of historical research on this subject. What will also be examined are the roots to this nineteenth century bilateral relationship as evidenced in such widely diverse areas as science, law, economics, and art. The organizers of the symposium would expect discussions not to judge deterministically (“How the Prussian model inevitably led to Hiroshima,” for instance) but instead to analyze the options which led to cooperation between these two countries and how these choices affected the course of history.

Program

The Acquisition of Japanese Items in Prussia in the 17th and 18th Centuries: Dr. Claudius MÜLLER (Museum of Ethnology, Berlin)

The Reception of Japan in Prussia until the mid 19th Century: Prof. Dr. Reinhard ZÖLLNER (Erfurt University)

The Prussian Expedition to East Asia: Prof. Dr. Bernd MARTIN (Freiburg University)

The Iwakura Mission in Prussia: Dr. Ulrich WATTENBERG (GMD, Berlin)

Japan and the Prussian Army: Dr. Gerhard KREBS (Berlin)

The Foundation of the Seminar for East Asian Languages at the Royal Friedrich Wilhelms University, 1887: Dr. Astrid BROCHLOS (Humboldt University, Berlin)

Japan and the Prussian Constitution: ANDO Junko (Düsseldorf University)

Japan and Prussian-German Historical Studies: Dr. Margaret MEHL (University of Stirling)

Relations between Prussia and Japan in the Arts: Dr. Hartmut WALRAVENS (National Public Library, Berlin)

German Missionaries in Japan: Prof. Rolf-Harald WIPPICH (Sophia University, Tokyo)

Wilhelm Hoehn and the Creation of Japanese Police Forces: Dr. Herbert WORM (Hamburg University)

Japan and the German Expatriate Community in Japan, as seen in the Reports by Georg Michaelis: Dr. Bert BECKER (Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Potsdam)

Prussian-Japanese Industrial and Economic Relations: Dr. Michael RAUCK (Gräfelfing)

Japan and the Prussian Education System: Jörg MÖLLER (Christian Pedagogic Institute, Eppingen)

The Berlin Architects Ende & Böckmann and their Contributions to the Planning of the Capital Tokyo: Prof. HORIUCHI Masaaki (Shōwa Joshi University, Tokyo)

The Japanese Image of Prussia in Historical Perspective: NAKAI Akio (Tokyo)

Private Initiatives for the Promotion of Economic and Cultural Contacts: Annette HACK (Berlin)

(A detailed conference report will be published in the next *DIJ Newsletter*.)

DIJ Forum

Ishida Hiroshi, Professor, University of Tokyo: Class Structure and Social Mobility in Japan and Industrial Nations (20 September 2000)

Bernd Martin, Professor, Freiburg University: A Common Past Full of Crimes: Japanese-German Collaboration in the Development of Bacteriological and Chemical Weapons and the War in China (17 October 2000)

Ezra Vogel, Professor, Harvard University: Japan and Asia in the New Century (10 November 2000)

Schedule of DIJ Events

DIJ Cultural Studies Workshop
Asiatische Selbstbehauptungsdiskurse [Alienizing Asia: Assertions of Cultural Uniqueness in Japan, China and Korea]
(Tokyo, 30 November – 2 December 2000)

DIJ Social Science Workshop
New Trends in Japanese Social Policy
(Tokyo, 18 December 2000)

DIJ International Conference
Japan and China – Cooperation, Competition and Conflict
(Tokyo, 118 – 19 January 2001)

For detailed information on the conferences, please consult our website (<http://www.dijtokyo.org>).

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