

and others have covered elsewhere but which might be necessary background for readers seeking a one-volume treatment. Readers in search of an institutional or mass cultural history of Japanese nationalism will also need to look elsewhere. The work is, nevertheless, ambitious with wide applicability.

Now, the unsettling part. Doak's careful analysis highlights conceptual affiliations usually hidden from foreign observers and which are counter-intuitive, given popular vilification of Japanese nationalism. For example, civil progressive thinkers scorned cultural exceptionalist theorists, whether they were prewar cultural nationalists or postwar *Nihonjinron* advocates, even though both groups shared a deep mistrust of the state in defining their conceptions of society. Populist nationalists on the right and left, in other instances, shared in their antagonism for the seemingly progressive civic nationalism of the postwar "peace" state, which, in their view, imposed a broad unity similar to that demanded by the wartime state. Doak notices these odd alliances, in part, due to his sympathy, in the narrow sense of the term, for nationalism. He notes that nationalism is necessary to fascism, but so too is it essential to democracy. He thus looks upon current nationalist politicians in Japan without the knee-jerk opprobrium of the international news media. Readers will need to judge whether Prime Minister Abe Shinzō, by other characterizations as right-leaning a Gaullist as has served in the post, deserves Doak's comparatively optimistic portrayal. Many other prominent figures appear differently in the light cast on them. Puzzling through the implications of this perspective is ultimately the book's reward.

In sum, Kevin Doak has produced a work of deep erudition and complexity.

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LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPES: A Comparative Study of Urban Multilingualism in Tokyo. By Peter Backhaus. Clevedon (UK), Buffalo (NY), Toronto: Multilingual Matters, 2007. x, 158 pp. (Tables.) US\$44.95, paper. ISBN 978-1-85359-946-0.

Public signs occupying urban space in modern Tokyo, a research topic which the author labels the *linguistic landscape* and which he promotes as a new but promising sociolinguistics sub-discipline. The premise is that a city is not only a place where people talk, but a place where they also write and read and, in this case, do so in a variety of scripts and languages. The language of public signs, that often bewildering array of written messages on public display in Tokyo, in a dazzling variety of languages and scripts these days, constitutes the linguistic landscape of the city, and this book attempts to not only introduce the study of language on such signs but also to show what insights

about multilingualism and language contact can be gained from such research.

An extremely short first chapter of three pages lays out the rationale for the study of linguistic landscapes, as well as a brief synopsis of the succeeding chapters. A second chapter provides a theoretical introduction to the study of language on signs, exploring their semiotic properties and introducing a terminological distinction between the process and the results of linguistic landscape actions. A third chapter, by far the richest chapter in the monograph, provides an overview of previous approaches to language on signs from a variety of settings around the world. The author reviews studies from monolingual, bilingual and multilingual environments from North America, Europe, Africa and Asia, drawing attention to the fact that there are many points of commonality despite differing research environments and research interests. A fourth chapter follows this drift, firmly establishing a link between the theoretical and empirical part of the book, which follows in the fifth chapter. The overall framework for the study of the linguistic landscape is based on three guiding questions that focus on the sign writers, the sign readers, and the dynamics of the language contact situation, respectively. These focal points can be conveniently summarized in the following three questions: Linguistic landscaping by whom? Linguistic landscaping for whom? Linguistic landscape *quo vadis?* (Where is it going?) A fifth chapter then analyzes the sample of 2444 multilingual signs collected in the centre of Tokyo in 2003. The data are categorized on the basis of nine critical features, namely, the languages contained, combination patterns, the differences between official and non-official signs, their geographical distribution, availability of translation or transliteration, the order of the languages combined, the visibility of the multilingual nature of the signs, linguistic idiosyncrasies and, lastly, whether there are and what are the differences between older and newer versions of a given sign when they do coexist. Chapter 6 finishes the exposition with a simple six-page summary drawing general conclusions about Tokyo's linguistic landscape.

There is no question that the author's presentation of previous studies around the world, and the way in which they reflect the interaction of language contact situations and language policy, is enormously interesting. Equally compelling is the core chapter in the book (roughly half the text at 76 pages) detailing Backhaus's case study of public signs in Tokyo and the ways in which these reflect the dimensions of multilingualism in that city. The one objection that might be raised is that the author is at times too concerned with demonstrating the scientific basis of the study. Even the average professional reader will simply be satisfied with the fascinating features of the array of signs he presents.

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