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Hans Dieter Ölschleger (ed.)

Theories and Methods in
Japanese Studies: Current State and
Future Developments

Papers in Honor of Josef Kreiner

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Preface

On February 2 and 3, 2006, the Institute of Japanese Studies / Center for Modern Japanese Studies at the University of Bonn convened an international symposium, »State, Current Developments, and Future Tasks in Japanese Studies« at the University Club in Bonn. The immediate reason for this symposium was the retirement of Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Josef Kreiner, the speaker of the Center for Modern Japanese Studies and for decades – with an interruption of eight years because of his position as founding director of the German Institute for Japanese Studies between 1988 and 1996 – managing director of the Institute of Japanese Studies at Bonn University. 19 colleagues and friends of Prof. Kreiner from all over the world, led by the *doyen* of Japanese Studies, Ronald Dore, presented papers on various aspects of the broad range of interest of Professor Kreiner, such as »Anthropology, Ethnology, and Folklore Studies«, »Ethnogenesis, Ryūkyū, and Ainu Studies«, and »Images of Japan, the Role of Museums and Collections, and Japanese-European Contacts«, as the various parts of this symposium were named. At the end of the symposium, those present unanimously decided to publish the proceedings in honor of Prof. Kreiner.

The aforementioned threefold structure of the symposium is reflected in this volume, although some papers – from a variety of reasons – could not be included here. On the other hand, some colleagues and friends of Prof. Kreiner who were not present at the symposium in Bonn volunteered to contribute papers covering selected aspects of these topics. The results of this joint effort to honor Prof. Kreiner and his contributions to Japanese Studies are presented in this book.

Finally the editor would like to thank the Rheinische Friedrich Wilhelms-University of Bonn, which has made possible the symposium in February 2006 as well as the publication of this book by a generous grant. Dr. Carole Gee and Jeanne Haunschild, both from Bonn, read and corrected several contributions to this volumes. To both of them, the editor offers his sincerest thanks. And last but not least, thanks go to Tomoe Steineck, Jeanne Haunschild, and members of the Center for Intercultural Communion in Tokyo, who translated several contributions from the Japanese.

Hans Dieter Ölschleger

Bonn, September 2007

Note: For Japanese, Chinese, and other East Asian names, we generally follow the convention of writing the surname first, followed by the given name, without a comma separating them. The sole exceptions to this rule are: (1) names in »References Cited«; here – for reasons of uniformity – the names are consistently written in the European order and separated by a comma if the order is inverted; (2) names of Europeans or Americans of Asian descent; these names are written in the European order.

For the transliteration of Japanese words, the Hepburn system is used; for Chinese, the Pinyin. In place names, long vowels in Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka, and Kobe have not been marked.

The style of the individual papers has been preserved, therefore standardization by the editor has been kept at a minimum.

Key Note Speech

Ronald Dore

Japan – Sixty Years of Modernization?

It is a great honor and pleasure to be invited to celebrate Josef Kreiner's non-retirement. At this distance I don't very clearly recall what we talked about when he and Sepp Linhart invited me to Vienna thirty or forty years ago. All I vaguely remember are pleasant strolls along the banks of the Danube. But I am sure that whatever our talk was, part of our sense of rapport sprang from our shared experience of having passed from wondering at the exotic ways of Japanese villagers to finding ourselves comfortably at home with them. We also shared an acquaintance with the ebullient Oka Masao whose enthusiastic presence did so much to get Japanese studies going in Vienna. Nor do I remember what I lectured on, but I am sure that it wasn't quite such a demanding subject as the one he has asked me to talk about today: namely what Japanese studies mean for the world today.

Unfortunately I cannot speak for the world today, I can only say what Japanese studies mean for me, and what I think Japanese studies *ought to mean* for the world today. We all have our own Japans, our own personal *Japan-problematik*, and what are universities for if not to keep the spirit of curiosity alive by giving free range to individual curiosities? But there is one particular question which has been tantalizing me for most of my adult life. It is a question which has preoccupied a lot of influential thinkers, from Condorcet to Weber, from Morgan to Marx, from Spencer to Fukuyama. It is also a question which ought to be of concern to anyone interested in the long-term future of the human race. Put in its simplest and most abstract form it is this: is there any inevitability about the direction of social evolution? More elaborately, it goes like this. There is one undeniably cumulative and uni-directional trend in the history of world societies over the last millennium, namely the steady – and for the last century vastly accelerating – accumulation of scientific knowledge and its technological application. Is there any reason for thinking that this has inevitable and perhaps equally unilinear consequences for social relations and patterns of governance? And if so, are these consequences the same everywhere? And are those changes aptly summed up as increasing individuation, accompanied by increasing individualism?

Postwar Japan's Search for Modernity

It is a question which was very much in my mind when I wrote my first book about a tiny 300-hundred household district of Tokyo in 1950. My

investigations in that ward were punctuated by visits, often with groups of sociological researchers, to rural areas, to what people often told me was »the real Japan« – in Viennese terms, the Japan of the *Volk*. At the same time I was still occasionally picking up material for a doctoral thesis on education in the Edo period, and that gave me some notion of the social structure of pre-Meiji Japan and the extent of the changes that a near-century of industrialization and westernization had brought about. A good deal of the book was about trying to distinguish between industrialization and westernization – sorting out the processes of cultural diffusion from the processes by which changes in the means of production bring changes in the social relations of production; in Austro-German terms, Father Schmidt versus Marx, if you like.

That smattering of knowledge about Tokugawa Japan was also extremely useful in understanding the Japan of 1950, because »feudal« was a word still commonly bandied about as a label used to castigate any social practice that was deemed undemocratic, unenlightened and unmodern. Employers who objected to the formation of trade unions, and fathers who insisted that their daughters should come home before 10 o'clock were alike branded as »feudal«. For Japanese social scientists who knew their German sociology, their Toennies and their Weber as well as their Marx, *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* were everyday terms, and the manifestations of *gemeinschaftlich*/groupishness were condemned as nothing but hangovers of feudalism. There was a harking back to the early Meiji spirit of »civilization and enlightenment«. Fukuzawa Yukichi and his denunciations of the dead-hand of feudal Confucianism and its suppression of individuality had a great vogue. Some of the favourite terms of the reformers seeking to create a modern democratic Japan were *jishusei* and *shutaisei*, autonomy and agency. It was through freeing individuals from the trammeling bonds of community and cultivating independence of spirit – refusing, that is, to afford that deference to hierarchical authority which was seen as inherent in the Japanese traditional community – it was only thus that Japan could and should make its way to modernity.

Unique Japan?

But most people were ambivalent about how this could be done. For this thinking in terms of historical stages through which societies evolve, often went along with a vague assumption of Japan's cultural uniqueness. Anyone writing about Japanese society in the 1950s was in some sense engaged in a dialogue with the arch-exponent of the cultural uniqueness assumption, Ruth Benedict, whose *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (1946) was then, by a long chalk, the most influential interpretation of Japanese society. When I got

back to London in 1951, the first thing the sociologists at the London School of Economics asked me to give a seminar on was Benedict's book.

The easy and comfortable relations I had with my Japanese friends made me very skeptical about the uniqueness business. In my book about the Tokyo ward, I remember writing a long passage arguing that the notion of *giri*, which according to her was »[one of the most curious] of all the strange categories of moral obligations which anthropologists find in the culture of the world« and something »specifically Japanese« (Benedict 1946: 133), was in fact perfectly familiar to any Englishman. What was different was the social structure and pattern of social relations which made the *relative importance* of the type of obligation it connoted – relative, that is, to other forms of obligation – rather different as between Japan and Britain.

For my money, a more helpful guide to understanding Japan was David Riesman and the notions he had elaborated in his book *The Lonely Crowd* (1950) about the evolution of American society. He had built on Weber's notions of how, from the hierarchical community-centered society of feudal Catholicism, the emergence of individualism took the form of the Protestant ethic, which both formed and was reinforced by early capitalism. Early capitalism, when economic activity was based on the family farm and the owner-managed small business was indeed, said Riesman, the era of the inner-directed man, proud of his independence, constrained neither by priests nor community gossip, but by the guiding light of his own conscience. By the late 20th century, however, that individualism was outmoded. This was the era of the big corporation, big bureaucratic organizations, public and private. Organization man was other-directed man, the man who had learned the virtues of conformity. The virtues of individualistic democracy based on independent conscientious thought, which the American Occupation was trying to transplant to Japan were the product of an earlier era, a moral legacy kept dubiously alive by sheer inertia.

The Skipped-Over Stage

That organization man thesis looks a bit dubious today as a description of contemporary America. American organizations have imported the principles of market individualism. They have become more and more organized on the basis of interpersonal competition and performance rewards rather than loyalty, trust, seniority or a sense of shared destiny. But at the time it seemed plausible enough, and I ended the book by quoting an influential left-wing writer at the time, the human geographer Iizuka Kōji (1952: 63): It is striking, he said, how much more often we hear the word democratization than the words liberalism and individualism. Maybe, he said, that is because a lot of left-wing Japanese hope for a socialist rather than a capitalist future. But such hankering after the security of a socialist society was only another manifesta-

tion of the spirit of dependency. You were only entitled to get to socialism if you had been through the baptism of liberalism and individualism. The Japanese he said were trying to get a democratic society while skipping over what he called the »process of individual reformation in the field of consciousness« which should precede and underpin it.

In quoting this I noted that for a Westerner to assume, as Professor Iizuka assumed, that the Japanese had to become just like us, and that if they had skipped important stages in the evolution of Western society that was something they had to make up for -take a make-up exam, as it were – might seem a bit like arrogant ethnocentrism. But anyway, that was how the Japanese did see it, as was evident in the frequency with which they classified Japan as a *koshinkoku* – a backward country or a following-behind country, not yet up to the standards of civilization of the *senshinkoku*, the advanced countries.

But my final word was about the nationalism factor: OK, I said, the Japanese consensus, under the overwhelming influence of the Americans, was that they had to become »just like us«. And maybe they will succeed. But one can

hardly expect the period to last indefinitely in which the nation is prepared to take its values from, and measure its achievements by the yardstick of, other countries. Eventually a sensitive *amour-propre* may combine with entrenched interests to develop new goals of a different – a »truly Japanese« – kind, and to create a new sort of society and a new sort of political regime in which the old forms of dependency are subtly combined with the new. (DORE 1999: 393)

The Economic Success Story

Well, by the end of the 1980s that new sort of society, that distinctively Japanese-type industrial society, had arrived. And, in a way that nobody had envisaged in the 1950s, it was a rich, industrially and financially powerful society. The Japanese phenomenon brought many more social scientists, in Japan and elsewhere, flocking into the field of Japanese studies. The concern was first to explain, second to evaluate. Explanation fell into two broad categories. On the one hand there was the sociologists' question: how does one explain the distinctiveness; explain why Japanese corporations and market regulation got to be so different from those in other industrial societies? And secondly, the economists' question: how do you explain the success, the high growth rates?

On the distinctiveness question there were four main strands of explanation – competing strands, often, because academics always like sparring with other academics, but in fact complementary strands. The first was the stages of evolution explanation. Japan was showing an odd combination of modern industrial technology and the hangover of feudalism – much as Veblen, prophetically at the time of the Second World War, argued that Japan had a unique opportunity for successful military imperialism in combining ad-

vanced military technology with an absurd ethic of fanatical sacrificial loyalty. The second was in terms of a distinctive, inherited, and permanently unchanging culture; low levels of individuation and the weak strength of individualistic norms, a propensity for group commitment, the emphasis on group harmony and the avoidance of conflict, the acceptance of hierarchy, high levels of generalized trust, etc. The third was in terms of late development, the particular circumstances of a country industrializing by learning from other already industrialized countries: being able to learn from others' mistakes, notably by avoiding class conflict; being able to adopt the latest and most enlightened organizational techniques unhampered by the institutional baggage of the past; giving full importance to education and meritocratic social mobility; creating a strong bureaucratic elite and legitimizing government planning and industrial policy regulation by the nationalist drive to catch up. The fourth strand was in terms of particular idiosyncratic historical circumstances, notably the brief outburst of class politics and industrial strife after the Second World War and the search for a more egalitarian pattern of development as a necessary compromise.

As for the success question, the battle was between those who thought that many of these distinctive features, notably government industrial policy, had contributed largely to Japan's high growth rates, and doctrinaire American neo-liberals who argued that it was, in fact, the entrepreneurial vigor Japanese displayed in their competitive domestic markets which explained their success – success which they had achieved in spite of the mistaken interference of an over-bearing state in the name of industrial policy. The argument got rather contorted by the fact that these Reaganite economists were also American patriots who wanted to argue that it was indeed the distinctive characteristics of the Japanese economy which gave them an unfair advantage and allowed them to gobble up market share in the United States. This line of reasoning led at the end of the 1980s to what was known as the Structural Impediments Initiative – a marathon series of negotiations in which the Americans tried to persuade the Japanese that many of their institutions and business practices should be altered to make it easier for American firms to penetrate Japan in the way that Japanese firms were penetrating America. Those negotiations had no small effect on the changes – what their authors, together with the enthusiastic chorus of the Western business press called the »reforms« – of the last fifteen years.

Japan: A Successful, But Also a Good Society?

As for the evaluation, what you thought of Japan depended on where you stood. For left-wing writers Japan was a repressive society in which the bosses had co-opted and corrupted the trade union movement and condemned workers to a life of unremitting toil; a thriving economy in a cultural and

political desert to Americans like Ezra Vogel whose *Japan as Number One* (1979) became a Japanese best seller, Japan had many virtues which America would do well to imitate – its educational system, its civil service system, the way it dealt with crime – and its industrial policy.

For me, the evaluation of the Japan of the 1980s was bound up with the growing awareness of just how naive it was to have talked about »westernization« in that 1950s book, about the Japanese becoming »just like us«, about Japanese ambitions to make Japan just like any other Western society. I had learned, not least from the experience of living in Mrs. Thatcher's Britain as it was becoming a part of Europe, just how importantly Western societies differed from each other. And I had learned that arguing about the virtues and the vices of Japan was in effect to argue about some of the central political issues of our own societies – what should be the balance between competition and cooperation; how does one resolve the tension between the demands for individual freedom and the demand for shared collective benefits which cannot be had without renouncing particular individual freedoms; how much inequality of income, power and prestige should society allow in order to provide individuals with the incentives which make the collective benefits possible.

I find this in the preface to a book on individualism which I wrote in 1990:

For anyone with half a sense of citizenship, writing at the end of the 1980s, a detached, dispassionate treatment [...] of individualism is hardly possible. No one could be wholly indifferent to the political passions of a decade in which the collectivist claims of the state were so conspicuously rolled back in so many countries – the decade when Britain's top-rate income tax fell from eighty-three to forty percent, while Britain came to accept an unemployment figure of two million as hardly an election issue; a decade which saw America create fifty billionaires and one hundred thousand decamillionaires, while millions of other Americans slipped below the poverty line; a decade which witnessed the apparent conversion of half the world from East Berlin to Shanghai from the view that economies could be run through public-spirited service to the social good in collectively owned organizations, to the view that economies only prosper if they give wide scope to individual self-seeking and let the invisible hand of the market do the coordinating.

And, one should add, the decade in which an unindividualistic Japan, and a Germany which is arguably the least individualistic country of Europe, confirmed beyond much doubt the superior efficiency of their economies in almost any kind of fair competition for world markets. (DORE 1991: 6/246)

I thought at the time that on those crucial issues – the balance between competition and cooperation, between individual rights and the claims of society, between incentives and equality – Japan had more or less got it right in very much the same way as the Scandinavian societies seemed to have got it right. By

contrast the United States, Britain, and the other Anglo-Saxon societies seemed to be increasingly getting the balance wrong – tipping it too far in the direction of market individualism, ever more competition, incentives at the cost of rising inequality. And it certainly seemed at the time that the Japanese recipe, like the Scandinavian or the German recipe was not only a recipe for a decent society, but also a means to superior economic performance.

The Turn of the Tide

So much for the world in 1990. And then what happened in Japan, of course, was the bursting of the asset price bubble; a debt-overhang recession; what seemed like a steady recovery until the middle of the decade, followed in 1997 by new disasters: a new recession set off by fiscal tightening, the entrenchment of deflation, the Asian crisis, and a big bank failure all coming together and producing a deep sense of gloom and loss of national self-confidence – all that just as the American economy started booming.

The end result has been a series of changes which have quite seriously altered those balances that I talked of – between individual freedom and the claims of society, between competition and cooperation, between incentives and equality. »Privatization«, »small government«, the neo-liberal slogans which various Japanese governments of the 1980s had endorsed as part of their admiration for Ronald Reagan without any very great conviction, now become actual touchstones of policy. Deregulation broke up many of the arrangements which had prevented competition from being cut-throat competition; the hollowing-out of the *shuntō* wage-bargaining system destroyed the Japanese version of incomes policy; bureaucrat-bashing and privatization bumped up the moral standing of profit-seeking and poured scorn on the notion of public service; labor market reforms increased the life-chance gap between those in secure and those in insecure employment.

Fundamental Change in the Japanese Firm

But the biggest change of all was the shift away from the established Japanese corporate system in which lifetime employment conventions and a system of mutual cross-shareholding had created semi-community-like firms run primarily for the benefit of customers and employees. Managers in 1990 saw themselves as something like the eiders of the firm community. Shareholders were treated as just one outside constituency that the firm had to keep happy as they had to keep their banks and their suppliers and their distributors happy.

Since then, there has been a decisive shift away from that conception of the firm towards the belief that firms should be run according to what has, over the last twenty years, become the American orthodoxy, the doctrine of shareholder value. Managers are increasingly seen simply as the agents of

shareholder principals. Their duty is to maximize shareholder returns, getting as much as they can out of the work force for as little a wage cost as they can manage without impairing the quality of their work. The stock exchange where these shareholders meet and buy and sell their properties has become the central institution of the economy, the barometer by which the health of the economy is measured, the nation's playground where two and a half million Japanese citizens have accounts with the internet stockbrokers.

The change is all in one consistent direction – to favor shareholders at the expense of employees and to make Japanese firms more like American firms. It is far from complete: some would argue that it has been marginal. A law designed to encourage firms to adopt a system of governance which gives external directors a dominant voice on company boards and expects them to act as representatives of the shareholders has so far attracted only a tiny minority of firms even though it is a significant minority. Managers use more and more contract and temporary labor, but are still reluctant to fire workers they have accepted as regular employees, and are still keen to offer the prospect of lifetime careers to key staff. But pleasing shareholders to keep up their share-price has leapt to the top of many managers' priorities; consultation with the unions has been downgraded and wage and salary differentials have greatly increased. Japan no longer stands out as a society with a relatively egalitarian income distribution.

So, once again, explanation and evaluation are called for. As far as I am concerned evaluation is simple. The *Wall Street Journal*, the *Financial Times* and the *Economist* all applaud these changes as changes for the better, and say they have not gone far enough. I take precisely the opposite view.

The difference lies primarily in criteria of judgment, political values. It is accompanied, however, by a difference in interpretation of the significance of these changes. The business press and the Japanese establishment are apt to describe the current economic situation as a definitive recovery, the pay-off for the greater efficiency brought by the restructuring of business that all the changes described above have made possible. I, together with a handful of unreconstructed Japanese Keynesians, would characterize it as a final emergence from a period of growth-depressing demand deficiency, too long delayed by the failure to tackle deflation. The growth in output and profits I would ascribe largely to Chinese demand, and the prospects for continuous modest growth as depending on the willingness to sacrifice some profits in favor of wage increases.

Back to Diffusion or Evolution

But explanation – not of the recovery but of the changes described – is much more complicated. We come back to our original question: cultural diffusion or the endogenous evolution of individual societies.

Clearly, cultural diffusion has a lot to do with it. The mechanisms of globalization are many, and America's cultural hegemony is not the least important of them. Japan's loss of self-confidence coincided with America's recovery of economic dynamism and apparent technological supremacy. In serving to enhance the status of America as role-model society, 1997 was a mini-1945.

But apart from this admiration of the contemporary American model there was another more subtle and long-term cultural hegemony mechanism at work. The end of the century saw the promotion to influential positions of senior middle management in the corporate and government bureaucracies of the »brain-washed generation« – those high-flyers who had been sent to the United States in the 1970s and 1980s to get MBAs at American business schools. At the same time, the economics and law departments of Japanese universities and the influential government advisory commissions were increasingly dominated by economists and experts in corporate law who had got their Ph.D.s in Chicago and Stanford, or even at Milwaukee and Ohio.

Cultural diffusion works through two main mechanisms: imitation and conquest. Imitation worked through those Japanese economists who came back from the U.S. thoroughly imbued with the doctrines of neo-classical economics, and the lawyers convinced by American doctrines of proper corporate governance. American institutional investors took care of the conquest part. Foreigners owned some 5–6% of Japanese quoted companies in 1990, about 25% now. The patient silent Japanese corporate shareholders who made the 1990 system viable, have been in large measure replaced by demanding shareholders, always ready to tell managements what they should be doing to serve their shareholders better and threatening takeovers if they do not listen.

Modernity or a New Stratification?

So diffusion is obviously an important part of the explanation, but what about the endogenous evolution part? What does Japan tell us about inevitable stages of social change accompanying technological development?

Some would say that 60 years after the end of the war Japan is at last shedding its remnants of feudalism, at last completing its process of modernization. By modernization they mean what the postwar Japanese Weberians meant, a process of transition from particularism to universalism, from rigidity to flexibility, from fate to choice, from tied commitments to persons and organizations to commitment to the principles of the market, from docile acceptance of submergence in ascribed groups to individual liberation and deliberately chosen association – association on the basis of individual achievement and shared interest – all those things that Professor Iizuka was talking about back in 1950.

Well, maybe. Greater affluence and the expansion of individual choice through the increasingly varied complexity of the economy and the social structure may well have something to do with it. But an even more important factor, particularly in eroding egalitarianism and changing the community nature of the firm by shifting the balance between employee and shareholder interests, is the increasingly stratified nature of Japanese society, the decline in social mobility, and the increasingly hereditary transmission of social class status.

After six generations of meritocracy – roughly three generations up to the Second World War when social mobility was limited by constricted educational opportunity, and three subsequent generations of much expanded educational opportunity and much less limited social mobility – class divisions in Japan are hardening. The intergenerational transmission of class status is increasing. It is not clear which of the four possible mechanisms which could account for this are the most important. It does not seem to be the result of any retreat from the principles of meritocratic competition. (I remember a Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, telling me that the last time a Kingsman's son was admitted just because he was a Kingsman's son was in 1973: Japanese universities had got to that stage in 1886. Even in private business, a Toyota great-grandson may be promoted to the board 10 years earlier than his peers, but unlike scions of the Agnelli family in Italy, he doesn't get to run an important part of the family empire.)

But which is the most important of the other three mechanisms which account for the hereditary transmission of the ability to succeed in meritocratic competition? Is it the economic mechanism – the ability of parents to buy educational privilege for their children? Is it the cultural mechanism – the effect both on aspirations and on cognitive attainment of the conversation at the breakfast table and the channels watched on TV? Or is it the genetic mechanism – bright parents tend to have bright children for all there is regression towards the mean? Is declining mobility part and parcel of the polarization of incomes, or of the final arrival in Japan of tabloid journalism and tabloid TV and refinement of the techniques of dumbing down? Or is it that six generations of educational selection have scooped all the talent to the top?

It is quite important to know the relative weight of the three mechanisms because social engineering can do something to alter the effect of economic and cultural privilege but not of genetic advantage. Little is known with certainty about the issue, chiefly because the correlation of intelligence with either race or class has become a taboo subject for social scientists. But whatever the cause the consequences are clear. They are clear, first, in the declining effectiveness of working class leadership. The talented union leaders of the 1950s and 1960s, forced on to the shop floor by family poverty, have no successors. The Socialist Party has evaporated. The managerial middle class continues to drain talent from below, but in diminishing proportions. It is

increasingly self-recruited. It increasingly sends its children to selective private secondary schools. Studies clearly show the polarization, not only of incomes but also of educational achievement.

And all this has important consequences for social relations. The top managers who are now retiring often came from large families of diverse occupational destinations, some managers, some craftsmen, some greengrocers. They rubbed shoulders with their future subordinates in common, often rural, schools and subsequently with people like their subordinates at family parties. The sense of empathetic cross-class rapport which was usual for their generation contributed a good deal to the quasi-community character of the Japanese firm. It is not being passed to younger generations of one or two-child families, educated at private schools.

Another major difference from the generation that built the postwar corporate system: with the destruction of personal wealth at the end of the war, most of that older generation had little income apart from their salaries. But they have built up and passed on to younger generations the financial assets which gives their owners a strong interest in the return on capital and makes of them a managerial class far more sympathetic to the claims of shareholders than to those of rank and file workers.

Cause For Our Concern Too?

So that, for me, is what the study of Japan ought to mean for the world today. Japan became a thorough-going meritocracy – in the sense of allocating positions in society on the basis of educational achievement, and allocating educational opportunity on the basis of cognitive achievement and demonstrated aptitude – earlier than any other industrial society. That was one of the »late developer« effects. So it is reasonable to suppose that the long-term consequences of meritocracy are showing up in Japan ahead of European societies. Marx has the famous phrase about England showing to India only the image of its own future. It may well be that Japan, as it shows signs of increasing stratification, is only showing us signs of our own future. And we should be worried.

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Part I: Anthropology, Ethnology, and
Folklore Studies

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Japanese Anthropology and Folklore Studies

1. A Brief History of Japanese Anthropology

Japanese anthropology has a longer history than is commonly supposed.¹ It is always difficult to identify exactly the beginning of a project, but we may say that, in Japan, anthropology began as an academic discipline shortly after 1877, when American zoologist Edward Morse discovered a shell mound in Ōmori near the Bay of Tokyo. This shell mound was later proved to belong to the late Jōmon period. Morse, who was hired by the Japanese government as a professor at the Imperial University of Tokyo, found an unusual pattern in the human bones excavated, and argued that it was a sign of cannibalism. His argument was not verified by subsequent research, but aroused strong interest among many Japanese in their ethnic origin. One of them was Tsuboi Shōgorō (1863–1913), often called the »father of Japanese anthropology«. In order to investigate the issue, Tsuboi proposed a comprehensive approach to the study of Japan, including archeology and biology. He thus established in 1884 an academic society devoted to the study of the human race, which is known today as Nihon Jinrui Gakkai (Anthropological Society of Nippon). Tsuboi's reputation was firmly established when he was appointed professor at the Imperial University of Tokyo after studying in England from 1889 to 1892.

Full-blown ethnological research began shortly afterwards. Among Tsuboi's students was Torii Ryūzō (1870–1953), who conducted fieldwork in many parts of Asia, including Okinawa, Taiwan, Korea, China, Siberia, and Mongolia. A major factor that made such extensive research possible was Japan's newly gained military power. Japan, a victor in the First World War, put under its control many Asian and Pacific nations, where ethnological research began to be carried out vigorously, sometimes in collaboration with Japan's information agencies. In 1934, the Nihon Minzoku Gakkai (Japanese Society of Ethnology) was founded, followed by the opening of some ethnological institutes. One such institute was the Minzoku Kenkyūjo (Ethnic Research Institute), which was established in 1943 with governmental support. Oka Masao Oka (1898–1982), who received a doctorate at the Univer-

¹ A most comprehensive survey, written in English, on this topic is found in Shimizu 1999. Yamashita, Bosco, and Eades 2004 and van Bremen, Ben-Ari, and Alatas 2005 also contain articles on Japanese anthropology in historical and comparative perspective.

sity of Vienna, was among the leading figures there. He emphasized the need to study contemporary issues, rather than so-called »primitive« society, paying special attention to political economy – a reflection of the exigencies of the war. Like Oka, many of the Japanese anthropologists who distinguished themselves after the war were affiliated with such institutes.²

This history shows that Japanese anthropology has so-called »colonial roots« as does its Western counterparts.³ In contrast to the West, however, where these roots remained almost undisputed until the early 1970s (e.g., Asad 1973; Hymes 1972), Japan's defeat in the Second World War revealed the anthropologists' involvement in its colonial and imperial enterprise. (The same may be said of German folklore studies as will be examined later). As a result, the discipline's reputation was damaged. Anthropology, which used to be known in the prewar days as *minzokugaku* (»ethnology«), was stigmatized for its collaboration, even though indirect and partial, with the military. Under these circumstances, Japanese anthropologists were forced to reconstruct their discipline using new concepts and designs. Two major figures who played a central role in this reconstruction were Oka and Ishida Eiichirō (1903–1968). Oka, with his superior organizational skills, helped found the Department of Social Anthropology at Tokyo Metropolitan University, while Ishida, who had been jailed during the war as a thought criminal, was appointed head of the newly established anthropology program at the University of Tokyo.⁴ Although partially trained at the University of Vienna, Ishida followed the American model of cultural anthropology in formulating the curriculum. Generally speaking, Great Britain and the United States exerted the greatest influence on the development of anthropology in postwar Japan.

Until the late 1960s, anthropology courses were offered at a relatively small number of Japanese universities. Beginning in the 1970s, however, when the slogan of *kokusaika* (»internationalization«) was on the lips of

2 For the details on the Japanese anthropologists' involvement in the Second World War, see Shimizu and van Bremen 2003.

3 Ethnological museums, in which cultural items taken from colonized nations are displayed, have frequently been criticized as quintessential examples of the »colonial roots« of anthropology. We must remember, however, that, like many of the Japanese objects currently owned by, and displayed in, Western museums, these cultural items were often presented as gifts by local nobility or were purchased from local people, however unfair the trade might have been, or were even exchanged for Western goods and services rendered. It would be too simplistic to unilaterally blame ethnological museums for the »crime« allegedly committed by curators and collectors.

4 Ishida is often regarded as *the* leading figure in the development of Japanese anthropology after the Second World War. According to Ayabe Tsuneo, however, Oka exerted even a stronger influence than did Ishida, especially in the founding and staffing of anthropology departments in Japan (personal communication).

many people, *bunka jinrui-gaku* (»cultural anthropology«) became popular not only among students, but also among the general reading public. This popularity was owed to the assumption that cultural anthropology was useful for broadening the Japanese people's understanding of other peoples' worlds. Three anthropologists, Umesao Tadao, Nakane Chie, and Yamaguchi Masao, even became national heroes. Umesao, the first director general of the National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, wrote in 1957 a legendary article on the place of Japanese civilization in the world (Umesao 1957, 1967, 2003). He maintained that, contrary to the common supposition that Japan is an eastern country, it has in fact many similarities with Western Europe due to the similar ecological conditions. He labeled his theory as *bummei no seitaishikan* (»an ecological history of civilization«). Nakane was initially trained as a specialist on India, but she is best known today for her 1967 book *Tateshakai no ningen kankei* [Human relationships in vertical society], which was later translated into English as *Japanese Society* (1970). In Japanese studies abroad, this book has been one of the most influential works on Japanese society. For their distinguished achievement, Umesao and Nakane were both awarded *bunka kunshō* (Order of Cultural Merits), the highest honor to be bestowed on Japanese academics, in 1994 and 2001, respectively. Yamaguchi has written extensively on a wide range of topics. In the 1970s and 1980s, his innovative views were considered exemplary of what at that time was called *nyū akademizumu* (»new academism«). His professional works, centered on the binary opposition between »center« and »periphery«, are comparable to those of Victor Turner.

Despite the popularity of cultural anthropology, the word *minzokugaku* continued to be used for Japan's professional community of anthropologists, Nihon Minzoku Gakkai. In 2004, however, after heated and prolonged discussion, this society finally changed its name to Nihon Bunka Jinrui Gakkai (Japanese Society of Cultural Anthropology). Today, it has a membership of more than 2,000 people, which makes it the second largest anthropological organization in the world only after the United States of America. Due to Japan's peripheral status in the »academic world system« (Kuwayama 2004), however, its influence is limited outside East Asia.

2. Major Characteristics of Japanese Anthropology

Three major characteristics of Japanese anthropology are briefly discussed here. The first is the strong concern with the self, namely, Japan and its people. As mentioned earlier, in Japan, anthropological research was initially inspired by Morse's argument about cannibalism and by the subsequent controversy about Ainu. This controversy took place between two competing groups of scholars, one supporting Tsuboi's theory that Japan's Stone Age people were Koropokguru, a people described in Ainu legends as earlier

inhabitants of their land, and the other group supporting Koganei Kiyoshi's theory that the Ainu were the original inhabitants of the Japanese islands (Shimizu 1999: 125). Until the mid-1920s, Koganei (1859–1944) received more support from the academic community than did Tsuboi, but the debate was not settled completely. Even today, the ethnic origin of the Japanese continues to be debated among Japanese anthropologists. By contrast, Western anthropologists have concentrated on the study of other peoples, leaving domestic research in the hands of historians and folklorists.

Another characteristic of Japanese anthropology is the affinity with the people who have been studied. In the West (i.e., the Western part of the world in general), anthropology began as a science of »primitive« people, whose history and culture were radically different from those of the West. In other words, there were, and still are, great differences between the researcher and the researched. By contrast, many of the people studied by the Japanese have been their Asian and Pacific neighbors. This fact explains why dichotomous thinking, such as »civilized« vs. »primitive« and »us« vs. »them«, has been less conspicuous in Japan than in the West (Askew 2004: 75–76). If anything, until the end of the Second World War, the Japanese emphasized continuity with the people studied, arguing that the Japanese were, as their neighbors, better able to understand them than the Westerners could (Yamashita 2004: 103, 109). This argument was presented strategically in order to eliminate Western influence from the Asia-Pacific regions ruled by Japan.

Still another characteristic of Japanese anthropology is the duality concerning research subjects and research objects. As is clear from the above, the Japanese have eagerly studied other cultures since the late nineteenth century. In the 1960s, when funding for overseas research increased dramatically (see the next section for details), the geographic scope of Japanese research expanded, and, today, it covers almost all parts of the world. In this respect, the Japanese are subjects (i.e., active agents) of anthropological research. At the same time, they have been studied and described by other people, especially by Westerners, who have found Japan radically different from their own countries. In this respect, the Japanese are, like the »primitive« people, objects (i.e., passive agents) of anthropological research. This duality derives from Japan's in-between status in modern history. In Asia, Japan was the colonizer/ruler, but, in the larger world, it was subdued by the Western powers.

3. The Status of Japanese Studies Within Japanese Anthropology

From the early 20th century down to the end of the Second World War, opportunities for overseas research increased steadily with the expansion of Japan's economy and military. Certainly, the »colonial roots« of Japanese anthropology left deep scars in many Asian countries, Korea in particular,

where resentment against Japanese research is still strong, despite its scholarly values. However, as far as research into other cultures was concerned, Japanese scholars benefited from their country's power.

The situation changed dramatically, and almost overnight, with Japan's defeat in the war: the Japanese government could no longer support overseas research. As a result, Japanese anthropologists, most of whom were city dwellers, were forced to study Japan's countryside as a sort of »substitute« for foreign cultures. Although unfortunate, this incident brought about some unexpected and positive results – the discovery of »peculiar« customs within their own country that had hitherto been practically unexplored. Yoshida Teigo, for example, carried out research on *tsukimono* (»possession«) and produced a classical book on the subject (Yoshida 1972). Afterwards, he did a comparative study of Japan, Indonesia, and a few other Southeast Asian countries, focusing on rituals. Unlike his young students born after the war, as well as his predecessors who had already received overseas training during the war, Yoshida had only a few opportunities to conduct long-term field research abroad. Instead, he avidly read ethnographical studies on different parts of the world and drew on his ethnographic expertise in analyzing Japan from a comparative perspective.⁵ We may say, then, that Japan's defeat in the war ironically helped Japanese studies grow within the country. It should also be noted that another major trend of research in the immediate postwar years was the sudden increase in the study of Okinawa/Amami and Hokkaidō.

In the mid-1960s, when Japan had recovered from the aftermath of the war, the situation began to change again. As more and more funding for overseas research became available, the Japanese anthropologists' attention began to shift once again to foreign countries. Sekimoto Teruo (1995, 2003) conducted a content analysis of the articles that were published in *Minzokugaku kenkyū* (*Japanese Journal of Ethnology*) from 1935, the year of its inauguration, down to 1994. According to his analysis, during the prewar period from 1934 to 1944, the number of articles that dealt with core Japan (i.e., the Japanese islands excluding Okinawa/Amami and Hokkaidō) was 95 (34% of the total), but it decreased steadily in the subsequent years: 63 (27%) during 1946–56, 53 (25%) during 1957–66, 48 (23%) during 1966–76, 41 (20%)

5 Yoshida frankly admitted, in his lecture given at the National Museum of Ethnology in September, 2005, that he had had only a few opportunities to do intensive fieldwork abroad for a long period. Considering the fact that Malinowski-type of research continues to be praised among anthropologists, this lack of field experience is certainly a drawback. However, Yoshida's comparative study, as represented by his book *Masei no bunkashi* [Cultural accounts of the supernatural], shows how ethnography produced by other scholars may be used successfully for cultural comparison.

during 1976–86, and 27 (16%) during 1986–94.⁶ By contrast, articles dealing with remote areas, such as Middle East, Africa, and Latin America, increased dramatically after the mid-1960s. Particularly notable was Africa, on which practically nothing had been reported until the 1957–1966 period, but which occupied approximately 13 percent of all the articles published from 1966 to 1986. As Sekimoto (2004: 137) explained,

In the last sixty years of its history, Japanese anthropology has been seeking people in the most remote areas, but they are the most remote only within a limited space that has been defined differently at various times by national and international politics. The centrifugal tendency of Japanese anthropologists is a search for the »maximally other«.

Today, Japanese anthropologists doing research on Japan are almost regarded in the professional community as »second-class citizens«. Specialists on Okinawa and the Ainu are probably exceptions, but, still, a certain stigma is attached to domestic research. Given the »centrifugal« tendency of anthropology, this is almost inevitable. Anthropologists, whether Japanese or not, build a career by studying different cultures »far« away from home. The word »far« has two meanings here. The first concerns space, namely, the location of a research site. The more distant it is from home, the more difficult field research is, and the more valuable it is considered to be. This was particularly true when transportation was undeveloped. The second meaning concerns time, namely, the assumed evolutionary progress. Anthropology emerged at the end of the 19th century, when cultural evolutionism began to prevail among Western intellectuals. As expected, the observing Westerners positioned themselves at the higher end of the evolutionary line, whereas the observed non-Westerners were placed at the lower end, hence the dichotomy between »civilized« and »primitive«. Lewis Henry Morgan's *Ancient Society* (1877), in which human societies were classified into three stages of development – »savagery«, »barbarism«, and »civilization« in ascending order of the assumed progress – is representative. Even though some scholars advocated relativism, the colonizer/observer/researcher and the colonized/observed/researched were regarded as completely different classes of people. Inevitably, the greater the

6 As noted in the preceding paragraph, in the immediate post-Second World War days, there was a sudden growth of interest in the study of Hokkaidō and Okinawa/Amami. In Sekimoto's analysis, the number of articles dealing with Hokkaido was 10 (4% of the total) during 1935–44, but it jumped to 30 (13 %) during 1946–56, followed by 19 (9 %) during 1957–66. As for Okinawa/Amami, the figures during the same periods were 9 (3 %), 23 (10 %), and 23 (11%). When these figures are combined with those of core Japan, the totals are 114 (41%) during 1935–44, 116 (50%) during 1946–56, and 95 (46%), which clearly indicates a high degree of interest in the study of Japan as a whole. In the subsequent periods, however, it rapidly lost its popularity: 63 (37%) during 1966–76, 58 (28%) during 1976–86, and 45 (27%) during 1986–94.

assumed distance between the two parties were, the more difficult field research was considered to be, and, therefore, the more highly it was evaluated. Even today, when the »primitive« world has practically disappeared, this structure of evaluation has not changed fundamentally. In anthropology, »far« means authentic.

4. The Development of Folklore Studies in Japan

Turning attention to folklore studies (also called »folkloristics«), in Japan, the foundation of this field was established in the 1930s with Yanagita Kunio (1875–1962) as the leader. Although little known outside Japan, Yanagita, a public intellectual who spent most of his life outside the academia, has been so influential, both inside and outside folklore studies, that there is today a field called *Yanagitagaku* (»Yanagitalogy«), which studies Yanagita's achievement both as a person and as a scholar. This is not to say, however, that he was the only figure that helped found the discipline. Among other leading figures was Minakata Kumagusu (1867–1941), who, during his long sojourn in Great Britain, wrote many articles for *Notes and Queries*. Minakata's research cut across a wide range of disciplines, including biology and ecology, and he even got published in *Nature*. Recently, almost 65 years after his death, his English publications were translated and published in Japanese (Minakata 2005). Still another major figure in the early years of Japanese folklore studies is Orikuchi Shinobu (1887–1953). Like Yanagita, Orikuchi was a man of letters, who, under the influence of Yanagita, started studying folklore, focusing on the ancient arts and beliefs. He is best remembered today for his idea of *marebito* (literally, »unusual person«), a stranger possessed of divinity who is believed to come from the other world on ceremonial occasions. This person's words and deeds are instrumental, in Orikuchi's analysis, in producing literature and the arts in this world.

Historically speaking, Japanese folklore studies developed in conjunction with ethnology. Because they are pronounced in the same way, *minzokugaku*, they used to be called »two *minzokugaku*-s«. The close relationship between the two disciplines derives from, among other factors, Japan's relatively late modernization. Until the mid-20th century, many old manners and customs had been retained in Japan, especially outside the urban centers. Japanese scholars, therefore, discovered within their own country what Western scholars had discovered among »primitive« people. In this state of affairs, the study of traditional culture among one's own people (folklore studies) coincided in many respects with the study of »primitive« culture among other peoples (ethnology). This coincidence partially explains why the scope of Japanese folklore research has been much broader than its Western counterparts. In Great Britain, especially in England, and in the United States, for example, folklore research is ordinarily focused on the analysis of folktales,

folksong, folk dance, folk costume, and so forth,⁷ whereas, in Japan, social structure and ideology are important parts of the discipline. In this regard, Japanese folklore studies may best be understood as the study of folkways, rather than folklore.

There is one important parallel between Japan and Germany – the appropriation of folklore research for political purposes during national crises. It is widely recognized today that, in relatively undeveloped parts of the industrialized world, including prewar Japan and Germany, folklore research played the role of a »national science« by both awakening and fulfilling the people's desire for recognition in the wider world. In terms of European intellectual history, this role may be understood as a romanticist reaction against the Enlightenment movement led by France. As the writings of German philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder show, romanticism rejected the Enlightenment ideal of rationality and universality, celebrating instead the non-rational aspects of human thought, the spirit of a nation (*Volksgeist*) in particular. Once nationalist politicians and writers declared spiritual independence, even superiority, of their nation, the responsibility of scientifically validating this claim fell on the shoulders of folklorists. They thus studied passionately distinctive traditions of their own nation, which were believed to spring from indigenous ideas uncontaminated by foreign ones. If such traditions were hard to find, they were often »invented«, if not completely fabricated. As the alliance of German folklore studies (*Volkskunde*) with the ideology of the Third Reich demonstrates, this tendency was strengthened during national crises. According to Hannjost Lixfeld (1994), contrary to the common supposition that German folklore research was misled by only a handful of fascist scholars, *Volkskunde* as »folk-national cultivation« was already evident in the preceding relatively democratic period of the Weimar Republic. Japanese folklorists were not as extreme as some of their German counterparts, but, still, strong nationalistic sentiments lurked in their writings. As Oka, Yanagita's contemporary, observed:

Yanagita's scholarship developed when Japan was full of nationalism. The Japanese people's view of their country as »backward« relative to the West had fostered a strong national consciousness among them. Thus, they resisted the influx of Western ideas and commodities. It was a period when the search for Japan's distinct culture began, and the need to maintain and strengthen the Japanese spirit was emphasized. Japanese

7 The theme of nationalism was less prominent in England than in Germany and in Japan. In England, the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution, industrialization and urbanization had progressed so rapidly that people felt threatened by the great social change taking place in their daily life. Eventually, a »nostalgic critique of industrialization and urbanization« (Mills 1997: 196) emerged, which became a major trend of thought in English folklore studies. This trend, in turn, brought about the strong emphasis on recording and describing the disappearing folklore.

folkloristics, therefore, has had fundamental similarities with its German counterpart (Oka 1979: 82, quoted in Kuwayama 2005: 111).

Yanagita's concept of *jōmin* («commoners») exemplifies the nationalism contained in his scholarship. As with other concepts he proposed, Yanagita did not define this neologism clearly, but its meaning is close to that of the German word *Volk* – commoners as distinguished from both the nobility and the outcaste. According to Fukuta Ajio (1984), who examined Yanagita's usages of *jōmin* from the 1910s, when the term was first used, down to the 1940s and afterwards, the meaning had gradually changed from a rather restricted sense of «peasants» to an all-inclusive category of people regardless of class distinction. In fact, shortly before and during the Second World War, Yanagita went as far as to juxtapose the Emperor with *jōmin* on the grounds that some aspects of ordinary people's life, rituals in particular, closely resembled those of the imperial family. *Jōmin* was thus identified with the entire Japanese nation, thereby buttressing the fascist government ideology, whatever Yanagita's intention might have been, which stressed the unity of all the Japanese people as the Emperor's *sekishi* or children (Kuwayama2007).

5. The Relationship Between Japanese Anthropology and Folklore Studies

Until the mid-1960s, when the Japanese resumed overseas research with governmental support, there were many overlaps between anthropology and folklore studies. Today, however, they have become increasingly separate.⁸ From the viewpoint of anthropology, the most obvious reason is, as noted earlier, the decrease in the number of Japanese anthropologists studying their own country. There are, however, other reasons hidden in the backstage. Two of the most significant are discussed below: (1) nationalization of Japanese folklore studies, and (2) the lack of professionalism among Japanese folklorists.

Nationalization means here the strong domestic orientation of an academic discipline, which has been caused by both its refusal to learn from foreign scholarship and its ignorance thereof, and the consequent isolation from academic communities abroad, despite the popularity the discipline enjoys within the country in which it is practiced. Due to the far-reaching influence of Yanagita and the enduring popularity of his books, Japanese folklore studies have successfully sustained themselves for more than half a century. They have, however, almost lost touch with Western folklore studies, from which

8 According to Iwamoto Michiya (2006), in terms of institutional organization, this separation was already observed in the 1930s, when anthropologists and folklorists established academic societies of their own in 1934 and 1935, respectively – Nihon Minzoku Gakkai (Japanese Society of Ethnology) and Minkan Denshō no Kai (Society of Popular Tradition). The former was organized by the people interested mainly in the study of foreign countries, while the latter by the people interested mainly in the study of Japan under the leadership of Yanagita.

Yanagita learned in his formative years. This nationalization has its roots in Yanagita's definition of Japanese folklore studies as a modern version of *kokugaku* (»national learning«)⁹, which in turn derived from his intellectual nationalism. The following words best illustrate his nationalism, coupled with a strong sense of rivalry with Western folklorists:

Even if foreigners flock together to make scientific observations [of our country], the results will be no more than those of »the five blind men and the elephant«. It is truly significant that our fellow countrymen, who are familiar with the world's scholarship, are setting out to study our own culture [...] We must study ourselves. Not only should we attempt to know ourselves better, we must also lead Western folklorists who have gone astray [because of the mistakes made in missionary reports on the non-Western world and by social Darwinism]. This is Japan's noble mission (Yanagita 1998a:171, quoted in Kuwayama 2004:72-73).

For Yanagita, a self-appointed leader of the world's community of folklorists, it was probably inappropriate to openly acknowledge his debt to Western scholarship. His pride, both personal and national, explains why much of the European-language literature he had consulted was eventually ignored in his writings.

A casual review of Yanagita's career reveals, however, his deep knowledge of Western scholarship. Shortly after his resignation in 1919 as an elite governmental bureaucrat, Yanagita was dispatched to Europe as Japan's delegate to the League of Nations. He took advantage of this opportunity to attend lectures at Geneva University and to read books by leading Western scholars at that time. The numerous European-language books he had collected during and after his stay in Europe are currently kept at Seijō University, Tokyo. In the voluminous works Yanagita produced, there are occasional references to the European-language literature he had studied, that of James Frazer in particular, but, because bibliographies were seldom attached, it is difficult to identify the sources of his ideas.

One of the best known examples in this regard is that of the three-stage model of folklore research, which Yanagita proposed in *Minkan denshōron* [On popular tradition], published in 1934. In this classic book, Yanagita argued that researchers should first study *yūkei bunka* (literally, »culture that has form«, meaning material culture), and then analyze *genko geijutsu* (»language and art«), and finally explore *shin'i genshō* (literally, »psycho-semantic phenom-

9 *Kokugaku* developed during the mid- to the late-Tokugawa period (1603–1868). Based on the philological study of ancient texts, such as *Kojiki*, *Nihonshoki*, and *Manyōshū*, it attempted to clarify Japan's distinctive culture and spirit, particularly those which were believed to prevail before the introduction of Confucianism and Buddhism. A major factor behind the development of this nationalistic discipline is the embryonic awareness of Japan as an independent nation (*Kōjien Dictionary of Japanese*, 5th edition).

ena«, meaning the mind). He thus proposed to proceed from the visible to the invisible, namely, from the less complex to the more complex. Many Japanese folklorists are convinced that Yanagita devised this model independently, but, among Japanese anthropologists, there has long been a suspicion that it was probably an imitation of Bronislaw Malinowski's three-stage model of anthropological research, presented in *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922), which consists of the analysis of, in ascending order of complexity, (1) tribal organization, (2) actual behavior in daily life, and (3) the native mind. Given Yanagita's familiarity with Western scholarship, it is unlikely, I think, that he was completely unaware of Malinowski's achievement. But my objective here is not to accuse Yanagita of plagiarism. Rather, my point is that the lack of awareness among Japanese folklorists of the possible connection between the two great figures has spawned both ignorance and indifference about foreign scholarship and the resultant isolation from the academic communities abroad.¹⁰

A second reason for the separation of Japanese folklore studies and anthropology concerns the difference in the degree of professionalism. Yanagita maintained vehemently that the study of folklore would flourish only when the researchers stayed close to the people they studied – *jōmin* or commoners. Therefore, he and his associates intentionally distanced themselves from institutionalized scholarship. Instead, Yanagita actively incorporated local people, who were, for professional scholars, no more than research objects or »informants« at best, into folklore research on the belief that only natives could fully understand or *wakaru* (»appreciate«) their culture. He thus

10 Another telling example of Yanagita's debt to Western scholarship concerns the conceptual distinction between folklore studies and ethnology. Yanagita wrote, in his widely read book *Seinen to gakumon* (1928), that when browsing in a used bookshop in Berlin, he had accidentally met Franz Boas, a German Jew, who had immigrated to the United States and had established anthropology there. When Boas asked Yanagita what kinds of books he was looking for, Yanagita did not know exactly what to say, although he did know the English word »folklore«. After hearing Yanagita's explanation, Boas remarked, »If you want folklore books, you should say »Völkskunde«. Otherwise, people here would not understand. In German, *Völkerkunde* means either ethnology or ethnography« (Yanagita 1998a: 164). We must also remember that Yanagita and his followers frequently used the term »*minkan denshō*« for their nascent discipline, the Japanese translation of the French term »*traditions populaires*«. Because this origin is well known, and given the importance Yanagita put on the study of *jōmin* (commoners), as explained earlier in the text, it is strange that Japanese folklorists have seldom asked about the possible connection between Yanagita's scholarship and the Annals school of French social history, for which the mentalities (mind) of commoners was a central theme. The Annals school emerged at about the same time Yanagita visited Europe in the early twentieth century. The »Western roots of Yanagita« are yet to be explored.

formed a nationwide network of amateur researchers called *kyōdoshika* (literally, »people studying the history of their hometown«). Under the leadership of Yanagita, then, Japanese folklorists *chose* to be unprofessional, and this choice has had to date a decisive influence on their position in the academia – the paucity of folklorists having full-time positions at universities, which contrasts sharply with the popularity they enjoy among the general reading public. By contrast, Japanese anthropologists have found their niche in the academia, and their community has become increasingly professional. From their viewpoint, folklore research is too amateurish to be taken seriously. According to them, it is not unusual to hear presentations, at the annual meetings of Nihon Minzoku Gakkai (Folklore Society of Japan), which hardly deserve scholarly attention.

6. Japanese Anthropology and Folklore Studies Today

Recently, there have been faint signs of rapprochement between Japanese anthropology and folklore studies. Among the younger generation, we see more theoretically inspired and sophisticated folklorists than before. They are, above all, interested in Western theories, as a recent issue of the journal *Nihon minzokugaku* (*Bulletin of the Folklore Society of Japan*) shows. Edited by Iwamoto Michiya, who teaches in the anthropology department at the University of Tokyo, the entire volume examined the idea of »folklorism« as proposed by German folklorists Hans Moser, Hermann Bausinger, and others (Nihon Minzoku Gakkai 2003). Having been presented in the 1960s, folklorism is certainly not a new idea, but it is epoch-making that Japanese folklorists, known for their allergy to Roman letters, tackled a Western theory head-on. Among younger anthropologists, too, a small, but growing, number of people have chosen to study Japan as their major field. Many of them received doctorates at Western universities, where they studied Japan as a foreign culture.

For a long time, Japanese folklorists have been ridiculed for their preoccupation with things of the past. Indeed, young folklorists have occasionally criticized their seniors for their indifference to contemporary issues. Today, however, Yanagita's belief that local people, no matter how amateurish, should be integral parts of folklore research has taken on a new meaning in light of the ongoing debate on civil society. In Japan, as elsewhere, the idea of civil society has only ambiguously been defined, but, generally speaking, it points to the increasing role of *shimin* (»citizens«), as opposed to *shinmin* (»the Emperor's subjects«) before the end of the Second World War and to *kokumin* (»members of the Japanese state«) thereafter, in formulating policies that will affect their daily life both nationally and locally. In civil society, a major problem facing professional scholars is how to give the people who have been studied value for their cooperation. Contribution to public welfare,

rather than to the small academic community, is called for today. It is truly significant, then, that leading Japanese folklorists of the younger generation took up the issue of civil society at the plenary session of the 2005 annual meeting of the Folklore Society of Japan, in which the following statement was made:

Even today, the Japanese community of folklorists includes as important research members many people working outside the institutionalized academia. In the past, many of these people were elementary or middle school teachers who »practiced« the fruits of folklore research in the classroom. Today, however, people like curators who are employed, after receiving higher education in folklore studies, at museums or at governmental agencies dealing with cultural property occupy an important segment of our research community. It is no exaggeration to say that folklore studies are sustained by the activities of researchers who belong to such public institutes outside the institutionalized academia. They are »actors«, in the sociological sense of the word, who conduct research by squarely facing the »citizens« in new areas of »practice«. Their number exceeds that of professional scholars in the purely academic world. They thus have the potential to create a new intellectual movement [...] More than anything else, the respect for amateurism has been the hallmark of Japanese folklore studies, as well as their strength. With this in mind, we should think about the future of our discipline by exploring both the possibilities and the problems, the merits and the demerits, involved in continuing to engage the »citizens« to participate in our research, as well as those involved in forging partnerships with the »citizens« in contemporary »civil« society. (Suga, Iwamoto, and Nakamura 2005:4–5, translated by the author)

Having developed as a science of »primitive« people without letters, anthropology lacks the tradition of engaging in dialogue with the people who have been studied, let alone collaborating with them as research partners. In the postcolonial world, however, the »natives« who used to be unilaterally subjected to the gaze of researchers from the »civilized« world have emerged as subjects (active agents) of research whose role is comparable to that of the citizens mentioned above. In this regard, anthropologists have much to learn from the Japanese folklorists' conception of scholarship in civil society.

7. Concluding Remarks

The foregoing has been written from the viewpoint of an anthropologist. As such, it may contain some unorthodox views of folklore studies. It would be ideal if orthodox accounts of Japanese folklore studies were given by their specialists, but, because of the nationalization of this discipline explained earlier, such accounts seldom appear in foreign languages, particularly in European ones. Even if they do, they are usually difficult to read because nationalized scholars are unaccustomed to writing for an international reader-

ship. In order to avoid misunderstandings, however, it should be added before closing this essay that I am one of the few Japanese anthropologists who are genuinely interested in the Japanese tradition of folklore research. Moreover, I am firmly convinced that, despite the many problems noted above, this tradition is worth serious attention by both Japanese and non-Japanese scholars. The importance emphasized by the younger Japanese folklorists of engaging interested »citizens« to jointly conduct research is just one example of the great potential their scholarship has, if, and only if, their message is communicated and understood properly.

Regarding communication across national boundaries, Japanese anthropology, too, has many problems to overcome. Among the most serious is the question of how to increase its visibility internationally. It is truly unfortunate that, outside East Asia, or, sometimes, even within this region, very little is known about what is going on in the world's second largest anthropological community. The language barrier is obviously responsible, but there is more to it than that – Japan's peripheral status in the »academic world system«. Because I have already written a book on this issue (Kuwayama 2004), it would suffice to say here that the current inequality between scholars positioned at the »center« of the system and those on the »periphery« derives from the imbalance of power involved in the academic world system. This inequality is best illustrated in the fact that central scholars can ignore peripheral research without risk to their careers, whereas peripheral scholars must carefully study central research in order to catch up. Thus, whatever the intention of each individual may be, the former as a collectivity tends to dictate what the latter should do, thereby wielding hegemony. This situation should be corrected through the efforts by both parties. On the one hand, scholars at the center – the United States, Great Britain, and France in the case of anthropology – should recognize their hegemonic power and become aware that they may have suppressed peripheral voices. They should then help redress the inequality by studying, for example, intellectual traditions in the rest of the world. Peripheral scholars, on the other hand, should first become aware of their marginality and disadvantages, which, in the case of Japan, are frequently overlooked because of the abundant opportunities to get published in the local language. Based on this recognition, the Japanese, and for that matter any other peripheral people, should make serious efforts to make themselves understood in the language/logic other people will understand.¹¹ Hopefully, this short essay, which has been written for a volume in

11 Even when writing in one's own language, the writing styles will be quite different if foreigners who are unfamiliar with domestic affairs are posited as readers. Japanese folklorists should firmly remember, when addressing themselves to an international audience, that their scholarship, including the name of Yanagita, is little known outside Japan. I was appalled myself when I met at an international confer-

honor of Josef Kreiner, whose deep knowledge of Japanese scholarship has earned him the admiration of his colleagues throughout the world, will constitute a small part of such efforts.

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ence held in India a Taiwanese literary critic who knew something about Yanagita, but who could not recognize him because the Taiwanese did not know the Japanese pronunciation of Yanagita's name: he had read in the Chinese way the two characters (*kanji*) used for Yanagita's name and remembered it in Chinese pronunciation. After my presentation, in which some of Yanagita's ideas were discussed, he approached me asking if the Japanese scholar he knew, Yanagita, had anything to do with the person I had discussed. It took us some time to notice that we were actually talking about the same person. Another scholar I met at the same conference was a famous Japanese critic, who had received a prestigious award for his book on Japan's national/ethnic identity. After hearing my presentation, he remarked, »Is his name pronounced Yanagita? I thought it was Yanagida.« This scholar had discussed in detail Yanagita's ideas in his book. Japanese folklore studies, then, are a mystery even within Japan.

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Itō Abito

The Distinctiveness and Marginality of Japanese Culture

In this paper I consider distinctive attributes of Japanese culture, but my aim is not to emphasize the uniqueness of the Japanese people and culture. Rather, it is to compare Japan with other societies of East Asia, especially Korean society, and in that light examine the marginal position Japanese society occupies in the East Asian context and the features of Japanese culture that have been shaped by that marginality.

Most studies of Japanese culture have focused on contrasting it with the West, reflecting an interest primarily with Japan in its process of modernization. Where this has not been the case, the bulk of scholarship has consisted largely of subjective, emic descriptions lacking perspectives of comparison with other cultures, as in Japanese folklore studies. Little inquiry has been made specifically into Japan's place within East Asia, and even scholars interested in comparing Japan with Korea have gone no further than piecemeal comparisons of folk culture.

In expanding my purview from an initial interest in Japan's folk culture to ethnology and then to cultural anthropology, I have consistently made placing Japanese society and culture within East Asia a central theme of my research. The nature of the scholarly field in which folklore studies, ethnology, and cultural anthropology of Japan overlap has been shaped in the climate of Japan's modernization, and in my view it is a scholarly tradition distinctive to Japan and one that reflects the multitiered identity of the Japanese people.

In conducting research while living among Koreans, I noticed from the outset their basic proclivity for logical and systematic thought. I found the degree of interest in universal concepts and reason as the basis for argument to be largely unrelated to educational background and conspicuous even among people of rural communities. This is perhaps not surprising given that in the past Koreans even in farming communities studied Confucian classics at *seodang* (private village schools) as part of their general education and regularly enjoyed engaging in intellectual debate. Japanese scholars, on the other hand, though often taken aback by the Korean penchant for logic and skillful argument, on the whole do not express much interest in Confucianism or logical debates about human existence.

In addition to this logical, systematic intellectual tradition, Korean society also has folk culture traditions specific to each region, but among intellectu-

als it is Confucianism, with its logical analysis of universal humanity, that has been regarded as the society's orthodox intellectual tradition. Interest in folklore studies became more prevalent among young Korean scholars with the waning of Confucian education and advances of democratization and ethnic consciousness in the 1980s. This contrasts with the concerns of Japanese scholars in comparable fields, which have focused on Japan's folk culture from the outset.

An Anthropocentric Worldview

In the backdrop of their logical, systematic intellectual tradition and concern with Confucian and Buddhist views of humanity, Koreans often seek to engage in intellectual discussion even with Japanese people they meet for the first time. On the other hand, compared to their keen interest in abstract, conceptual topics about humanity, Koreans show relatively little interest in discussing things to do with the nonhuman world. In short, their intellectual worldview can be said to be anthropocentric.

In their everyday lives, people are for the most part unconcerned with such questions as humanity's place in the universe or the nature of the relationship between human beings and nonhuman things. Nonetheless, the attitudes people take to such questions are fundamental to their lives and are among the central concerns of all religions and basic worldviews.

In societies rooted in highly organized and systematized religions such as Christianity, Islam, Confucianism, and Buddhism, the relationship between human beings and the things of the nonhuman natural world, including plants and animals, is defined and explained in terms of those religious systems. In such cases, the basic world order is depicted as centered on human beings as the main protagonists, with a clear distinction being made between human beings and the things of the nonhuman natural world. Because the task of defining this basic world order has been relegated to the religious domain, most people do not bother to go back and reexplore for themselves such questions as the divine creator's will or the systematic worldview as taught by the Buddha, Confucius, or other central religious figure.

When it comes to explanations of humanity's place in the natural world, on the other hand, biology and other natural sciences occupy the dominant position. As a result, people's interest has been directed at the »person« within human society, with the emphasis on the social attributes and status that govern the nature of the person. In this worldview, furthermore, nonhuman things have been relegated to a subordinate status vis-à-vis the person, either as objects of consumption necessary for human life or as media of interhuman relations.

In Japan, a systematic, structured worldview, as in the major religions, that defines the relative status or order of human *versus* nonhuman existence has

never been fully accepted or firmly established. Some Western scholars seem to include Japan among societies that have fully embraced Buddhism, but very few could clarify just how systematically Japanese people have accepted the Buddhist worldview or how they characterize human existence or life experience within that system. That is, it is fair to say that the relationship between human beings and the nonhuman world has not been systematically prescribed in Japan, and that Japanese people do not particularly concern themselves with that question in their daily lives. The characterization of human-nonhuman relations not as clearly prescribed under a logical system but rather as reciprocal and coextensive in the context of everyday life is arguably one of the key distinguishing features of Japanese culture. In examining such features ethnographically, a useful approach is to consider key examples of Japanese folk vocabulary and the folk beliefs underlying them.

Mono, Tama, and Nushi

The word *mono*, expressing a concept indigenous to Japan, can signify either physical things or human beings, and is also used for abstract referents. Different Chinese ideographs (*kanji*) are used for each of the first two cases, and when signifying abstract referents that are neither physical nor human, the word is written in the *hiragana* syllabic script. In classical Japanese, furthermore, *mono* was also used to refer to divine or spiritual beings to be feared and revered. The Japanese language thus includes a word whose range of meaning extends from nonhuman material things to people and even to spiritual beings, and which thus suggests that these different referents stand in multitiered semantic relationship to one another.

In Japanese folk beliefs, even aspects of the nonhuman, natural world – trees, rocks, animals, and so on – have been regarded as inhabited by spiritual beings of some kind or other. Japanese have traditionally thought that a *tama* («soul») or *nushi* («abiding spirit») could dwell even in such nonhuman things, and that people should not recklessly defy the will of such spirits or desecrate their domains. To harm a tree, for example, would be to violate the spirit dwelling within the tree or within the mountain on which it grows. Even today, spiritually minded people believe that before cutting down a tree one should make an offering to the tree, or to the mountain *nushi* presiding over it, to beg its permission, or recite an incantation to appease the tree's spirit. Similarly, it is thought that just before actually cutting the tree down, one must plant a seedling beside it for the tree spirit to relocate to; and that when using a saw one must draw it gently so that the tree will not suffer pain.

It was considered even more natural to suppose the presence of spiritual beings in animals than in plants. Virtually all animals that in some way related to people's lives or attracted their interest – not only livestock (cattle, horses) and domesticated pets (dogs, cats) but also forest-dwelling animals

(deer, bears, monkeys, snakes, foxes) and small creatures such as mice, birds, and fish – were thought to be invested with some kind of abiding spiritual entity. Even nonliving things (rocks, crags) and places (ponds, abysses, caves, mountains, forests) were associated with *nushi*-type spiritual beings, and such beings appear in various forms in folk tales and legends.

The relationship between humans and these spiritual entities associated with aspects of nature was regarded as a relationship between beings of more or less equal status that ought to live in mutually respectful coexistence. To act without regard for spiritual beings – such as by recklessly ravaging their domains, needlessly touching or moving trees or rocks, or fouling or throwing things into ponds or deep pools – was regarded as violating or inflicting harm upon those spirits, and as therefore liable to incur a curse in retribution. When the causes of disease or other misfortunes were sought through divination, they would often be attributed to past transgressions of that kind. That is, at times of sickness, accidents, disasters, and so on, people would think in terms of this kind of spiritual relationship between human beings and the nonhuman physical world, and in that context they would urge each other to exercise self-restraint toward the natural world in their everyday behavior.

Yoru, Yadoru, and Kakaru

The verb *yoru* is used not only to signify the state of one material object »leaning« against, »resting« on, »drawing close« to, or »drifting« toward another, but also in reference to nonphysical, nonvisible spiritual beings. It has traditionally been thought that spiritual entities can »attach« (*yoru*) to such material things as flowers, tree branches, and even small stones. In the traditional Japanese practice of *matsumukae*, people welcomed gods or spirits into their lives by going into a mountain or forest and collecting pine sprigs to bring back and use as New Year's decorations. Similar items would be collected in other seasons – azaleas, camellias, or other flowers in spring, flowers from mountains or forests for the summer Bon festival (all souls' festival) – to be used as physical media for gods or ancestral spirits to inhabit. In Japan, plants have thus been regarded as more than merely decorative objects.

A related verb is *yadoru*, which normally signifies a traveler's »staying« or »lodging« in some place on a journey, but which is also used for an invisible or spirit-like being's »abiding« or »dwelling« within something. The word *kakaru* is likewise used in the same two different registers of meaning: it can indicate a material thing's »hanging« on (*kakaru*), »catching« on (*hikkakaru*), or »leaning« against (*yorikakaru*) something else; and it is also widely used for non-material intangible situations, such as a misfortune's unexpectedly »befalling« (*furikakaru*) a person, the psychological state of some matter's »weigh-

ing« on one's mind (*ki ni kakaru*), or the »possession« of something by a spiritual being (*kami-gakari*).

Thus we find in the Japanese language a number of verbs all of which apply broadly not only to physical relationships but to spiritual ones as well, though people do not normally pay any particular attention to this distinction when using the words.

Harau, Shizumeru, and Kuyō

In traditional Japanese society, people attached special significance to well-worn household utensils or long-used clothing or personal effects, often treating them as if some form of spiritual being dwelled within them. Items that tended to be viewed in this way included long-used brooms, cutlery, sewing needles (*hari*), and writing brushes; things worn or used on the body, such as clothing, combs, and footwear; and other personal effects such as fans, walking sticks, and umbrellas. The older such an item became, the more it would be treated as if it were invested with something spiritual, or as if some part of its owner's soul had seeped into it. It was therefore customary to avoid unnecessary or reckless use of things previously used by strangers. For the same reason, it was advised that if one found another person's personal item, such as a comb, lying on the ground, one should drive away the spirit of the former user and establish possession of it by first treading upon it; and conversely, that one should not thoughtlessly discard one's own long-used personal items. For the proper disposal of such things, people would conduct special exorcising/purifying rites (*harai*) or votive/memorial services (*kuyō*) at shrines and temples at appropriate times, as if to express their appreciation to or appease (*shizumeru*) living beings associated with the items. The custom of *hari-kuyō*, whereby seamstresses set aside all their bent and broken needles for a special memorial service to thank them for their service, is still practiced today. The custom is now mostly confined to certain traditional dressmaking schools and girls' schools, but in former times even students at ordinary elementary schools would observe the practice, placing defunct needles from home economics lessons into a »broken needles container« and holding a *kuyō* service to them once a certain amount had accumulated. Such ceremonies are also held for writing brushes, knives, and fans, while other items of long personal use – dolls, clocks and watches, and these days even video game devices – are placed in shrines for similar purifying or memorial services. During such *kuyō* ceremonies, people speak words of appreciation to these inanimate objects as if speaking to other living or sentient beings. Even when they do not go so far as to conduct *kuyō*, many Japanese nonetheless feel a kind of gratitude when parting with items they have used for a long time, even ones that are far from special. An acquaintance of mine who has lived in Korea for many years recounts an incident that illustrates this point:

he had decided to dispose of an old chair from his room, but then was dismayed to see the collection worker toss the chair roughly into the back of a truck. He was sincerely regretful, saying he would have kept the chair if he had known it would be »treated« that way.

In former times, it was a widespread custom among Japanese farms that kept cattle, horses, and other livestock to erect special towers or *tumuli* at which to hold *kuyō* to dead livestock. Similarly, hunting communities in mountain areas would build *kuyō* towers to the wild boar, deer, and other game they hunted; and fishing villages would erect stone towers for *kuyō* in honor of not only large sea creatures, such as whales, dolphins, and sharks, but also the small ones that they caught in large numbers, such as salmon, herring, and sardine. Even today, *kuyō* in honor of the bounty of the sea are still conducted under the auspices of fish markets around the country. In Shimonoseki (Yamaguchi prefecture), the local fishing industry association holds *kuyō* to blowfish (*fugu*) every year during the *fugu* fishing season. Yanagawa in Fukuoka prefecture, Isahaya in Nagasaki prefecture, and Hamamatsu in Shizuoka prefecture are among the places known for holding *kuyō* ceremonies to freshwater eels, and in recent years *kuyō* towers have been built at some eel farms as well. Some restaurants, such as those that serve tempura or other shrimp dishes, also build *tumuli* or other special places at which to conduct *kuyō* services to the shrimp from which they make their livelihood. This suggests that these surviving examples of *kuyō* practice should be regarded as more than just vestiges of the simple beliefs held by the farming and fishing communities of the past, and that even a significant number of people in cities still consider fish, shrimp, and other sea creatures to be more than mere commodities for consumption. That Japanese people often erect graves for and hold *kuyō* to their dead pets can also thus be attributed to more than just popular zoophilia imported from the West.

Tsuku

The verb *tsuku* (and inflected forms including *tsuite*, *tsuki*, etc.) signifies a physical state of one object's attaching or adhering to another, but it can also be used for comparable states of psychological dependence or support, as in *Watashi ni tsuite kureba daijobu* (»Stick with me and you'll be all right«) and *Watashi ga tsuite iru kara anshin shinasai* (»Don't worry, I'm with you«). *Tsuku* is also used to express the presence of good fortune – *Saikin sugoku tsuite iru* (»Luck has really been with me lately«) – as if one's body were possessed by or charged with some kind of spiritual force. Here again we see a word's semantic range encompassing not only physical but also psychological and even spiritual relationships.

Japanese folk tales and legends include many stories involving animals that take human form and interact with people in various ways. There are also

tales about humans who transform into animals. These stories point to a worldview according to which humans and animals exist in states that are reciprocal and coextensive. Such a view differs even from the Buddhist notion of the transmigration of souls, whereby humans and animals are thought to be at different and discrete levels of existence.

Particularly prominent among such views of the spiritual interactivity between humans and animals is the belief in *tsuki-mono*, or spirits that possess people. In such cases, the spirit of an animal possesses a person's body, which, though it remains a human body, takes on aspects of that animal. If we understand this to mean that a human subject and an animal spirit become one, each superimposed upon the other, then such a phenomenon would constitute a major threat to the notion of humanity's spiritual autonomy and superiority over the natural world (»master of all creation«), and for that reason the notion is completely unacceptable to Confucianists. The idea of humanity's spiritual autonomy from the natural world also exists in the anthropocentric worldview of the Judeo-Christian tradition, and has been further emphasized by the scientific view of nature that has emerged along with modernization. In that context, even unilateral or temporary possession of a person by a spirit would be regarded as an extreme debasement of that person's character and social standing. Contrasting this is the view of nature and humanity seen in traditional Japan, whereby even the status of human beings was determined through their interactivity with the things around them, and appropriate behavior was required accordingly. In that worldview, spiritual possession is nothing more than one of the ways in which people and other things relate to one another. The field of psychiatric anthropology, which focuses on mental health in connection with cultural expressions of this kind, has paid considerable attention to the potential for psychological healing through forms of self-expression mediated by such perceived spiritual entities. In Japan, this is an approach that has long been widely practiced as part of folk culture.

Katami

In Japan, the objects that a deceased person was especially fond of using, or used especially long or often, are traditionally treated with great care, as if that person's soul had come to inhabit those things. More than mere mementos to aid recollection, as *katami* such keepsakes were regarded as corporeal substitutes for the deceased. In a custom called *katami wake* (»sharing of keepsakes«), *katami* items would be distributed among the people who were closest to the deceased. Nor are the dead the only people for whom *katami* are used; when parting from a loved one for an extended period of time, one might give them a *katami* of oneself in the form of something one has worn or used with special preference or care. Such items are thought to protect the

holder, and it is considered perfectly normal for the holder to occasionally talk to such objects as if the person they represented were actually present. In this way, the *katami* that people leave behind allow us to maintain a connection with them when they are no longer with us, and provide us with emotional support in their absence.

One might think that preserving and cherishing the material belongings of the dead occurs more or less in the same way in every society, but in fact this is not the case. In Korea, for example, people still carefully observe rites of patrilineal ancestor worship in keeping with Confucian principles and forms; but according to Confucian teaching, the spirits of the dead dwell only in family ancestral mortuary tablets, and to revere some other object as the vehicle of a person's spirit would be entirely out of the question. In this view, the favorite clothes or belongings of a deceased person are considered irrelevant to the person's soul; on the contrary, it is not uncommon for people to avoid contact with the deceased's clothes or to burn or discard them. In that context, distributing such items as *katami*-type mementos would be simply unthinkable.

In Japan, memorial museums or exhibits honoring eminent and widely respected people generally display various items that the person wore or frequently used. Such items are displayed as more than mere historical artifacts; through them, visitors to the memorial are better able to recall or imagine the character of the person and to feel a sense of intimacy with him or her. After viewing a memorial to a famous literary figure in Japan, a Korean exchange student remarked that, while he could accept the relevance of such artifacts as the writer's unpublished manuscripts and favorite fountain pen, he could not understand why the exhibit included items ostensibly unrelated to the writer's literary achievements, such as clothes, hats, and footwear. In Korea, on the other hand, I have heard that plans to build such memorials often get bogged down when it is realized that too few display-worthy mementos of the person in question have been kept to constitute an exhibit of sufficient content and scope. Thus there appears to be a considerable difference between the two countries in terms of the perceived relationship between human beings and inanimate material things.

***Komeru*: »Investing« Gifts and Other Objects**

Japanese ideas regarding physical objects are also clearly related to Japanese gift-giving practices, an aspect of the culture that has attracted much interest among researchers from other countries. The custom of giving mid-year gifts (*o-chūgen*) and year-end gifts (*o-seibo*) is observed extensively in Japan. Japanese also often send presents to people whom they wish to thank for a recent kindness, and upon receiving such a gift the recipient will also feel disposed toward making an appropriate gift in response. At weddings,

guests traditionally give money gifts to the bride and groom and receive token gifts in return. When paying a visit to someone, too, it is accepted practice to take some kind of present as a courtesy, and invariably the host will respond by giving the visitor something to take home. In traditional Japanese thinking, verbal expressions of gratitude, no matter how eloquent or profuse, are considered insufficient on their own; the sentiment expressed by the words is considered fully conveyed only when the words are accompanied by some form of concrete embodiment of that sentiment. Furthermore, when one receives a gift, even one's gratitude for the gift is not thought to be properly conveyed unless one gives some concrete thing in return. This contrasts sharply with the situation in Korea, where it is considered more sincere to express one's feelings as far as possible in words alone, and attempting to do so through material things is regarded as either insincere or indicative of some special or ulterior motive. It seems clear from these various considerations that in Japan material objects are often regarded as vessels or vehicles »invested« with something else.

From that perspective, it is fair to say that in Japan concrete expression and communication through material objects has been valued more than communication through verbal expressions of concepts and logic. Someone who values the conceptual dimension may regard communication through physical objects as indirect; but from the reverse perspective, one could also say that it is ideas and language, rather, that are empty and lacking in concreteness, and that conveying feelings by means of material things is the more direct form of communication.

Artisans (including craftsmen, skilled tradesmen, and so on) see their tools as extensions of their own limbs, and treat their most time-worn tools with great care, almost as if such objects actually were part of themselves. The proper care and storage of tools is considered part of such work, and for that reason one can often glean the character of an artisan by observing the state of his workshop and tools. The works created and even the tools used by an artisan seem to be invested with the spirit of the person himself. Generally speaking, artisans are taciturn by nature. They are expected to express themselves not by words but through skills and material things, and are evaluated solely by the quality of their workmanship. Such special respect for and attention to one's relations to material things is found not only among artisans but also in such traditional arts as tea ceremony and flower arranging as well as in sports.

In Japan, even machine operators in modern factories have conventionally regarded tools and machines as more than mere equipment. Such workers often treat even state-of-the-art machines like valued colleagues, and take scrupulous care in cleaning and inspecting them and checking that they are running smoothly. Sometimes they give machines and robots nicknames and observe their »birthdays« as they would for their fellow workers, and are

even known to offer machines cups of tea. Although such practices may appear to be done half in jest, they cannot be attributed entirely to playfulness. Factory workers often verbally praise and thank their machines for a job well done, and may even feel a genuine sense of compunction after burdening a machine with a particularly heavy work load. Thus we can infer that people's perceptions of their relations to material things are reflected in how they care for and preserve their tools and how they clean, service, and maintain their machines.

Folk Knowledge

A sensitivity toward material things and a preference for thinking in terms of the concrete seem to form an important part of the context of Japanese folk knowledge. By »folk knowledge« I mean popular, indigenous knowledge the nature of which contrasts sharply with that of modern scientific knowledge. Not only modern scientism but logical, systematic worldviews in general are peculiar to advanced civilizations. Such worldviews and systems of knowledge are posited as universal frameworks beyond individual life experience, and through their centralizing authority they have incorporated and integrated the peripheral societies around them into their logically structured world. Folk knowledge, on the other hand, is rooted in individual life experience and consists of clusters of distinct knowledge traditions each shared among and passed on by members of a specific local community. While folk knowledge is thus an agglomerate of different types of knowledge, it cannot be said to form a coherent system held together by logical connections. Folk knowledge has a low level of abstractness; it is largely tied to concrete things, places, and situations, to the body, and to specific, concrete activities. The standardization and transmission of such knowledge is made possible by nothing other than people's formalized life practices.

Even in folk knowledge, however, there is systematic knowledge derived from the dominant great tradition that in fragmented form ties in with concrete life experience and takes root among the populace. This is evident in East Asia, as elsewhere. In Korean society, for example, which was under the powerful influence of China's great tradition, Eastern medical knowledge and forms of knowledge such as Chinese geomancy (*feng shui*) are deeply entrenched, albeit in less systematic form, among even farming people who have no specialized knowledge about such matters. In that light, let us now consider the nature of folk knowledge in Japan with reference, where relevant, to forms of knowledge that have spread through the populace in this way.

Names of things: folk vocabulary

One type of folk knowledge is knowledge of the names and attributes of the things of the natural world around us. In Japan, high social value has long been placed on having extensive knowledge of this kind. Regarding animals and plants, many observers have noted the variety of names applied to them in different regional dialects, and how those names relate to different seasons or locations or to the forms and features of the animals and plants themselves. An especially valued aspect of such knowledge and concern about the natural world is knowing the names of things. With the help of handbooks and so on for learning the names of natural things, even premodern Japanese society had a high degree of collective knowledge in that area.

In Korea, by contrast, most people's knowledge of natural flora and fauna is surprisingly scanty, a trend seen not only in urban areas but in rural communities as well, and one particularly evident among people who consider themselves middle-class. That Koreans generally tend to show little interest in things of the natural or material world can perhaps be attributed in part to the fact that Confucianism, which emphasizes the moral and spiritual aspects of people's inner being, exerted a more far-reaching influence on people's lives in Korea than it did in Japan. Most Koreans are not normally aware of the affects of that Confucian tradition on their everyday lives, but in comparison with Japan the difference is clear. In the traditional Confucian view of the world and of human existence, not only has little value been placed on the external world itself, but even folk knowledge of that world has been regarded as base. As expressed in the classic phrase that »toying with things beggars the spirit«, it was thought that paying too much attention to things of the external world led people to neglect their inner lives.

To many people in Japan, however, being well informed about practical matters such as clothing, food, and housing is connected not only with life skills but also with how one is evaluated as a person, and intellectuals are no exception to this trend. Manufacturers and stores are well aware of the scrupulous attention Japanese consumers pay to food, clothing, and other items, and of the need therefore to provide them with detailed information and explanations about their products. There is no doubt that paying close attention to the details of things and having meticulous knowledge about them is valued highly in Japan.

This ethos of detailed knowledge is also reflected in the research methods of Japanese folklore studies, where considerable effort has gone into collecting and describing folk vocabularies, and classified glossaries of such have been compiled for various specific fields and genres. Such formalized knowledge characterizes the field of Japanese folklore. This emphasis on description of forms in folklore studies has been criticized, even by scholars in related fields, as making too much of vocabulary and as systematically and

logically deficient. However, the field of Japanese folklore studies is itself only a reflection of the nature of folk knowledge in Japanese society, and we should bear in mind that it has always been a unique scholarly tradition shaped by Japanese realities.

Concrete expression

In the realm of traditional Japanese arts such as tea ceremony and flower arranging, again the emphasis is not on explaining the logic or mindset behind the activity, but rather on learning the names of the utensils and mastering the required etiquette by copying a formalized routine. A similar attitude is evident in Zen ascetic practice in Japan; rather than through explanations couched in abstract, conceptual language, novices train by following rules of action in relation to concrete objects and forms, such as tea, flowers, or gardens. In other words, concrete expression independent of all forms of linguistic expression, such as sermons or sutra texts, occupies a central place in the process.

In this respect, too, we can see a clear difference from the norms in Korea, where the focus is on conceptuality and abstract values rather than meticulous knowledge or form. In direct contrast to the Japanese case, when Koreans wish to communicate about states of religious enlightenment or deep emotion, their first preference is to do so by linguistic expression. Recordings of sermons and sutra recitations by distinguished priests and monks are sold at temple kiosks, and their writings fill many shelves in the Buddhism sections of bookstores. In connection with not only religious but also other kinds of instruction such as performing arts, I often encounter people in Korea who are not particular about actual styles or forms but instead try to explain the discipline logically. In the field of folk dance, for example, experts seek to describe the basic structure of the art in terms of elemental principles of the world (»heaven«, »earth«, »man«), yet pay relatively little attention to the specific knowledge or visible forms of the art itself. Here again we find a clear contrast with the Japanese cultural equivalent, that is, Japanese folk dance.

Nonsystematic thinking

Folk knowledge is an aggregate of forms of knowledge lacking overall logical consistency, and as such it cannot be understood as an integrated system. Each constituent form of knowledge within folk knowledge is seen as having its own validity under specific circumstances, and in that context people typically avoid making assessments on conceptual grounds until they have properly identified the nature of the particular situation at hand. They do not assume any logical consistency that is out of actual context, and are not especially concerned with its universality. For these reasons, ostensibly in-

consistent types of knowledge can coexist without being regarded as inconsistent. One could even say that the logical criteria for rooting out inconsistency itself does not exist in folk knowledge. Similarly in Japan, little attention is given to logical worldviews or moral standards stressing consistency (including that in manners and behavior), and this is an aspect of Japanese culture many non-Japanese living in Japan soon become keenly aware. An attitude prevails of what might be called pluralism – that is, accepting things without trying to exclude or eliminate those that seem divergent – is considered a sensible, prudent way to live. Accordingly, Japanese people tend to regard everything that already exists as existing for some reason and with some validity or other, and therefore to accept it. Attention is focused, rather, on situational or contextual understanding; the appropriateness of any particular type of knowledge is judged according to the particular situation at hand, and the lack of overall systematic coherence is not viewed negatively in any way. On the contrary, logical systems are sometimes explicitly rejected as falsehoods and fabrications – a view that can be found, for example, in the criticisms of foreign thought by Edo-period scholars of *kokugaku* («National Learning»). These circumstances of knowledge in Japan must seem insufferable to the intellectual elite of the broader civilization of East Asia, who place great value on rational principles and ideas.

Situationalism

In Japanese society, people are expected to respond flexibly to meet the specific conditions of each occasion or situation, and the ability to understand the multidimensional nature of things and make adjustments accordingly is highly valued. Given this type of intellectual tradition, however, when required to make a judgment in a complex situation, Japanese people have a tendency to vacillate, mulling over various precedents and similar situations to the point of failing to make a clear decision or conclusion from a logical point of view. For this reason, Japanese are liable to be seen as irrational or unprincipled, or to seem lacking in logical or moral faculties. Furthermore, the tendency for Japanese not to form consistent, authoritative guiding principles has created in Japan a climate that makes it difficult to achieve the kind of leadership demanded in Western and other East Asian societies.

In the past, logically structured approaches to development policy, shaped by leaders of industrially advanced nations, have in many cases ended in failure due to circumstances that logical thinking could not have predicted. In the indigenous-knowledge-based, practice-oriented approaches emphasized in recent years, however, actual results are valued more than logical consistency, and multidimensional, all-inclusive thinking is desirable. While identified with other advanced economies on the donor side of development, as a folk culture Japan in fact has a rich tradition of such pragmatic thinking. This

indigenous tradition has been overlooked by other industrially advanced nations, and even among Japan's own intellectual leaders it has not been adequately recognized, and therefore not acknowledged in a positive light.

The Chinese Tradition and the Inhabitants of the Japanese Archipelago

What I hope to show is that, given its geographical conditions, Japan's position within the East Asian cultural sphere was more marginal than Korea's; and that as a result Japan, though influenced by Chinese civilization, adopted aspects of that civilization not systematically but only in fragmentary or superficial ways. Regarding not only Confucianism but even Buddhism, it cannot be said that such teachings or worldviews were systematically assimilated by the Japanese populace. Regarding Buddhism, it is significant that those sects with particular emphasis on harmony with nature, such as Zen, with approaches based not on linguistically expressed logical systems but rather on concrete expressions and forms – painting, sculpture, tea ceremony, flower arranging, landscape gardening – made the religion more palatable to the Japanese people and allowed it to be embraced in ways that were based on feeling rather than on intellect.

In Japanese popular society, the view of the world or humanity as defined by Chinese civilization was thus not assimilated in any systematic manner; instead it was the folk ways of life, including indigenous belief, that provided the crucial frames of reference, as noted earlier in this paper. Those folk lifestyles were practiced through interaction with concrete things of the immediate environment, and were rooted entirely in indigenous beliefs. That is, the prevailing worldview was one according to which even humanity's place was understood in terms of its interactions with material things, and the world was perceived as an all-inclusive, coextensive field in which people and things shared the same space and interacted not only physically but in psychological and spiritual ways as well. This society was characterized by an emphasis on scrupulous sensitivity to and knowledge of material things, and by a lifestyle attitude geared toward accumulating but at the same time constantly improving and refining experience and knowledge, in accordance with the actual circumstances of life.

Thus, in Japan, what people have traditionally considered important in life is not logic or concepts but rather the immediate, concrete things and circumstances that directly shape daily living, and having a facility with such things and circumstances is considered a basic life skill. Material things can also be important media for inter-human relations and communication. In the evaluation of personal worth, importance is placed on having detailed knowledge of and keen sensitivity to material things – or in other words what in various spheres of Japanese culture has been recognized as *mono no aware*, or a profound, affective appreciation for the nature of things. Even psychological

or spiritual relations between people and things have at times been accepted as a perfectly human aspect of life. Such belief in the spirituality of material things was, however, extensive among marginal societies in East Asia.

In the Confucian worldview, however, which formed the cornerstone of Chinese civilization on the Asian mainland, and especially in the teachings of neo-Confucian scholar Chu Hsi (Zhu Xi; 1130–1200), the world was explained in terms of a logical, systematic order with humanity at the center. In this thoroughly secular worldview, the notion of material things having spirituality was rejected as undermining the idea of human beings' inner moral nature and disrupting not only the spiritual but also the social order, and people who lived by such a belief were regarded as unenlightened and in need of civilizing. In that sense, Japanese people's conspicuous sensitivity to physical things and reality-oriented thinking created at the periphery of the Chinese cultural sphere a society quite different from the »civilized« society of the mainland.

Civilized and Uncivilized

The Japanese worldview may be regarded in that sense as »uncivilized« or »underdeveloped«, but whatever its lack of logic and system, it is by the same token immune to opposing logic. While focused on the immediate, concrete, and empirical, the Japanese outlook is also pluralistic, harmony-oriented, respectful of history and precedent while prioritizing present realities, practice-oriented, and refined through constant improvement. In certain types of exclusive or close-knit societies, such as island societies, these features are effective for maintaining a distinct, stable society.

Even today the logical brand of thinking imported from abroad is widely regarded in Japan as too theoretical and disengaged from reality, and is even actively rebuked and avoided as a source of misleading untruth. In Korea, logical and linguistic skills have long been encouraged in children from an early age, both at school and at home. In Japan, contrastingly, children with a talent for logical verbal expression have tended to be admonished for »rationalizing« or being »argumentative«. Even the concept of filial duty to one's parents – a Confucian ideal imported from continental culture – has been regarded in Japan as something learned not logically through abstract language but rather empirically through concrete guidance focusing on actual objects and behavior. By being tied to material things, Confucian thought became less systematic and more fragmented in Japan. Zen Buddhism, which was embraced in Japan despite being an imported religion, is another case in point: instead of preaching its universal concepts and rationale through abstract language, it was accepted by Japanese people and became firmly entrenched in their lives in sensory, emotional ways, such as through rapport

with nature or physical representations or concrete practices following formalized styles.

Let us suppose that civilized life is that whereby human beings, having been released from the »spell« of concrete things and situations and thus given autonomy, are thought to live in a universalistic, logical world unaffected by the vicissitudes of specific things and situations. Or rather, let us define civilized thought as an approach that projects a vision of life whereby, through logical exposition in linguistic forms (oral and written) of a universalistic view of the world and of humanity, the realities of individual life are understood as existing in the context of a universal system. On that basis, Japanese, who see themselves as existing in distinct relation to their immediate surroundings and situations, can be regarded as indeed living in an »underdeveloped« state whereby they cannot break free from those concrete things and situations. This suggests further that, as Confucians and other scholars from continental Asia have witnessed, Japanese society, while clearly part of East Asia, existed in an »underdeveloped« state on the periphery of or perhaps even external to Chinese civilization. If we take that civilization as the standard, then the way in which Japanese people have identified themselves in the context of their close relation to concrete things can be called a condition undifferentiated from nature and one in which humanity has not even established its autonomy. This view of Japan is still sometimes evident among older-generation intellectuals in continental Asia. On the other hand, the same suggestion draws a very different response from younger Korean intellectuals with no experience of living in Japan; they seem to find it difficult to imagine that such a thoroughly »underdeveloped« cultural tradition could possibly be deeply entrenched in the first Asian country that successfully modernized. When I explain the Japanese approach to life, which seems abhorrent to the Confucian's way of thinking, such young intellectuals make no secret of the difficulty they have in comprehending it. Fortunately, however, to all those, young and old alike, who have even a little experience of living in Japan, the idea seems to ring a familiar bell and to accord with the ambiguous impressions of Japan that they have struggled for many years to reconcile.

In Japan, the attitude of avoiding strictly logical thought is in fact commonly accepted not only among the general populace but even among the elite in almost every sphere of society. Abstract debate far removed from tangible things and circumstances is regarded as meaninglessly out of touch with reality, and concrete situations and examples are considered much more desirable than abstract explanations.

By virtue of universality that transcends actual situations and contexts, a logical system provides a framework that ensures free and fluid activity unconstrained by the details of particular situations. On the other hand, if through accumulated experience one seeks to improve and refine one's life

based on one's continued connection to specific things and circumstances, then maintaining that connection to one's immediate surroundings, or in other words not moving from the situation that forms the basis of one's life, takes precedence. This entails placing high value on the continuance of those specific, local realities of life, and leads to the pursuit of a fixed lifestyle.

Modernization and Marginalization

Japan's proactive assimilation of Western technology since the Meiji era has been remarkable in many respects, but serious doubt remains as to how logically and systematically Japanese have embraced Western civilization. From the Meiji era on, the issues that had been raised by Edo-period *kokugaku* scholar Kada no Azumamaro (1669–1736) came to be obscured, and therefore ignored, under the illusion that they had naturally been resolved in the process of modernization and Westernization known as the Meiji Enlightenment (*bunmei kaika*). In fact, however, it is disturbingly apparent that those issues have carried over unresolved into the present day. The concrete-reality-oriented (*sokubutsuteki*) mode of thought and communication described above is far from a thing of the past in Japan; fundamentally it applies to the great majority of Japanese even today. One could even say that logical, systematic thought, regarded as one of the prerequisites of civilized society, has failed to take proper root in virtually any area or class of Japanese society. This is true even of scholars, a group ostensibly engaged in work of an explicitly logical kind. In their everyday lives, rather than adhering to strict logical rationality, even specialists in theoretical economics and professors who have themselves published textbooks on logic adopt the same situationally appropriate behavior as is expected of all »decent« people in Japan. Some Japanese who go abroad for study, particularly those who go to the United States, sense this kind of discrepancy between their studies and the realities of their personal lives, and I am sure many more have been troubled by such a feeling without being able to pinpoint the cause. While accepting that studying abroad entails enduring that predicament in order to complete a logico-systematic dissertation and thereby obtain a degree, I suspect many Japanese have felt reluctant to lead such a thoroughly logical life so incongruous with their true nature. Even after learning how to write papers with appropriately logical argument so as to satisfy their supervising professors' expectations, it is doubtful whether such students have truly internalized that logico-systematic mode of thought. On the other hand, those who really do internalize such logical thinking may have difficulty readapting to Japanese society upon their return.

Contemporary society has become increasingly globalized, particularly in economic and technical areas, and the world increasingly systematized in accordance with universal logic. In the world as a whole, people with talent

for logical and systematic thought and expression have played leading roles in those processes as the elite of our age. As explained in the foregoing discussion, however, this is not so true in Japan's case. The modern style of leadership can be described as one in which leaders demonstrate powers of logical persuasion based on their capacity for logico-analytic thought and their systematic outlook on the world. In Japan, however, people who try to persuade others by displays of logic are not necessarily respected; on the contrary, they are liable to be suspected of having some ulterior motive, or else regarded as unseasoned in the realities of life. There are also some who confuse taking aggressive or high-handed action with leadership ability. The kinds of qualities expected of a leader in Japanese society, however, include a broad capacity for making judgments appropriate to each situation and based on a wealth of experience, and the ability to skillfully coordinate other people's varied opinions rather than persuade people by the cogency of one's own logic. The ideal leader is seen as having the skills necessary for responding flexibly to diverse circumstances, and as someone with a fundamentally pluralistic outlook. The kind of leader who argues for reform in eloquent logical language based his own unique point of view is more likely to be regarded in Japan as a dangerous element that would plunge society into turmoil. In short, in Japan, even among people in central or leading positions in the society, the ability to make decisions in a multilateral, broadly inclusive manner is prized over any capacity for logical consistency or systematic thought.

Japan's development in economy and technology in fact illustrates that logical and systematic rationality is not necessarily a prerequisite for success in those areas. Japan's economic and technical development can be attributed instead to the accumulation of experience with a diversity of concrete things and situations, and to the refinement of practices through constant efforts to improve, and as such it has demonstrated the effectiveness of a work ethic that prizes the resourceful, bricolage approach typical of the artisan.

Japan's »distinctiveness« is not simply a matter of its peculiarity as a national culture. Rather, it lies in the fact that Japanese society, while in a marginal, »underdeveloped« state, and despite the lack of awareness among Japanese people themselves of that fact, has nonetheless managed to survive as a distinctive traditional society without yet ever being excluded from the »civilized« world.

Concluding Remarks: Japan's »Distinctiveness«

This »uncivilized« or »underdeveloped« quality seen in Japanese society is in fact widely shared by people at the peripheries of other spheres of civilization around the world. It is even widely apparent among socially alienated people in communities subsumed within »civilized« societies. Such people

have tended to be labeled »uncultured« or »underdeveloped«, and to be marginalized and made the targets of religious and cultural enlightenment programs. The features seen in Japan's folk culture are the same as those seen generally in such marginal societies. What makes Japan unique is that it is the only such society to have remained part of the global system without its true nature as a marginal society being really understood.

Christianity and Islam, both monolithic, systematic religions, have remarkable records of propagation throughout the world, and socialism has similarly sought universal acceptance by logical and systematic means. In that context, Japanese society is exceptional in that efforts to convert people to Christianity have gained virtually no ground despite more than a century of missionary activity. Some people take the simple view that the preexisting Buddhist system has denied Christianity the chance to spread in Japan, but I disagree. As mentioned earlier, compared with Korean Buddhism, Buddhism in Japan was accepted and indigenized in much more experiential and sensory ways through various material representations and by largely discarding logico-systematic elements expressed through language. The same is true of Confucianism in Japan; its unique, systematic worldview, presented as a discourse on the nature of humanity, has hardly been wholeheartedly embraced by Japanese. The type of thought that seeks to define things by means of analytic concepts, and to logically reconfigure experience and place it within such a system, does not find very fertile soil in Japan. That Christianity was not widely embraced in Japan was not because some preexisting system precluded the spread of the Christian system, but because Japanese society is rooted in a folk-culture tradition that rejects the systematic. The essence of that cultural tradition must be sought in Japan's indigenous folk knowledge and, as pointed out long ago by kokugaku scholars, in folk beliefs; in a word, it is the attitude known as *mono no aware* (lit., »the pathos of things«).

My view of this »underdeveloped« quality of Japanese society is far from negative. In fact, the nature of such indigenous knowledge is attracting renewed interest in today's international community, particularly at the front lines of development in developing countries.

It is often pointed out that development policies carried out unilaterally on the basis of all-too Western logical systems have in many cases gone contrary to theoretical predictions and achieved no significant results. In today's international community, which has essentially been restructured along logico-systematic lines by the elite of the developed world, people in developing societies have been characterized as marginal or external to that logico-systematic global system and labeled as »underdeveloped«. In regard to the realities of such marginalized societies, any further attempts at development based on the values of logical coherence and systematic order are likely to repeat the same mistakes. Such marginal lifestyles closely adapted to con-

crete things and situations in fact represent the most natural and inherently universal form of human life.

These lived realities peripheral to or outside of the logico-systematic world are grounded in folk or indigenous knowledge, a form of knowledge that in recent years has come to attract keen attention at the ground level of development efforts. Because of its marginality, Japanese society is not adept at logical self-expression, and in the context of the developed or »civilized« world it is therefore often regarded as having little presence, or even as something of a mysterious or enigmatic nature. However, to the extent that Japanese society remains free of the influence of the systematic modes of thought of Christianity, Confucianism, and Western science, its indigenous modes of thought and sensibility survive, and in Japan's example many people are intuitively beginning to discern the universal issues inherent in marginality on such a global scale. Aspects of the Japanese cultural tradition are apparently being reflected in the activities of Japanese individuals directly involved in international development efforts, but it is doubtful whether or not even those Japanese are adequately aware of their own marginality.

Furthermore, Japan currently faces an additional problem in the form of its inability to logically and systematically verbalize these features of its own society and culture. For their own psychic well-being, it is imperative that Japanese people develop proper awareness of their own cultural distinctiveness and its attendant problems. Only then will they be able to contribute to the world in distinctively Japanese ways true to their essential nature.

Actually, this problem is not limited to Japanese society; it is a universal problem bearing equally on all people at the margins of the global system. I venture to suggest that Japan's »uniqueness« lies precisely in this universal issue.

From the Japanese by Center for Intercultural Communication, Tokyo

Fukuta Ajo

How the Task of Studying Yanagita Kunio Has Developed

1. Two Relationships with Yanagita Kunio

Countless ardent readers have consumed the enormous amount of literature that was published by the pioneer of folklore in Japan, Yanagita Kunio. Even after the *Teihon Yanagita Kunio shū* [Yanagita Kunio – standard edition] (Yanagita 1962ff., encompassing thirty-one volumes and five supplemental volumes) was published in the early 1960s, other collections of his works continued to appear in print. Even paperback editions entitled *Yanagita Kunio zenshū* [Complete works by Yanagita Kunio] (Yanagita 1989–1991) were issued. Many of his works also appeared individually in various paperback series, and now the definitive edition of his complete works is being prepared for publication in thirty-six volumes. These repeated publications of Yanagita's collected works indicate that there are many people all over Japan who desire to read and own his entire works. Quite a few possibly keep his works on hand for their own erudition as readers, which means Yanagita has become an educational standard. But the publication numbers also indicate that there are large numbers of researchers who refer to his works. This large body of scholars concerned with Yanagita's writings may be divided into two groups, according to their perspective in reading his work. Namely, those interested in developing theories on Yanagita himself – a perspective I shall call »Yanagitaism« – and those focused on matters of folklore studies.

1.1 *Yanagitaism*

I shall define as »Yanagitaism« that kind of reading of, and reflection on, Yanagita's works that aims to examine his thought and insight. From this position, he is understood mainly as a theorist, and his works are read in order to understand his theory. The fact that Yanagita's arguments were based on folklore from places all across the Japanese Islands is acknowledged as a proposition and also appreciated. Yet there is hardly any interest in the relationship between the reality of folklore and Yanagita's description of it. These readers filter Yanagita's theory from his statements and hypotheses and subsequently evaluate it.

Whether or not Yanagita had correctly grasped the folklore phenomena and processed it adequately before he based his own theories on them re-

mains outside the scope of analysis. Critique and discussions written from this viewpoint hardly ever examine Yanagita's articles in connection with the actual folklore phenomena.

The content of Yanagita's ethnographic descriptions is never doubted but understood as established fact, as a fixed reality of folklore. The Yanagitaist reading does not concern itself with concrete folklore phenomena, takes Yanagita's description of folklore at face value without further questioning, and understands and evaluates the ideas expressed on this presupposed basis.

Yanagitaist readers highly appreciate Yanagita's role in establishing folklore studies. But this remains mere appreciation and they themselves do not enter the world of folklore studies Yanagita had created. Yanagitaism thus remains outside of folklore study. Although it holds Yanagita Kunio in high esteem, it has a conspicuous tendency to downplay the meaning of actual ethnographic research.

1.2 *Folklore Studies*

I shall define as a »folklorist reading« that kind of reading of, and reflection on, Yanagita's works that strives to learn from them how to study folklore. This position attempts to adopt from his works interpretations, explanations and hypotheses concerning folklore phenomena. Again, as with the Yanagitaist reading, there is a strong tendency to accept the phenomena he described without question and to take his interpretations and hypotheses as established facts.

The field of folklore studies has hardly ever generated researchers who questioned Yanagita, critically examined his views as well as theories, and come forth with alternative propositions. It was easily forgotten that the folklore put forward by Yanagita was filtered through his selection and judgement, his theories marked by his subjectiveness. No attention was paid to the fact that even where Yanagita purportedly lets the source material speak for itself, it is something produced by Yanagita based on his thoughts and expertise. The fact that the latter was intimately tied up with the concrete content of his folklore studies was ignored.

Consequently, in the folklorist reading of Yanagita's works, the man himself was not discussed. It seems many researchers in folklore studies regard Yanagitaism as an issue discussed outside their field, unrelated to the study of folklore. There are very few folklorists who have examined their theories and claims on folklore in conjunction with Yanagita's thoughts and insights. The title »Study on Yanagita Kunio« almost always meant a Yanagitaist study and hardly ever the study of folklore.

2. The Four Stages of Yanagitaism

The writings by Yanagita not only exist as reading material, but his research results were very frequently the focus of examination, his thoughts and findings vigorously discussed. The discussion of Yanagita was closely linked to the state of society. At present, we have a continuous flow of publications on Yanagita. One can even speak of a constant boom. But as the words or content may be strong and severe, this is merely a problem on the level of academic evaluation; it is apparently not related to any enthusiasm for social change. The study of Yanagita Kunio is cut off from practical concerns.

However, it was due to people believing that by learning from Yanagita Kunio they would be able to work out a plan to change Japan, which brought him into the limelight and persuaded many researchers to study his works. At the earliest, this tendency can be witnessed in the social changes of the 1930s and has resurfaced once again in the 1960s. The *Yanagita shiron* [Historical studies on Yanagita Kunio] by Ienaga Saburō (1973) obviously needs mentioning as a pioneer work, but it never led to a true Yanagita trend.

Risking simplification, I contend that Yanagitaism seems to have changed its aspects roughly every decade since the 1960s to form a revival. Today, there are possibly more than 150 publications entitled »Yanagita Kunio«, paperback editions and special magazine issues dealing with Yanagitaism. There has been no other Japanese who has been discussed so much.

2.1 *The 1960s Campaign Regarding the Security Treaty and Yanagitaism*

After the campaign centered in the big metropolitan to fight the security treaty had failed and the treaty concluded, a »return to the home villages« movement was propagated. People planned to return to the countryside and build up a grassroots movement for social change from there. The corresponding academic initiative was to read Yanagita and learn from him. European and American theories had failed to produce a successful plan for changing Japan. It was necessary to grasp and understand Japanese society from the inside. To achieve this, the call went out to learn from Yanagita Kunio, who was able to understand the eye-level of ordinary people and conceptualise Japanese society accordingly. This approach followed the same logic as those of the prewar changes. The young generation began to read Yanagita.

Typical for the Yanagitaism of this period is the work of Gotō Sōichirō. He made his appearance with the article »Yanagita Kunio-ron: Yanagita-gaku no shisō to gakumon« [Yanagita theory: Thought and scholarship in Yanagita studies] in *Shisō no kagaku*, published in 1964, followed by a host of Yanagitaist studies. Gotō was a specialist in the history of political thought. After the struggle against the security treaty had failed, he strongly

felt the necessity to understand Japanese society from within and came to study Yanagita. He owed his awareness of Yanagita to the influence of his university teacher Bunzō Hashikawa. Hashikawa's own view on Yanagita had been published in *Tenkō: Kyōdō kenkyū* [Collaborative research: Conversion] (Shisō no Kagaku Kenkyūkai 1962) and in the first volume of the series *20-seiki wo ugoka shita hitobito* [People who influenced the 20th century] (Kuno and Tsurumi 1964).

Other articles appeared by Masuda Katsumi, Hanada Kiyoteru and Sumiya Kazuhiko. The publication of *Teihon Yanagita Kunio shū* [Yanagita Kunio – standard edition] in 1962-1964 and the death of Yanagita in August 1962 were further important events of this period. Interest in Yanagita grew spontaneously. A sign of this tendency was that the 1961 January issue of the journal *Bungaku* [Literature] by the publishing house Iwanami was printed as a feature issue, bearing the title »Yanagita Kunio«.

2.2 The 1968/69 Student Revolt, the 1970 Security Treaty and Yanagitaism

Student activism against the established system that at the time spread globally developed in Japan as the so-called campus strife and, especially, the student movement called *zenkoto* (All-University Strife Council). It overlapped with the fight against the renewal of the security treaty in 1970, which rose in intensity before eventually being defeated, while the »campus strife« was re-evaluated as a »campus dispute«. Once again, the study of Yanagita was widely propagated in order to achieve an inside understanding of Japanese society. The latter was deemed necessary to subdue the spell of the *Tennō*-system, which had been absorbed into people's bones. To do this, one had to study Yanagita. Around 1970, reports and comments on Yanagita appeared frequently in journals of the New Left, and even some special features were published.

In the 1970s, researchers without any direct connections to the campus strife started to discuss Yanagita with protagonists of the movement. For example, young people gathered in *terakoya* (literally: »temple schools«), which were born out of disillusionment with the universities. These *terakoya* had been established by their own efforts after the model of Edo-period private academies as a new forum for studying. Yanagita was one of the major issues taken up in these academies, and these discussions laid the foundation for the further development of Yanagitaism. This is shown by the collaboration of academic researchers such as Miyata Noboru or Noguchi Takenori with Gotō Sōichirō in teaching in these schools. The *Kikan Yanagita Kunio Kenkyū* [Quarterly Yanagita Kunio studies] (1973–1975) came out of this same trend. Each issue took the form of a special feature, and so the journal became a forum for studying Yanagita from various perspectives. Those

engaged in Yanagita studies at the *terakoya* later assumed even more independence, forming the Yanagita Kunio Study Group and continuing their research. Gotō Sōichirō was the leading personality in this group.

This was the time (1973) when the *Yanagita Kunio kenkyū* [Yanagita Kunio studies] edited by Kamishima Jirō appeared. It was also the time when researchers in folklore studies began to discuss Yanagita, exemplified by Makita Shigeru's *Yanagita Kunio* (1972) and Wakamori Tarō's *Yanagita Kunio to rekishigaku* [Yanagita Kunio and historiography] (1975). Noboru Miyata also published articles touching on Yanagita.

Amidst the flurry of appreciation and praise lavished on Yanagita, Ariizumi Sadao's *Yanagita Kunio shō* [Reflections on Yanagita Kunio] (1972) was a sober exploration. Ariizumi argued that the subject of Japanese folklore studies was formed by omitting the problem of discrimination. Scholars, answering the wish for the ongoing succession of the family, had attempted to make ancestor worship the basis of the *Tennō*-system, systematically disregarding the fact that discrimination against minorities was an integral part of ancestor worship. His article did not have an immediate impact, but raised a point that continues to be of concern today.

2.3 Academic Yanagitaism of the 1980s

The flood of articles on Yanagita continued without interruption in the 1980s. Each and every one of these publications held his thought and expertise in high esteem and posited something that one should learn from him. But the practical missionary zeal of the 1970s, which had looked to Yanagita for direction in a desire for change after the failure of various struggles, diminished quickly. He was now taken up more as a scholarly model. The many pedagogical studies referring to Yanagita that were published at the time can be characterised as paradigmatic in that respect. As the problems and contradictions of modern public education became more and more visible, an undercurrent emerged that raised the esteem of the village group education Yanagita had depicted so favourably.

Thus the Yanagitaism of the 1980s was supported by academic researchers. Most exemplary is the economic historian Iwamoto Yoshiteru. Anecdote has it that he began his study of Yanagita during a research stay in the United States by borrowing the *Teihon Yanagita Kunio shū* [Kunio Yanagita – standard edition] from the library and is a case in point. Since his 1976 monograph *Yanagita Kunio no no•seigaku* [Yanagita Kunio's studies in agricultural policy], Iwamoto kept on writing about Yanagita in the late 1970s and 1980s. Kawada Minoru, a historian of political thought, published *Yanagita Kunio no shiso•shiteki kenkyū* [Yanagita Kunio's studies in the history of ideas] in 1985 and many other Yanagitaist works.

On the other hand, from the failure of the social struggles of the 1970s and the disenchantment with the *zenkoto*, there emerged, among those seeking autonomy, ever more clearly a movement to read Yanagita privately as an »alternative science«. The voluminous *Yanagita Kunio den* [Biography of Yanagita Kunio] presented to the public by the Yanagita Kunio Kenkyu kai (1988) headed by Gotō Sōichirō is representative of this trend.

Many of those discussing Yanagita stood outside the academy. Especially Gotō's activities brought many to the study of Yanagita who were not professional scholars. He strove to organize circles in every region that were called »People's Universities« and encouraged them to move on from passive learning to active research. Meanwhile and independently, Yanagita studies in the academy also tended to grow, eventually leading to the foundation of a scholarly organization for the study of Yanagita. It was established on the occasion of a Yanagita symposium held during the conference of the History of Social Thought Association in 1994. The call to organise a »Yanagita Kunio Association« came from presenters at the symposium such as Fujii Takashi, Kawada Minoru, and Fukuta Ajo, and the association was founded in 1995. Its members are generally dedicated to the scholarly study of Yanagita.

2.4 The 1990s: A Period of Criticism

The 1990s were a period in which Yanagita, who had hitherto been a model from which to learn, became an object of criticism and the problematic aspects of his work were pointed out. It is well known that Yanagita was a member of the Meiji state bureaucracy. But his thinking and expertise were discussed without giving sufficient thought to the relation between this fact and his folklore research and views. In contrast, Funaki Hiroshi's *Yanagita Kunio gaiden* [Addenda to Yanagita Kunio] (1991), which explored Yanagita as the administrator that he was and clarified his deep commitment to the Meiji state policies in a factual manner, opened up a new phase of research on Yanagita. According to Funaki's insight, Yanagita in his folklore studies strove to »rationalize the *Tennō*-system by the notion of the »common people«. This was followed in 1992 by Murai Osamu's widely discussed *Nanto• ideorogi• no hassei* [The origin of the Southern Islands ideology], which posited that Yanagita's folklore studies were policy studies for colonial rule. A further discussion of Yanagita in the context of colonialism was Kawamura Minato's »*Dai To•a minzokugaku*« *no kyojitsu* [Truth and lies in Greater East Asian folklore studies] (1996).

Thus, discussing the problematic aspects of Yanagita became the fundamental trend of Yanagitaism in the 1990s. Especially Yanagita's thesis of ethnic unity of the nation came under fire, to the extent that criticism of this uniformity theory became the mainstream of Yanagitaism. An exemplary

work is Koyasu Nobukuni's *Kindaichi no arukeorojī: kokka to senso• to chishikijin* [The archaeology of modern knowledge: The state, war, and the intellectuals] (1996).

Not all Yanagitaist publications followed this trend. There were highly academic publications that explored various textual problems within Yanagita's writings. Numerous others followed the line of »turning to Yanagita in hard times«, that is, whenever they came across a situation that was difficult to explain in terms of Euro-American theories. Education was a typical field. Early on, educationists had turned their eyes on Yanagita's »group education« or »village education«. When the contradictions in modern public education became apparent, they increasingly took up Yanagita's pedagogical theories and tried to apply them as a model.

3. Research on Yanagita Kunio in Folklore Studies

As I have mentioned above, Yanagita was for a long time treated as the absolute and final truth in folklore studies. His words had the status of established and commonly accepted theories. They were almost never perceived as hypotheses he had built on the material he himself had collected at the time. Research in folklore studies often took up the task of supporting his theories by seeking additional examples of things he had mentioned, or conversely, of applying his analyses to new material. If folklorists wrote about Yanagita, they rarely went beyond explaining his views. *Nihon minzokugaku* [Japanese folklore studies], the journal of the Japanese Association of Folklore Studies, does not contain one article that discusses Yanagita Kunio critically.

The first folklorist to really take issue with Yanagita was probably Miyata Noboru. Miyata did not restrict folklore studies to a small world of its own, but sought active collaboration with other disciplines, and in doing so exchanged views and collaborated with Yanagitaists. He joined hands with Gotō Sōichirō in the *terakoya* activities of the 1970s and became one of the editors of the *Kikan Yanagita Kunio kenkyū* [Quarterly Yanagita Kunio studies]. He joined the panel discussions on selected topics of Yanagita studies, which headed each issue, and made his statements from the perspective of folklore studies. Still, there is hardly any paper by Miyata that specifically discusses Yanagitaism. His own research generally just continued in the direction given by Yanagita's theory. But he did not follow Yanagita in sounding the warning bells for contemporary society that the master had interwoven into his research. Miyata's opus magnum *Miroku shinkō no kenkyū* [Research into Miroku worship] (1970) developed the hypotheses Yanagita (1971) had exposed in *Kaijō no michi* [Maritime roads]. However, Miyata did not touch on the evaluation of Okinawa or relate his findings to the history of migrations on the Japanese archipelago. He made no mention of the feeling of urgency that had previously made Yanagita use the term

Nihon hondo («Japanese mainland») as a warning sign against forgetting Okinawa. Instead, Miyata sought to liberate Yanagita's thoughts from the sense of crisis and the missionary zeal that accompanied them and to integrate them into his own way of thinking. Furthermore, he attempted to come to terms with the *Tennō*-system that in many aspects stuck in the throat of Japanese society. While Miyata often served as a mediator in explaining Yanagita to people outside folklore studies, in his own research he had liberated himself from his spell and followed a broader agenda.

In the folklore studies of the 1970s, it became a mainstream trend to cast doubt on Yanagita's propositions that had hitherto been followed unchallenged by his immediate disciples in their research and to explore the various problems of the Yanagita approach. Yanagita's method of exploring folklore phenomena according to the theory of a »synchronicity of historical layers« (*jūshutsu risshōhō*) – a term coined in his *Minkan denshō-ron* [Theory of folklore tradition] (1934) – and his »centre vs. periphery thesis«, proposed as a hypothesis in *Kagyū-kō* [Reflections on snails] (Yanagita 1930), were subjected to critical analysis. These works did not discuss Yanagita's thought *in toto*. Still, they took issue with fundamental parts of his theory. The first to question these seminal elements of Yanagita-style methodology was Katsunori Sakurada, but it was Ajo Fukuda who made them the topic of a series of articles collected in his *Nihon minzokugaku hōhō josetsu* [Prolegomena to a methodology of Japanese folklore studies] (1984). Sakurai Tokutarō also elucidated problems of the »synchronicity of historical layers« theory, and tried to transform it into a method that could only be applied regionally. At this time, Jūrō Ono's propositions on the ethnic differences in Kagoshima prefecture made a great impact. Ono had already inherently rejected Yanagita's national frame of reference in comparative studies in the 1960s.

This way, Yanagita was studied by folklorists mainly with respect to his way of handling materials, with a special focus on his method of interpreting folklore phenomena, without reference to his general ideas, his sense of crisis and his missionary zeal. Although severe criticism of Yanagita appeared among Yanagitaists in the 1990s, it was rarely taken up by folklore researchers. If they became a topic of discussion, folklorists tended to defend Yanagita and to consolidate their high evaluation of his work. This was shown by the suggestion that the Japanese Association of Folklore Studies should issue a statement to counter such criticism. Many articles of the 1990s extolled Yanagita's superb accomplishments and excoriated contemporary folklore studies and folklorists for their low-level and meddlesome disputes.

The folklore researchers today tend to over-interpret Yanagita, dragging his claims into the present and conceiving his writing as far more complex than it was at the time of publication. Moreover, even sentences suggesting the infallibility of Yanagita appear, approving Yanagita's thoughts without even examining the methodological problems he presented. In those cases,

the sense of crisis and the missionary zeal have been completely forgotten. It is obvious that there is no *raison d'être* for this kind of academic research in the present age. It will be necessary to construct a folklore study fit for the 21st century by extracting the theory of Kunio Yanagita (which had evolved through the first half of the 20th century), apply his sense of crisis and missionary zeal in a manner suitable for the present age, as well as critically examine his claims and hypothesis.

Recently, Yanagita Kunio's request for development to be seen from a single-nation folklore as well as a global folklore perspective, which he stated in his work *Minkan denshō ron* [Theory of folklore tradition], is increasingly gaining attention. Yanagita himself did not comment further on the context of the term global folklore, but merely left the term as a legacy. It can be perceived as the homework Yanagita has left for the next generation to do. Nevertheless, the generation that had inherited folklore studies after the Second World War perceived single-nation folklore as the standard and completely disregarded global folklore, for which Yanagita had left no guidelines as to content. The time has come to examine the concept of global folklore as well as to search for its concrete possibilities, whilst attempting to overcome the barriers of single-nation folklore within the Japanese Islands. The multi-cultural situation on the Japanese Islands is undoubtedly prompting this step.

4. The Task Ahead

The thoughts and insights of Yanagita Kunio are worth being reconsidered and examined at all times, by reading his works. But, as to Yanagitaism, it has to overcome the problem stated earlier in this text. Thus, it remains to be examined whether or not Yanagita had correctly grasped the folklore phenomena he had used as a foundation for his theories on the folklore phenomena of the Japanese Islands, and whether he handled the source material adequately. Yanagita's claims are merely sandcastles if the folklore phenomena that supposedly back up the hypotheses are not performing their task, even if the claims or hypotheses are extraordinary. At this point, modest attention needs to be paid to the results of the post-Yanagita folklore studies, and any verification of the theories brought up by Yanagita goes on from there. On the other hand, the folklore study should not glorify Yanagita Kunio as an absolute, but understand him simply as one researcher. The task for the field of folklore study should be to realise the sense of crisis and missionary zeal that Kunio Yanagita had coherently expressed and simultaneously investigate the methods and hypotheses of Yanagita, so as to re-conceptualise them as tasks suitable for the modern age. Folklore researchers undoubtedly politicize their field of study by ignoring Yanagita's theory and sense of missionary zeal, as well as by conceiving all his works as objective research results with folklore study as its base, as well as speaking about them second hand. Fur-

thermore, Yanagita has to be understood as a child of his age. It has to be fully understood that he was greatly bound by his background at the time of publication. The truly intense sense of crisis and missionary zeal he bore in mind are witness to his limitations, and even though his hypotheses were constructed within the study of folklore, it cannot be simply characterised as an objective point of view or as objective hypotheses.

Whether it be Yanagitaism or folklore, the content that can be extracted from the works of Yanagita Kunio is immense and never-ending. Yet the writings of Kunio Yanagita, who was a literary enthusiast in his youth and educated in the Meiji period, do not evolve in a logical and explicit manner. Neither can one be sure that Yanagita states his claims and hypothesis as clear results. For the modern reader he is difficult to understand, and the reader is frequently confused about whether he has at all grasped the meaning and claims made by the writing. It leads to mistakes if the reader picks out expressions that suit his own attitude and judgement, lines them up as his and presents them as the viewpoint of Yanagita Kunio. With Yanagita's writings, we must continue our efforts to grasp the entire train of thought in the body of the text as a hypothesis and to extract the claims hidden within it.

Because the writings of Yanagita Kunio are difficult to understand for younger readers or foreigners, there have been very few translations into English or other languages. Only a handful of publications by Yanagita have been introduced overseas. Moreover, the keywords to understanding the claims of Yanagita are typically Japanese terms, reflecting the characteristics of single-nation folklore. They are very peculiar terms, which make the process of finding the appropriate term in the target language a difficult one. But future examinations of Yanagita Kunio must progress within an international relationship, not merely inside Japan. To realise this aim, many writings by Yanagita Kunio need to be properly translated into other languages and to be read by many people. This would create an environment that makes appropriate examination possible. I put great hopes in Japan researchers and their undertakings across the world.

From the Japanese by Tomoe Steineck

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Ishige Naomichi

Historical Survey of the Food Culture

Introduction

Gastronomy functions as the mirror of culture. Food materials in the kitchen reflect the local environment and life style. Kitchen tools and cooking recipes are the essence of the traditional technique of a people. Traditional rules of human relationship and religious aspects become apparent through table manners, and culinary occasions act as symbols of events such as rites of passage, annual and other festivals. Throughout history, crops and livestock have been introduced by intercultural exchange. It is possible to understand the culture of a region or of a people by examining the way food is handled, which is the basis of human living.

It is apparent that food culture is an important field of cultural studies, yet because it seems to have an overwhelmingly trivial nature, it has rarely been taken up as a topic of studies in the humanities or social studies. Worldwide, the study of culinary culture is a new field that was not begun till the 1970s, except for a few pioneering achievements, and the situation is much the same in Japan. The study of Japanese food culture, which has been conducted since the first half of the 20th century, was mostly done within the frame of ethnology or historical studies, apart from some fragmentary research.¹

In the process of nation-building, the Meiji government tried to popularize the stoic ethics of the *bushi* as a model for the entire population. As a result, being particular about the subject of food was generally condemned as unmanly. The Kansai area, which took pride in its *chōnin* culture (towns people, mainly of the merchant class) that valued consumption and amusement, was an exception to this rule. Intellectuals were not. Researchers did engage in the practical aspects of the subject, such as the production of food in agriculture, the analysis of the process of cooking (*chōrigaku*), or dietetics, which deals with the nutritional situation of the nation. But matters concerning food culture were categorized as dilettantish pastime.

After the post-World War II period of enormous struggle to achieve economical growth had ended, the 1970s introduced a lifestyle of enjoying the fruits of one's labour. The appearance of scholars engaged in genuine studies of the gastronomic culture can be placed around this time. In the 1980s the »gourmet boom« began and people started to view food as enjoyment. The

1 The history of research in Japanese food-culture up to 1990 is dwelt with in Ishige 1996.

knowledge of food and gastronomy came to be accepted as part of cultural education, and the study of gastronomic culture developed hand in hand with these trends in Japanese society.

Tendencies in Recent Research

Clustered around the researchers of the National Museum of Ethnology, food culture began to be investigated from an ethnological viewpoint during the 1970s. From 1982 onwards, the »Food Culture Forum«, organized by the Ajinomoto Foundation for Dietary Culture, was held annually. Every year a special topic on the cultural aspect of gastronomy was chosen, and researchers from various fields dealing with gastronomy gathered three times a year to promulgate and discuss their research. The results were then published in an annual report. This forum took a comprehensive stance on the study of food culture, taking foreign countries into account as well. Such reports on foreign food culture proved useful for the study of the Japanese landscape, too, as the forum consistently maintained a comparative approach. The researchers who took part in this forum acted as the core group that supported the study of gastronomic culture in its early stages. The altogether seven volumes of *Kōza shoku no bunka* [Comprehensive edition: Food-culture] were published from 1998–1999, based on the essays published at this forum. This series is a compilation of the study of gastronomic culture in Japan at that time (Ishige 1998–1999). The twelve volumes of *Zenshū Nihon no shoku bunka* [A comprehensive collection on Japanese food culture] appeared within the same period (Haga and Ishikawa 1996–1999). The editorial policy of the first publication takes up Japanese food culture in an international context, whilst the latter focuses on Japan and compiles important essays dealing with food that were published in academic journals.

Along with its publication of the quarterly journal *Vesta*, which is the only learned journal on food culture in Japan, the Ajinomoto Foundation for Dietary Culture produces and publishes the database *Food Culture Bibliography*. If the pioneering researchers, who were centered on the »Food Culture Forum« and led the study of Japanese food culture, can be regarded as the first generation, the dawn of the 1990s witnessed the appearance of the second generation of academics. The first generation tried out methods of researching food culture whilst simultaneously engaging in their various major subjects. The young people who took up the study of food culture after it was accepted as an academic subject in its own right constituted the second generation. This second generation includes many eager researchers who engage in fieldwork overseas, and this young generation will successively contribute their findings in due time.²

2 A series on the food-culture of the different regions of the world by Japanese scholars is currently under publication; see Ishige (ed.) 2004–2007.

Periodization in the History of Food Culture

Compared to changes exhibited by the development of ideology, society, or technology, which can sometimes be revolutionary, the history of food culture in general evolves more gradually. For a new cuisine or change in table manners to spread through the entire population, time is needed to prepare and structure the manufacture and supply of this food. Tastes and food-related values developed during childhood change slowly and are transmitted gradually from generation to generation. Accordingly, the time periods of the history of food culture must differ from that of standard history. The first work dealing with a proper overview of Japanese food culture from prehistory through to the modern age was published in 1934 (Adachi and Sakurai 1934). Since then, several historians published overviews on the eating habits of the Japanese people. All of them follow the political-historical periodization of Japanese history, such as the Nara-, Heian-, and Kamakura-periods and deal with eating habits within this frame. They also share the focus on the historical description of »traditional« food culture, and only very briefly touch the post-Meiji periods. They do not investigate Japanese history from the viewpoint of food culture research, but merely apply the tools of their trade as historians to the topic of food culture. To liberate the historical consideration of food culture from standard periodization by replacing it with one's own periodization means expressing the individual historical viewpoint of a researcher. This process of creating an historical survey from the viewpoint of food culture research began in the 21st century.³ In the following chapters, I would like to briefly outline the history of food culture in Japan according to my own periodization, as well as touching on some of the problems concerned here.

Prehistory

This period, during which food was obtained by hunting and gathering, is subdivided into the Palaeolithic and the Neolithic. The latter also covers the Jōmon Period. Numerous stones with traces of carbohydrate, proof of heat treatment, have been excavated from Upper Palaeolithic sites, which leads to the conclusion that an earth oven was used for cooking. As Japanese soil is unsuitable for the preservation of organic compound, traces of flora and fauna are rarely found, and the current situation faces the problem that there is no tangible proof of the eating habits of the Palaeolithic people. Hope remains for the discovery of new archaeological evidence in the future. In the Jōmon period, earthenware was introduced and with it the new cooking method of boiling, which widened the range of food sources immensely.

³ The following two volumes present a history according to the periodization of the authors: Ishige 2001 and Harada 2005.

Other than animal products, nuts such as walnuts, chestnuts, and acorn have been identified as the main nutritional source during the Jōmon period, and the acorns include some types that can only be eaten when boiled. When compared with the mainly nomadic cultures of hunters and gatherers, the people of the Jōmon period were largely settlers. Furthermore, the Neolithic is generally known by its agricultural revolution, but traditional research understood the Jōmon society as a hunting and gathering culture. Nevertheless, since some archaeological sites revealed traces of cultigens, the theory of the Jōmon period as an agricultural period has emerged. The foremost task of food culture research concerning the Jōmon period is to unravel the agricultural situation of this period based on archaeological evidence.

The Establishment of the Rice Agriculture Society

The greatest event in the history of Japanese food culture is the establishment of a fundamentally agricultural society centred on wet rice cultivation in the Yayoi period.

The founder of Japanese ethnology, Yanagita Kunio, accredited the formation of the Japanese people to the introduction and reception of rice cultivation. He argued that the evolution of the traditional social structure, as well as culture, strongly depended on the life style based on rice as the main food source. On the other hand, scholars such as Sasaki Kōmei and Tsuboi Yobun presented the alternative hypothesis that an agriculture based on assorted grains and various potatoes existed since the Jōmon period, and that it is this genealogy of cultivation that can be traced as the undercurrent of Japanese culture up to the present.⁴

Apart from its role in different genealogies of agriculture and cultural theories, rice is also at the center of two opposing views on its status as a staple food in Japanese history. One firmly believes that ever since the Yayoi period, the Japanese people have mainly lived on rice. The other argues that in old times, many people could not afford to eat rice regularly. The staple diet hypothesis was for a long time accepted as general knowledge on an a priori basis, without being subject to critical examination. Citing written admonitions by Edo-period statesmen, who condemned rice consumption amongst farmers, and the harsh conditions set by the annual tribute, its opponents argue that even the farmers who produced the rice were unable to eat it on a regular basis. After the Second World War, there was a tendency to emphasize the misery of farm life in the past. The opinion spread amongst academics that assorted grains and various potatoes, rather than rice, were the staple diet of the average farmer. Concrete examples were mainly provided by ethnologists such as Miyamoto Tsune'ichi, who held that the Japanese were a people who ate a mixed diet

⁴ The different hypotheses are summarized in Sasaki 1983.

based on various kinds of products (Miyamoto 1982; Miyamoto and Ushioda 1978).

Koyama Shūzō published a computer-based quantitative analysis of the correlation between the Japanese population and its food resources from the Jōmon to the contemporary age. This study states that in Meiji 10 (1877), when the diet was basically still the same as in the Edo period, about 60% of the nutritional energy and 50% of the protein that the Japanese absorbed from their main produce derived from rice. In Meiji 2 (1869), 55% of the energy gained from the overall produce of the Hida region derived from rice. Second came Japanese millet (*Echinochloa utilis*) with 22%. These numbers reveal that even in the mountainous region of Hida, which was supposed to be the most unsuitable region for rice cultivation within Japan, rice was the staple food. Meanwhile they disprove the general idea held by ethnologists that assorted grains were the staple food in mountain villages (Koyama *et al.* 1981).

In the contemporary world, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Indonesia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam are the countries where more than 50% of overall nutritional energy is gained from rice. Since they are all considered as rice cultures, it would be appropriate to say that Japan too has been a rice culture since the Yayoi period (Ishige 1986).

According to ancient written records, the cooking method since the Yayoi period was steaming, the terminology being *kowameshi*, and the method of boiling with water common today, called *himeii*, was not introduced until the Heian period. However, archaeological excavations brought to light Yayoi period pots with residues of burned rice, which confirmed that since the introduction of rice cultivation in the Yayoi period, the boiling method was commonly used (Sahara 1996). The late historian Shinoda Osamu pioneered the study of Japanese food culture in the East Asian context, not as an historian's pastime, but from the viewpoint of food culture. In publications such as *Sushi no hon* [The book of sushi] (1966) and *Kome no bunkashi* [The cultural history of rice] (1970), he considered many rice-based foods like *sushi*, *sake* (rice wine), and *mochi* (rice cake). I would like to briefly introduce post-Shinoda studies dealing with these products.

The *sushi* that now enjoys global popularity is an offspring of the *nigiri sushi* that came into existence in early 19th century. This *sushi* is a piece of rice ball seasoned with vinegar and garnished with a piece of raw fish. The *sushi* of the Edo period, called *narezushi*, was different; it was a piece of salted fish concealed within rice, which grew sour through lactic fermentation whilst the fish inside was preserved. Shinoda believed that *narezushi* was introduced to Japan, together with rice cultivation, from its origin in the mountainous regions of the Indochinese peninsula (Shinoda 1966, 1970). Based on fieldwork, Ishige and Ruddle presented the hypothesis that *narezushi* is spread over a wide area of Southeast Asia, originating in the area

around the Mekong banks all the way to Yunnan in China. They argue that *narezushi* originated in connection with the fishing of freshwater fish from paddies and their irrigation canals and spread all over East Asia hand in hand with rice cultivation (Ishige and Ruddle 1990).

There is also a hypothesis that claims the existence of alcohol via fruit fermentation in the Jōmon period, but this is based on circumstantial evidence and so is uncertain. Compiled in the early 8th century the *Fudoki* records that people in southern Kyūshū chew rice grains and thus produced *kuchikami-sake* (›alcohol chewed in the mouth‹), utilizing enzymes in the saliva. The standard theory accepts *kuchikami-sake* as the first form of brewing in Japan, since the tradition existed on Okinawa and the Nansei (Southwest) Islands, whilst brewing with yeast was introduced to Japan later via the Korean peninsula. Rice cultivation in Korea as well as in Japan most likely had its origins in the lower reaches of the Yangtze River in China. By the time rice had reached Japan, yeast brewing should have been well established in China. Considering the development of chewing foxtail millet for brewing amongst the aboriginal people of Taiwan, the rice-chewing brewery of Okinawa and the Nansei Islands – where rice cultivation was introduced fairly late – can be interpreted as a relict of the millet culture that had existed prior to the introduction of rice (Ishige 1998).

Mochi, made of steamed glutinous rice using a millstone and pounder, were believed to be peculiarly Japanese, yet they can be found on the Korean and the Indochinese peninsulas, as well as amongst minority peoples in southwest China.

In China and on the Korean peninsula, a rice cake similar to *mochi* is usually made by using rice flour. On the peripheries of Chinese culture, in which food made of flour could not establish itself, pounded *mochi* nevertheless remains.

In Japan, *mochi* was believed to be the abode of the spirit of rice, and as a sacred food played an important role in rituals and festivities. In Southeast Asia, pounded rice cakes occasionally function as ceremonial food, too. The ancient form of rice cultivation that was once transmitted to Japan can still be found in Southeast Asia today. Ethnographical research of rice products such as *mochi* in Southeast Asia should be useful for reconstructing the situation of early rice cultivation in Japan.

The Formative Period of a Japanese Food Culture

I believe that Japanese food culture was formed during a long period spanning the ›ancient‹ to the ›late medieval‹ epochs, according to historical terminology. This time span can be divided into two halves: the unification stage of the Kofun period together with the Nara and Heian period are then the first half, the Kamakura and Muromachi period the second half. The for-

mer period is characterised by an uninterrupted exchange with the continent, and it was at this time that the food culture of East Asia was introduced to Japan. Chopsticks, personal tables called *zen*, *miso* (fermented bean paste), and noodles all came from the continent. Ceremonies or festivals of Chinese origin and culinary practices associated with them were also transmitted. A civilization is marked by several connecting cultures using the same type of calendar, and by this definition China, Korea, and Japan together form the cultural sphere of East Asian civilization, which shares a ceremonial cuisine of the same origin. The court was pivotal in this process of building a civilization; new culinary culture usually spread from the aristocracy to the populace. If the first half was the period of introduction, the second half, initiated when the Japanese stopped sending tributary missions to the Tang court (*ken-tōshi*), is the period of processing. It can be characterised as the period during which food culture not merely followed the continental model, but built up the basis of the classical, traditional Japanese food culture. The *bushi* (warriors) and the clerics represented the main influence on food culture in this period.

The most important event in the formation of traditional food culture was the spread of a taboo concerning the consumption of meat from mammals. Tenmu *Tennō* issued the first edict prohibiting meat consumption in AD 645, but in the first period it proved difficult to change this habit. After awhile during the 10th century, meat consumption came to be despised amongst the clerics, the aristocrats and urban populations. Not till medieval times did this attitude spread among the common people, but even then, eating meat was not considered a taboo by all the Japanese. Still, in the latter half of the formative period, the distinct Japanese cuisine evolved, founded on a base limited to seafood and vegetables that was globally unique.

Traditionally, the taboo of meat consumption was explained in conjunction with Buddhist ethics. However, the conjunction of this taboo with Shintoism, which abhors *kegare* (»defilement«) by blood, and not the victimization of animals, must not be forgotten. We should also note Harada Nobuo, who developed the theory that the administrative powers' unilateral predilection for farming, related to the absolute preference they placed on rice production, strongly contributed to the rejection of eating meat (Harada 2006).

The Age of Fluctuation

The time between the middle of the 15th century to the first half of the 17th century, corresponding to the historical periods of the Sengoku (Warring States Period), the Azuchi-Momoyama and the early Edo period, was a time of great social change when mediaeval order disintegrated and a rearrangement of feudalism took place. It is also a revolutionary period in the history of food culture.

In 1543, a ship manned by Portuguese seamen went ashore on an island in southern Kyūshū. This was the first Japanese encounter with Europe. After that, Jesuits arrived in Japan from the Iberian Peninsula and began a spirited missionary activity.

Since they were considered »barbarians« who had arrived from the south, they were called *nambanjin* – the »southern barbarians«. Those in Japan who converted to the Christian church were no longer bound by the taboo of meat consumption and began eating meat unrestrictedly. The food introduced by the southern barbarians was called »*namban* cuisine«, the cakes and candies »*namban* sweets«. The *tempura*, representative of Japanese cuisine, is very likely of this origin. Once Christian oppression began in the following period, the taboo of meat consumption again intensified, and meat dishes of Western origin disappeared. Nevertheless, some dishes metamorphosed into a Japanese format with altered ingredients and have survived to the present day. The *namban* sweets without meat survived very well, *casutera* being the foremost example, whose name derives from the Kingdom of Castile on the Iberian Peninsula. Around the same time, sugar began to enter Japan and the consumption of sweet dishes began.⁵

More important than cuisines or sweets was the arrival of new vegetables, such as the sweet potato, pumpkin, and chili from the new world. In the regions unsuitable for rice cultivations, such as Okinawa and the southwestern islands of Japan, the population increased once sweet potato farming provided a supply of staple food. This period is marked by an active trade between China and the wealthy merchants of West Japan, and by the appearance of Japanese town settlements all over Southeast Asian. Overseas trade was at its highest in the early pre-modern age, and foreign food culture had a great impact. There are various studies on the process of how elements of foreign food culture spread across Japan. However the task still remains to complete research on the original form this food culture took in its country of origin at the time of its introduction to Japan and to reveal the acculturation of foreign food culture in Japan by comparing the two.

The tea ceremony – *cha no yu* – developed during this period. The tea ceremony greatly influenced table manners, and the cuisine accompanying the tea ceremony – *kaiseki* – has played a major role in the aesthetics of Japanese cuisine ever since.⁶

5 On the cuisine and the sweets, the (South) Europeans brought to Japan as well as on the Western cuisine at the Dutch trading factory in Nagasaki during the Edo-period, I recommend Etchū 1982.

6 On the cuisine of the tea-ceremony, Kumakura 2002 is a very detailed study.

The Period of the Completion of Traditional Food Culture

The time span from the *sakoku* («closure of the country») beginning in the first half of the 17th century up to the Meiji restoration, covering most of the Edo period, was an exceptionally peaceful period in world history, also termed Pax Tokugawa. Under the *sakoku* policy, few foreign food influences entered Japan, and time was spent on organising, systematising and refining the elements that had been introduced so far. It is a time when the values, cooking- and dining methods, which contemporary Japanese regard as traditional, was completed. Most of the Japanese cuisine consumed today evolved in this period, and the soy sauce that flavours the greater part of present-day Japanese cuisine, also grew popular during this time. All the traditional Japanese cuisine was formed up to the Bunka and Bunsei eras in the first half of the 19th century and has not developed much since then, until today. The brewing of sake as it is drunk today as well as the spread of green tea amongst the populace occurred in the Edo period. By the end of the 17th century, the custom of having three meals a day was established compared to the mediaeval tradition of two daily meals.

The Tokugawa government strengthened the feudal system of dividing the country into *han* provinces, each under the control of a *daimyo* lord. A *han* province was also an economic unit, and a country-wide distribution system of goods was already established in this period. Yet the supply of basic food in this system relied on the resource within the province, thus the culture of provincial specialities that remain until today, which mirrors the different climate and the resulting products, was also established at this period.⁷

As modern archaeology excavates Edo period sites as well as ancient sites, a lot of evidence was came to light that could not be found in written sources on the concrete dietary situation. At the moment most of these sites are located in cities, yet great things are expected of archaeological methods for the reconstruction of Edo period dietary habits.

The most important development of this period is the establishment of a culture of eating out. Various kinds of food-serving shops appeared, ranging from places offering snacks such as noodles or *nigiri-zushi*, to fine, expensive restaurants. The latter helped to generate a refined dining culture, which also influenced the daily meals of the general population; this trend was initiated and carried out by the merchants in the cities, who frequented the fine restaurants, while the common diners and pubs catered to workers and craftsmen. In the 18th century it became apparent that the Japanese economical engine was not driven by the class of the *bushi*, who held the highest status, but by

7 Nihon no Shokuseikatsu Zenshū Henshū Iinkai (ed.) 1986–1996 is a series on regional cuisine as it is handed down at present. The following two contributions deal with the regionalization of food-culture in present time: Hori 1996 and Okumura 1996.

the city merchants, who even extended loans to the *daimyō* lords. Thus, craftsmen and merchants created the city culture. But although they constituted the lower strata in Edo period society with its top-down hierarchy of *bushi*, farmers, craftsmen and merchants, the popular culture they symbolized arose in the cities of Japan without a popular revolution. Restaurants and diners appeared in the three cities of Kyoto, Osaka, and Edo around the middle of the 18th century, and by the end of the 18th century Edo was probably the city with the densest restaurant cluster in the world. Against this background, various restaurant guides tailored for the traveller began to be published (Ishige 1990).

The familiar scheme in many countries is that refined food and clothing cultures originate at court or in the aristocracy and gradually find their way down the social ladder. However, in the Edo period, refined cuisine started from the restaurant culture transmitted by urban society and travelled from there to the upper class of the aristocracy and the *bushi*, as well as to the larger rural farming population. There are studies on the restaurants in Edo, but partly because of the limited written sources, the situation in the cities of Kyoto and Osaka, where restaurants flourished even earlier than Edo, is not well researched.

Changes in the Modern Age

The modernization period of food culture since the end of *sakoku* can be divided in two phases. The first phase runs from the opening of the country and the Meiji restoration that began the construction of a modern nation to the food shortage following the end of the Second World War. The second phase begins with the rapid economic growth in the 1960s and lasts until today. The first phase was a time when information from overseas, including food and dietetics, was accumulated and subsequently took on a concrete presence on the people's plates, aided by the industrialization of Japanese society.

The biggest event here was the lifting of the ban on meat consumption. Upon Its establishment, the aims of the Meiji government were firstly the adoption of Western modern industry to trigger the industrialization of Japan, and secondly the organization of a modern army through general conscription. For this purpose it was necessary to raise strong and healthy workers and soldiers. The reason why the reality of the health of the Japanese people was far from this was thought to be the lack of meat and dairy products in their diet. As a result, the government encouraged the consumption of meat, and eating meat or drinking milk was to become a requirement for a modern citizen. Meals of Western origin containing meat were introduced into the military canteen.

Many Western restaurants opened in the cities, too. These were the places to eat the meat that was lacking in the art of traditional Japanese cuisine. Chinese and Korean food cultures, which also included meat and gave it a place in the cultural sphere of the chopstick, were introduced only later. The common people became familiar with Chinese cuisine after 1910. Although a Japanese colony, the Korean cuisine, which made ample use of chilli and garlic, was claimed not to correspond to the Japanese taste and popularized only after the Second World War. The reason behind this was the social tendency of the Meiji period to adapt to the Western model, thereby holding Western cuisine supreme as the food culture of the civilised world and ignoring the »stagnant« food culture of East Asia.

Nevertheless, the people who frequented Western restaurants and served Western food at home were just a small elite minority, whilst the common man only rarely consumed traditional Japanese dishes that had adopted meat, such as *sukiyaki*. According to the statistics of the year 1930, just 70 years after the lifting of the meat taboo, the meat consumption rate of one Japanese person lay at 6.1 g per day (in 2003 the rate rose to 77.1 g per day). This proves that the common diet had not changed much at all since the Edo period.

It was only in the 1960s, after Japan had recovered from the food shortages that were part of the aftermath of the 15-year long war, that rising economic growth made a more enjoyable diet possible. Economic growth not only brought a rise in quantities consumed, but also a change in quality. Changes included the shift from a diet relying on vegetables and rice to a diet rich in animal protein gained from fish and meat, a cuisine with plenty of spice as well as fats and oils, the regular consumption of bread at breakfast, and cooking at home food that had its origins abroad. This process is frequently called the westernization or the »no-nationality« nature of Japanese food culture. But quite on the contrary, it is better understood as an adaptation of food and cooking methods from abroad that enriches the repertoire of Japanese cuisine, because those meals that became part of the diet prepared daily at home became incorporated into a Japanese form.

Since 1962, the consumption of rice has continued to sink. Meal patterns changed from the main meal type that consumed lots of rice full of carbohydrate and vegetable protein with a little side dish as appetizer to ease the rice consumption and turned into a side dish of preferably many dishes that allow various tastes in a single meal. This change that is still ongoing, is equal to the change that occurred around the time of the Yayoi period when rice cultivation began. It indicates a shift from a food culture based on the traditional life style of a farming society to the food culture of a highly advanced industrial society based on globalization. Not only the content of the menu has changed, but also its manner and presentation. Since ancient times, food was served in single portions on small personal tables called *zen* while the con-

sumer was seated on the floor. The order of the *zen* tables reflected the traditional ranks within the family hierarchy, such as the difference between the lord of the house and the rest of the family, man and woman, older and younger. In the first half of the modern period, the low but larger *chabudai* table that can be used by several people was introduced and spread so that it could be found at almost every family home around the 1930s. Yet the meals were still served in individual small bowls, preserving the pattern of single portions embodied by the *zen* tables. Even within the family, one's own individual chopsticks and bowls were used to avoid contagion by *kegare* (>defilement<) when using chopsticks that might have been used by another family member.

In the second phase of the modern period, the use of Western chairs and dining tables became common. In this case, the rice and the soup are still served in individual bowls, but the side menu is often served on a larger platter and family members help themselves using their own chopsticks. The National Museum of Ethnology conducted a collaborative research into the transformation of the variety of food, presentation mode and table manners that comply with the change in the domestic dinner table, which inquired into the transition of communication within a family that is reflected in the dining situation (Ishige and Inoue 2005; Ishige 2005).

Ainu and Okinawa

Aside from the food culture described above, the Ainu at the northern end, and Okinawa at the southern end of Japan had both maintained their own characteristic food culture until the Meiji period. The Ainu people formed a society that relied on fishing as well as hunting and gathering for their food supply, without cultivating rice. Today, most of the characteristic Ainu food culture has disappeared, as has the elder who transmitted past traditions.⁸ There are papers and studies about Ainu methods of obtaining food or ceremonial cuisine, but extremely few researches about the cooking methods or food culture. This is a large task being left to Japanese historical ethnology to conduct a comprehensive research on the Hokkaidō Ainu, a task that presupposes the compilation of the fragmentary records and their comparison with the ethnographical material of Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands.

It is generally believed that since the 3rd century, foxtail millet, taro (*Colocasia esculenta*), or yam (*Dioscorea*) have been harvested in Okinawa using the slash and burn method. Rice cultivation in a paddy was introduced around the 11th century, but the environment of the coral island is ill suited to this method. When cultivation of sweet potatoes started at the turn of the

8 Summarized interviews on the diet of the Ainu during the first half of the 20th century are presented in Morinaka *et al.* 1992, which will presumably remain the last record told by the Ainu themselves.

16th century, Okinawa's population grew. Before the Meiji period, Buddhism had not permeated these islands. There was therefore no taboo on meat consumption, and people ate pork and goat.

The trading ships of the Kingdom of Ryūkyū, which came into existence around the beginning of the 15th century, operated as intermediary vendors connecting the Japanese mainland, Korea and the various countries of Southeast Asia. When placed under the authority of the Edo Bakufu at the turn of the 17th century, it maintained its tributary trade relations with the Ming court and formed a semi-autonomous state that was part of both the Chinese and the Japanese political system. Under these circumstances, Okinawa developed its own particular food culture, incorporating elements from China – especially from Fujian, on the other side of the ocean – the Japanese mainland and Southeast Asia.

Research on Okinawan food so far has stopped at dietary studies analysing eating habits of Okinawans as people who are particularly long-living, and at recording details from popular magazines and characteristics of the various regional cuisine. Further studies are thus greatly desired that would elucidate the formation of Okinawan food culture in detail, while paying due attention to its historical relations to China and South East Asia.

From the Japanese by Tomoe Steineck

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The Cultural Turn in German Japanese Studies

1. Introduction

In 2001, two German Japanologists edited the reader *Grundriß der Japanologie* [Outline of Japanology] based on a series of lectures that introduced the main topics and subdisciplines of Japanology (Kracht and Rüttermann 2001). A compilation of contributions by the leading representatives of this field, this volume rightfully claims to be a comprehensive overview of the academic field of Japanology in Germany. Concerning the epistemological character of Japanology, one can find a consensus in all the articles of this book that Japanology is »Kulturwissenschaft« and the subject matter of Japanology is »culture«.¹ But on closer inspection, this consensus proves to be superficial. Different authors advocate different definitions of »culture« and consequently different approaches to Japanese culture and society. This allows for the formation of different kinds of »Kulturwissenschaften« (note the plural) as well as of »Kulturwissenschaft« (note the singular) which may be or may be not the same as »cultural studies« in the English-speaking world where »cultural studies« themselves are not a uniform approach. Therefore, the question remains unanswered if there ever was a cultural turn (German: *kulturalistische Wende*).

The topic of my short presentation is the contemporary state and the future development of Japanese studies in German-speaking academia, a present and a future where the German term *Kulturwissenschaft* (or sometimes *Kulturwissenschaften*) is said to play a decisive – if not *the* decisive – role in the scientific consideration of all things Japanese. The relative scarcity of time does not allow any comprehensive survey of cultural studies in Germany – therefore I will restrict myself to an overview of the problematics and to a few examples from Japanese studies that, nevertheless, will be sufficient to make my main points clear.

2. Terminological Remarks: Cultural Studies, *Kulturwissenschaft* and *Kulturwissenschaften* in German Academic Thought

Let me return to a short consideration of the terminology. We need to talk about »Kulturwissenschaft« and »Kulturwissenschaften« as well as cultural

¹ Compare for this Rüttermann 2001: 9–14, Antoni 2001: 117–118, and Kinski 2001: 604–609.

studies as possible sources of influence on German Japanology and Japanese studies.

- *Kulturwissenschaft* (or, to return to the original German orthography, *Culturwissenschaft*) is nothing new in the German intellectual landscape. As early as 1851, Gustav Klemm (1802–1867) coined the term *Culturwissenschaft* to draw a clear dividing line to the field of *Culturgeschichte* (cultural history). The subject matter of *Culturwissenschaft* was to be the culture of the human race as a means of confronting nature and other human beings. This approach evolved over the decades until its importance reached a climax in the 1920s. Today, this term is used for an individual discipline still under construction.
- *Kulturwissenschaften* (plural) is used to replace the older term of *Geisteswissenschaften*, emphasizing a process of modernization or to designate the disciplines of the philosophical faculty in their entirety. The subject matter of this category of approaches is also culture, a term which is – as you may know – impossible to define accurately. In a very wide sense culture means »the whole of the products of human work and creativity as well as human life forms, including natural scientific discoveries« (Frühwald *et al.* 1991: 10), which makes »the world in its cultural form« the subject matter of *Kulturwissenschaften*.
- The renewed interest in *Kulturwissenschaft* also drew its impetus from developments in the English-speaking academic world. In 1964, the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies was founded at the University of Birmingham. The main proponents of these cultural studies did not intend to create a new academic discipline; their main interest was a »shift of interest« in all historical disciplines, since they wanted to reduce the distance between the university and the popular English culture of the postwar period. Stephen Greenblatt's *New Historicism* in the 1980s, which soon found its advocates in a variety of disciplines, initiated the so-called *cultural turn*, a thorough re-orientation of the humanities. Based on Foucault's discourse analysis, Greenblatt attacked the work-immanent *close reading* of literary texts and propagated the opening of textual interpretation. Greenblatt's main concern was to restore the cultural context of the literary product. And last but not least the French *histoire de mentalité* (history of mentalities) needs to be named here, the history of mentality as the research into the development and function of the collective mental, ethical and affective characteristics of human beings in the process of history.²

2 Cf. for this short overview Kramer 1997 and Hansen 2003.

This is, in a nutshell and maybe all too briefly, the background for the development of Japanology and Japanese studies in Germany. Now let us finally turn to the study of Japanese culture and/or society.

3. Japanology, Japanese Studies, and the Cultural Studies of Japan

The most important method of approach to the study of Japanese culture and society advocated by German »Japanology« (*Japanologie*), seen in the strict sense of the word, has been – and still is – of the philological kind, that means, textual analysis. But this changed during the 1960s, and possibly the reason for this change can be found in 1964, during the Olympic Games in Tōkyō, when Japan successfully represented itself as an economic powerhouse in East once again. The first signs could be seen of a scientific approach (independent of philology) to the study of Japan as a modern society that, with its most interesting phenomena such as democratization, economic development, and social change exemplified by falling birth rates etc., eluded the attempts at explanation of traditional philology. New approaches to the study of Japan were inspired by economics and the social sciences and questioned philological Japanology. For the first time in the institutional framework of German Japanology, approaches to Japanese culture and society were created which were comparable to Japanese Studies in the US-American and British sense of the term. Japanology suddenly had to face new tasks. In the field of academics, economic »success« needed to be explained as well as social change at a breakneck speed hitherto unknown in modernizing societies. And a public existed that suddenly demanded simple, even simplified, explanations of the so-called Japanese miracle. Japanology and Japanese studies had to diversify and Japanologists had to think over their own theories and methods. And in the decades that followed, culture as a possible subject matter entered the field and with it cultural anthropology or ethnology (as it is called in the German-speaking countries) as an example of the afore-mentioned *Kulturwissenschaften*.

3.1 Japanese Studies as Ethnology: An Example of the *Kulturwissenschaften*

Ethnology had not hitherto played a significant role in German Japanology at all, and especially so, if there is an unwillingness to label the study of foreign cultures as »cultural anthropology« *per se*. But beginning in the 1960s, with its origins at the University of Vienna exemplified by names such as Slawik, Kreiner, and today Getreuer-Kargl etc., ethnologists devoted their work to the description and explanation of things Japanese, as well as Japanologists who tried to make ethnological/ethnographic methods and theories fruitful in the study of Japan. And their numbers are slowly, but gradually, increasing. Here we see the facet of German Japanology as a *Kulturwissenschaft* – not as an example of cultural studies, but in the long tradition of the

German use of that term. Another example of this turn to ethnology and therefore culture is represented by Klaus Antoni, now at the University of Tübingen. His main interests lie in religion in its various interrelations with other cultural subsystems. His definition of »culture« as given in the aforementioned *Outline of Japanology* is a strictly cultural, anthropological one. Behind the great diversity in the definitions of culture, he sees consensus in the notions that culture is 1) changeable, and that means not genetically pre-determined, and 2) it has to be learned by human beings, and that means socially transmitted (Antoni 2001: 117). Of course, we see here the influence of Tylor's classical definition of culture as

Culture, or civilization, taken in its broad, ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. (Tylor 1871: 1)

In the decades following the 1960s, the academic community observed a rapid diversification of the theory and method in the humanities – as if they were reacting to the increasing degree in the societal division of labor, pluralization, and individualization. A multitude of methods and theories developed where formerly there had been unity and consensus. As soon as this diversification found its way into Japanese Studies, a path opened for ethnology to enter the Japanological stage. And here we can find a development that closely resembles the noted cultural turn, the gaining of influence of cultural studies in the United States, Great Britain and France. Rüttermann (2001), for instance, defines the subject matter of Japanology as a set of signs peculiar to Japan – things, not only words, used by human beings in communication that have to be interpreted by their users, i.e., symbols. And the study of these symbols forms the main task of Japanology. Here, we see a parallel to cultural anthropology; compare, for instance, this quote from Leslie A. White (1949: 22) from as early as 1949:

All human behaviour consists of, or is dependent upon, the use of symbols. Human behaviour is symbolic behaviour, symbolic behaviour is human behaviour. The symbol is the university of humanity.

To repeat: As far as culture – seen as 1. a system of symbols shared by a collective of human beings, 2. historically and socially contingent, and 3. socially transmitted – is the subject matter of Japanology we find parallels to the cultural turn, insofar as the historicity of culture (which in many ways might be regarded as a text) is addressed. New currents develop thoughts on the textuality of cultures, leaning on the approach of »writing culture« and »thick description« (cf. Geertz 1973). But we also see strong connections to an earlier form of German *Kulturwissenschaften* and to German cultural philosophy with their stress on the operation of understanding as opposed to explaining.

And finally at least two developments should be introduced that are based on the understanding of Japanology or Japanese studies as »cultural studies«: 1. The study of intercultural understanding and communication, and 2. the use of ethnographic methods.

3.2 *Intercultural Understanding and Communication*

The founding of »intercultural communication« as a new and interdisciplinary field of research can be dated back to the 1950s when Edward T. Hall published his book, *The Silent Language* (1959). Hall was a student of Ralph Linton and advocated, as his teacher did, the position of the Culture and Personality-school of cultural anthropology with its strong influences from (neo-)Freudian psychoanalysis. Nevertheless, intercultural communication is a relatively late-comer to German universities, and here it owes much to psychological anthropology. This fact becomes clear when the definition of »culture« and the concept of the communication process are considered (see Moosmüller 2000: 16–20).

The following »Policy Statement« of the *Journal of Intercultural Communication* makes the basic understanding of »intercultural communication« clear:

The world today is characterized by an ever-growing number of contacts, resulting in communication between people with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This communication takes place because of contacts within the areas of business, military cooperation, science, education, mass media, entertainment, tourism but also because of immigration brought about by labor shortages or political conflicts.

In all these contacts, there is communication that needs to be as constructive as possible, without misunderstandings and breakdowns. It is our belief that research on the nature of linguistic and cultural similarities and differences here can play a positive and constructive role.

(<http://www.immi.se/intercultural/policy.htm>; downloaded Oct. 13, 2004)

One proponent of this approach to Japanese studies is Alois Moosmüller, an ethnologist who spent some time in Japan and now teaches »Intercultural Communication« at the University of Munich. His focus of research is the influence that the social framework of contact exerts on the form of communication between members of two different cultures. One such framework is the multinational enterprise, and Moosmüller (1998, 2003) is able to show that the different cultural backgrounds of the interacting employees not only profoundly influence their behavior, but also their mutual understanding and, thereby, the process of national stereotyping. The construction of national identity, equally in a comparative perspective, is another of Moosmüller's topics (1999).

Klaus-Peter Köpping, an ethnologist at the University of Heidelberg, is the proponent of a second approach to intercultural communication and understanding. Köpping majored ethnology in the 1960s, but he studied Japanol-

ogy, too, and, consequently, when conducting his comparative research he found important examples in Japanese culture and society. He started his academic career showing a profound interest in Japanese religion, exemplified by his doctoral dissertation which deals with the relation between the development of new religions and rapid social change in the process of modernization (Köpping 1974). In the decades to follow, he broadened his field of research. He went to Japan several times to look into the problems of cultural change in general, of management structures in the *sōgō shōsha* (general trading firms), and feasts and rituals at New Year. The comparative perspective in his way of dealing with feasts (*matsuri*) in Japan offers the best illustration of his approach and his understanding of anthropology as a cultural science. In his own words: he plays » the role of a mediator between different lifeworlds«, a researcher who is »actually impelled to transgress constantly« (Köpping 2002: blurb). He considers the anthropologist a wanderer between different worlds, and this fact makes intercultural understanding possible. On the other hand, is not the anthropologists alone who is transgressing, transgression is a »mode of life extant in all cultures in one form or other«. Therefore transgression becomes an important topic of research for Köpping. A project on »Ritual and Theatre at Shintō Festivals« shows the revival of his original interest in Japanese religion. Köpping's focus on comparative aspects is seen in his cooperation with Bernhard Schnepel, who did research on »Staging of Power, Authority, and Territorial Sovereignty in Orissa, India« (see Köpping 2002; Köpping and Schnepel 2000).

3.3 *Ethnographic Methods in the Study of Japanese Society*

A last development to be mentioned here lies in the methodological field, namely, the use of ethnographic methods of data collecting data in social scientific research on Japan, e.g., in sociology and pedagogics. The steadily increasing number of scholars who make use of ethnographic methods proves that this tendency in unbroken, and quite impressive results have been published. To cite only one example: the first German scholar to use qualitative methods in empirical research of Japanese adolescents is Susanne Kreitz-Sandberg (Kreitz-Sandberg 1994).

The theoretical discussion of ethnographic methods and their contribution to the understanding of Japanese culture and society is another strong current in German-speaking Japanology. The results of a joint research project on fieldwork in East Asian Studies were presented by scholars from the University of Vienna in 1996 (see *Methoden ...* 1996). And in 1999, at the Eleventh Conference of German-speaking Japanologists, methodological problems were the topic of a panel with several speakers (see, e.g., Getreuer-Kargl 2001; Heise 2001). And last but not least, Kreitz-Sandberg's important

contribution (2000) to the ongoing discussion of the relative importance of qualitative vs. quantitative methods in Japanese studies has to be named.

4. Conclusion

To summarize my main points:

- Some time ago, German Japanese studies encountered a necessity to reflect upon the conditions and foundation of studying Japan, its culture and society. From this followed a renewed interest in »culture« as the subject matter of Japanology.
- The representatives of German Japanology acknowledge the fact that Japanese Studies – like all area studies – have to be cultural studies in the sense of an example of *Kulturwissenschaften*. (This, incidentally, does not prevent the overwhelming majority from pursuing the old, »traditional« philological approach to Japanese culture.)
- The renewed interest in culture as the subject matter of Japanese studies is owed to the strong influence of cultural anthropology, but also of older forms of German approaches to the study of culture and cultures.
- Although there are parallels to culture studies in the United States and Great Britain, I think the influence of these scientific approaches on the development in Japanology can be ignored.
- In other words, German Japanology had its culturalist turn, too.

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Klaus Antoni

The Divine Country: On State and Religion in Modern Japan

1. Preface

Japan's present-day image is that of a Far Eastern economic powerhouse. Yet in the face of high tech and economic achievements, one tends to overlook the fact that this hypermodern success story rests on extremely traditional, even archaic, underpinnings. Today, Japan is the most ancient monarchy in existence, with the imperial family claiming a historic legacy that dates back well into prehistoric times. This ancient core of the Japanese state remains hidden to most observers, especially in Tokyo, a city that has become synonymous with the furious and hectic pace of modernization. Nonetheless, it is in Tokyo, of all places, where we can have a good look at the other Japan that lurks beneath the westernized surface. In the middle of Tokyo's banking district, right in the city center, is a vast area inaccessible to the public. It includes large stretches of woodland and even some rice fields which add to the rural flair in the midst of the teeming metropolis. Yet this almost surreal idyll is not a landscaped garden or an urban greenery like Central Park in New York, but rather a »void in the center« of Japan, as an observer once aptly termed it. It houses Japan's official and also its alleged spiritual center – the imperial palace. Carefully shielded from both the public and court bureaucracy, it is here that the imperial family, led by its 125th *Tennō* (as official chronology has it), resides in the middle of their own world in the capital city of Tokyo. Even though the late Shōwa *Tennō*, the father of the current emperor, was asked to renounce his status of »living deity«, Japanese emperors in reality still draw on this source for both their moral and spiritual authority, as was evident from the great, religiously orchestrated funeral and later accession ceremonies in 1989 and 1990. Surveys constantly yield high approval rates for the institution of *Tennō* and empire. However, almost no Japanese citizen will think of religious motifs when answering the questions of an interviewer. Rather, they perceive the *Tennō* as what the constitution explicitly names him to be: the »symbol of Japan«. As long as the *Tennō* resides in mysterious seclusion as on an island in the middle of Tōkyō and holds his daily rites there, Japan is assured of inner unity. Thus there is a sense of continuity in Japanese matters which, considering its total breakdown in 1945, seems quite surprising. Especially the ritual events triggered by the death and succession of Shōwa *Tennō* have highlighted the need

to penetrate beyond the current image of Japan. Influenced by the largely non-historic education of the immediate postwar era, foreign observers and analysts have all too willingly subscribed to the view of the historical juncture as a »zero hour«. »1945« – the myth of a supposedly clear-slated beginning – was thought to hold true for Japan as well, serving as the premise for a »modern«, functionalist approach to history. Yet experience has taught us that history will overcome us exactly at that moment when we think we have successfully repressed it. In my opinion, this holds true for Japan as well. The task of critical historic research is to throw light on the transitional phases and periods of great change since they set the stage for the times ahead. Only time will tell if the role of the current *Tennō* represents a re-interpretation of the relation between Shintō and imperial family, and between state and religion. Current debates on Shintō and politics, e.g. in respect to the Yasukuni shrine, clearly show the importance of such questions for the present-day position of Japan in a globalized world.

The view of history plays a decisive role in this matter. Even today, the constructs of ideology obscure our knowledge of the religious history of modern Japan, especially of the dynamics of prewar and wartime State Shintō. Here lies the key to separating historical facts from ideological fictions. Such a critical view on modern Japanese Shintō history has its own history which begins with the work of one of the most prominent japanologists of the late 19th century: Basil Hall Chamberlain (1850-1935). And with him we will start our tour through the world of inventions, traditions, historical facts, and fictions.

2. Inventions

2.1 Basil Hall Chamberlain

Throughout the Taishō and early Shōwa reigns, State Shintō and its *koku-tai* dogma continued to evolve into a »fundamentalist«, *Tennō*-based state ideology. Criticism in those years seems to have been rare, with most Japanese intellectuals either making their peace with the dominant *Zeitgeist* or actually endorsing it. A striking example is Inoue Tetsujirō, who during the 1930s and 1940s thoroughly transformed himself to become a fanatic Shintō nationalist.¹

When the political climate became more repressive, threatening to ideologize both the intellectual and religious spheres, critical voices at home grew scarcer, although foreign observers in Japan voiced their dissent every now and then. While these observers were sometimes intimately acquainted with Japanese affairs they were not obliged to conform as rigorously as their Japanese counterparts.

1 Cf. Antoni 1990 and Nawrocki 1998.

A few artists and scholars in Japan and abroad confronted and criticized these subtle ideological constructions, among them Karl Florenz, who had done research on the written aspects of Shintō history during the last decades of the nineteenth century. Karl Florenz's studies on Shintō were on a strictly scientific and comparative basis.² However, the most important work on this topic that we should consider is that of another foreign scholar in Japan, one who dealt with the subject in a surprisingly pointed, and even polemical fashion – and that is none other than the nestor of philological Japanese studies, Basil Hall Chamberlain (1850–1935).

Unparalleled as a linguist and translator of historic sources (especially the *Kojiki* (1883, repr. 1981), which is of paramount importance in this context), Chamberlain possessed an intimate knowledge of authentic cultural tradition and ancient texts. He enjoyed more wide-spread fame as author of an insightful collection of miscellanies, *Things Japanese*, which impressed readers with its array of informative and amusing facts about Japan (Chamberlain 1890). Few people know, however, that he included a postscript in the fifth edition of this book (Chamberlain 1927) that hardly conforms to the image of a serene and easy-going scholar but instead shakes up readers even today with its frankly uttered disaffection and verbal daring. This essay first appeared in 1912 as a publication under the auspices of an organization with the tell-tale name »Rationalist Press Association«.³ In it, Chamberlain strongly censures contemporary Japanese intellectual trends using the most outspoken and undiplomatic terms. The title of this essay, *The Invention of a New Religion*, neatly sums up what Chamberlain intends to criticize. Incidentally, he introduces the term »invention« in this essay which only recently had figured as a central concept (»invented tradition«) in Hobsbawm's research.

At the very start of his essay, Chamberlain makes the sarcastic remark that contemporary Japan provides a good model for anyone trying to figure out how to put together a religion for worldly ends. Even though this presupposes a number of existing conditions, such as a feeling of reverence for the *Tennō*, he claims (CHAMBERLAIN 1927: 561) that state bureaucrats were busying themselves transforming archaic images into new theories to suit their needs (and, in a broader sense, to those of the Japanese people). »Shintō, a primitive nature cult, which had fallen into discredit, was taken out of its cupboard and dusted,« in order to displace Buddhism as the people's religion. Thus describes Chamberlain the current religious situation at the time. It is solely

2 For studies on Shintō published by Karl Florenz, see Antoni 1998: 302–303.

3 In his obituary for Basil Hall Chamberlain, Harold Parlett mentions: »His last contribution in the field of Japanese knowledge was a small pamphlet entitled *The Invention of a New Religion*, an arresting essay but unpalatable to many Japanese« (in: *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, University of London* 8, 1, pp. 284–285).

the Japanese government, he maintains, that keeps insisting on the myth of the direct solar lineage of the *Tennō*. Even the right to conduct funerals and, later on, marriages, which used to be none of the Shintō priests' business, was assigned to them then.

Thus, Shintō was made to widen its influence to encompass more and more aspects of daily life, so that political and military progress would be attributed to the wonderful influence of the *Tennō* and his divine ancestors in the end. Chamberlain reprovingly adds that at all the important Shintō shrines, guns looted from the Russians and the Chinese were on display so that Shintō, nationalism, and imperialism became inseparable in the public mind. He goes on to claim that schools, the army, and the navy were realigned according to imperialist designs (Chamberlain 1927: 563).

Criticism of state mythology was not permissible if it contradicted the so-called »historical facts« such as the monarchy's purported founding date of 660 BC. Japanese scholars at the time were well aware that concrete records of Japanese history were no older than the fifth century AD. Still, they demanded uncritical acceptance of all elements of national historic legends, and woe to him who dared depart from this path!

Thenceforth was everything based on these »absurd dates« (Chamberlain 1927: 563), irrespective of the fact that the sources that bore mythological information also contained early historical records. This also ignored the fact that early Japanese tales and customs were infused with Chinese themes which made it an impossible task to properly assess what was »indigenous« about them at all. Similarly, moral ideals, especially loyalty and filial piety toward the emperor's descendants, had once been taken over from the Chinese.

»The new Japanese religion of loyalty and patriotism has emerged into the light of day« – yet as simple as it may have been, Chamberlain claims that ideal was enabling the Japanese to do great deeds. The new Japanese religion was based on veneration of the *Tennō*, and his divine ancestors and also on the belief that the Japanese nation was superior to every other nation since the *Tennō* through his divinity, was superior to all other emperors. Early history textbooks stated that Japan was created before all other countries. Thus, the fact that Japan condescended to deal with foreign nations in order to accept insignificant mechanical devices should be perceived as an act of pure grace.

Chamberlain (1927: 565) goes on to say that in reality especially simple folk like farmers hardly identified with the new doctrines, instead clinging to the Buddhist faith passed on from their ancestors (p. 567). The new religion suffered from the lack of any kind of scripture. This gap was filled by the proclamation of imperial rescripts and their respective commentaries with such lofty diction that many people could not understand them. Here Chamberlain makes an insightful point. He notes that although there is good reason

to assume that Japan may have some difficulty in convincing foreign nations of the truth of these dogmas, the reverse seemed to be true. As a matter of fact, Western nations had shown great interest in Japan's purportedly legendary past and its fabulous virtues. Japanese officials were only too eager to expound them.

Japan thus availed itself of the foreigners' credulity (Chamberlain 1927: 568) who had to rely on whatever they were told and could not find out if it was true by consulting the original sources. Furthermore, learning the language was in itself a formidable task for any foreigner. As a result, the Japanese knew everything about Europe, while Europeans only learned those facts about Japan that were deemed beneficial to Japanese interests. This was also why neo-Japanese myths found their way into English textbooks, newspapers, and encyclopedias.

It was true, Chamberlain grants, that some Europeans in Japan were in fact denouncing the bureaucrats' actions in respect to the new cult that did not permit of any kind of criticism or scientific research (that, incidentally, being the reason for the persecution of Japanese liberals that came to be labeled as »traitors«). Nevertheless, as Chamberlain concludes his controversial essay, the government considered it of the utmost importance that its substitute religion was being generally adopted, although they knew all along it was false.

So much for Basil Chamberlain. Decades before Hobsbawm (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) published his epoch-making inquiries into »invented traditions«, Chamberlain came up with this polemic pamphlet on State Shintō as an »invented religion«. His voice does not belong to one who, judging from a safe distance historically and geographically, intends to criticize. Rather, he knows what he is writing about and has an impeccable reputation for competence, basing his judgments on firsthand experience while chafing at the brazen distortion of historical facts.

No one even came close to rivaling Chamberlain for his intimate knowledge of Japanese (religious) history and philology. He was well-acquainted with the historical sources, and it was this knowledge that lent significance to his critique. Instead of pandering to the dominant *Zeitgeist*, Chamberlain put forward his opinion in the contemporary debate based on his intimate knowledge of historical sources. The voice of the enlightened scholar and cultural anthropologist, who managed to decipher the patterns of ideological reasoning, seldom rang out with such clarity.

Chamberlain shows us beyond a doubt that knowledge of the actual historical sources is indispensable when trying to the »inventions« that have been artfully crafted in the course of cultural history.

2.2 Eric J. Hobsbawm

Hardly any other academic »discovery« has had such a revolutionary influence in this respect as that of the above-mentioned »invented traditions«. Its most basic insight is that the antagonism of »tradition« and »modernity«, which – not just in the case of Japan – appear so concise and stringent, are not sufficient to describe complex historical processes, but require at least one additional category: that of the »invented« traditions. Supposedly reliable traditions, which convey a certain cultural identity, often appear in the light of critical and historical examination not only questionable and unreliable, but also as »inventions« of the modern age.

The Austro-British scholar Eric J. Hobsbawm and his colleagues are to be thanked for their pioneering studies in this area which have shed light on the worldwide genesis of such artificial traditions.⁴ It is not difficult to recognize the pattern of development in Japan as well, especially since the Meiji period. The examples of reinterpretation, manipulation, and utilization of existing cultural elements in the sense of »invented traditions« in modern and contemporary Japan are many.

Hobsbawm's observations have also shaped the view within Japanese Studies that the process of the manipulation or even the invention of traditions is by no means limited to Japan. Japan is not an exception in which »tradition« and »modernity« have entered a »unique« relationship. On the contrary, the case of Japan proves to be an especially incisive example of a process of global proportions, which can be understood within the context of the formation of nation states. The exploitation of traditions is a standard course of action in this process in which the construction of religiously justified, national, and nationalistic ideologies play central roles.

At this point, another author, Dietmar Rothermund, in my view, undertakes the critical methodological step forward toward clarification. Rothermund, a historian who studies modern India and especially the ideology of Hindu nationalism, focuses on the term »traditionalism« in his research.⁵ This is an incredibly useful tool for the analytical separation of

4 In the collection of essays compiled by Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983), *The Invention of Tradition*, the national systems of tradition in various Western nation states are examined in a series of articles for their true historical validity. The studies all come to the conclusion that an immensely large number of those traditions purported to be ancient or often archaic are in reality products of the modern age, specifically, from the end of the 19th century.

5 In a short but programmatic article published in 1989, in which the major theoretical ideas underlying this kind of historical criticism of ideology are summarized, the author establishes that tradition is »lived tradition with all its contradictions and inconsistencies; [politically motivated] traditionalism on the other hand is an

traditions. Rothermund defines »traditionalism« as: »the deliberately selective interpretation of traditions [...], which aims to establish solidarity, and thus either simply denies those elements which are not reconcilable with this aim or apologetically tries to reinterpret them« (Rothermund 1989: 144–145; translation by K.A.)⁶.

Using this basic concept, Rothermund critically analyzes the issues involved in »artificial« and »genuine« tradition, in regional special cases and universal structure, in symbol and idea.

2.3 *Dietmar Rothermund*

With the concept of »traditionalism«, the author provides a very expedient category for the analysis of genuine and »invented« tradition. In his work from 1970, Rothermund refers to the universal character of traditionalistic constructions that support modern national ideologies:

Traditionalism is a phenomenon that can be observed in many nations in a transitional phase of cultural and political development. Tradition is a many splendored thing, it encompasses a variety of social structures and ideas which are frequently contradictory. Traditionalism, however, is a conscious attempt at streamlining tradition so as to fit a particular need for a useful past. This need arises when a people wants to acquire a national identity and looks for some common denominator. This common denominator is usually found in a reconstructed tradition of social, cultural and religious solidarity. (Rothermund 1970: 35).

In a more recent publication on this topic, the author refers to the fact »that modern traditionalism is of universal meaning and therefore it is not possible to conceive/describe ›universalism‹ and ›traditionalism‹ as inconsistent contrasts« (Rothermund 1997: 188). Traditionalism plays the crucial role in expressing national identity. Traditionalists select, systematize, and create ideological systems, in which heterogeneous cultural traditions are used to create a homogeneous national ideology. The purpose of this finding of identity is national solidarity, which seeks to reduce social and religious differences. It becomes clear, as Rothermund writes, »that the finding of identity for the purpose of solidarity is the goal of ›traditionalists‹« (Rothermund 1989: 147).

Traditionalism in some regard resembles nativism of cultural anthropology – e.g., in the »attempt to re-establish a ›pure‹ tradition« (Rothermund 1989: 145) – but it is per se an instrument of political ideology that strives for national

ideology, a mental construction – and therefore often conflicts with lived tradition« (Rothermund 1989: 144; translation by K.A.).

6 Original text: »die bewusst selektive Traditions-Interpretation [...] die Solidaritätsstiftung zum Ziel hat und deshalb solche Elemente der Tradition, die mit diesem Ziel nicht vereinbar sind, entweder schlicht verleugnet oder aber apologetisch umzudeuten versucht.«

consensus. In the search for a concrete example of a »traditionalistic« linkage between the shaping of identity and the creation of solidarity the author takes on the ideas of the Indian national revolutionist Vinayak Damodar Savarkar (see Rothermund 1997: 174 – 181).

Savarkar's nationalism centers in the conception of »Punyabhumi«, a Sanskrit neologism, which literally is translated as »the country (*bhumi*), in which one gains religious merit (*punya*)« (Rothermund 1989: 146). This expression implicates »that this opportunity is only given to this particular country, India.« Rothermund continues as follows:

This way, Savarkar succeeded in finding some common grounds for the characteristics of the modern territorial nation state, which corresponded to the Indian tradition. Here the linkage between identity shaping and solidarity creation becomes particularly clear. With a clear and simple definition of the »Hindu's« identity a comprehensive solidarity is constituted. But at the same time an obvious (social) exclusion results from this: The Indian Muslim, who naturally cannot regard India as his »Punyabhumi«, is excluded from this solidarity. (Rothermund 1989: 146)⁷

At the very least, this description of a »religiously justified traditionalism of solidarity« will catch a Japanologist's attention, because the structures of modern Japanese religious nationalism can be found here: the Japanese *shinkoku* (»land of the gods«) and the Hinduist Punyabhumi seem to be almost interchangeable. Rothermund (1997: 185) also remarks – with reference to the research in Japanese studies – that one can characterize the theories of Atsutane Hirata as »best-quality traditionalism of solidarity«.

3. Milestones

As becomes clear from the works of Chamberlain, Hobsbawm, and Rothermund, it is not possible to deal with religion and especially with modern State Shintō without clear reference to history as a dynamic process. Thus, some factors relevant to Japanese cultural history will be discussed now to provide a solid basis for a more detailed look at the matter.

7 Original text: »Es gelang Savarkar auf diese Weise, die Charakteristika des modernen territorialen Nationalstaats auf einen Nenner zu bringen, der der indischen Tradition entsprach. Die Verbindung von Identitätsfindung und Solidaritätsstiftung wird hier besonders deutlich. Mit einer klaren und einfachen Definition der Identität des »Hindus« wird eine umfassende Solidarität begründet. Dabei ergibt sich aber auch eine ebenso klare Ausgrenzung: Der indische Muslim, der selbstverständlich Indien nicht als sein »Punyabhumi« betrachten kann, ist von dieser Solidarität ausgeschlossen.«

3.1 A Brief Outline of Ancient Japanese History (Until 1868)

State Shintōist dogma explaining the foundation of the Japanese empire, which is ascribed to the mythical first emperor Jimmu *Tennō*, who is said to have established his reign in 660 BC, was viewed as fact in modern Japan until the end of the Pacific War. Declarations of this kind can still be heard in and outside of Japan today, and the day of the »National Foundation« (February 11) has been elevated to a national holiday once more.

Despite this fact, it has been archeologically and historically proven that this national foundation by a »Jimmu *Tennō*« is only a legend, which has nothing to do with historical facts. Historical research shows that the Japanese state developed only gradually, as did the Japanese language. Only approximately 1000 years after the fictitious founding year of 660 BC can we talk of a state developing out of several small principalities in Japan. This state developed its basic form in the 5th century, through its contact with China.

Through this contact, the Japanese rulers obtained – besides Buddhism – also Confucianism, and with it the methods of ruling a central state. From then on, the Japanese rulers called themselves »divine ruler« (*Tennō*), thereby following the Chinese model, and claimed sovereign rule sustained by a host of civil servants. Yet, in contrast to China, where the power of the son of heaven was rested on a mandate from heaven (which theoretically could also be withdrawn), the *Tennō* and his family based their reign solemnly on their alleged heavenly descent: they regarded themselves part of the direct lineal succession of the mythical deities of heaven, especially of the sun goddess Amaterasu Ōmikami. This legitimization is basically still valid today. Although the emperor renounced his own divinity on January 1, 1946 (declaration of *ningen sengen*), yielding to the pressure of the victorious powers, the current *Tennō* Akihito is officially regarded as the »125th *Tennō*« in this direct lineal succession, which goes back to the sun goddess. The religious-genealogic ideology can be seen here in its most obvious form.

3.2 The Modern Age

The history of modern Japan began with a paradox. At the start, which is axiomatically set to the year 1868, was an event, which seems anything but »modern«: the Meiji restoration. For in that year, the political and social order that marked Japan during the Tokugawa period, came to an end, and the Meiji restoration of 1868 – based on the idea of the reinstatement of an alleged archaic divine emperorship – thus began.

If the foundations of modern Japan and its concept of the state are to be discussed, this – apparent – contradiction cannot be ignored. Through the forced opening of the country by the West, the Meiji restoration resulted in the retrospective ideology of »reconstructing« earlier patterns of power.

During the Meiji period, this traditionalistic idea (see discussion above) was transformed into a comprehensive, religiously and politically founded state ideology, which revolved around the formation of a specific Japanese »national polity« (*kokutai*). Until Japan's defeat in 1945, the official concept of the Japanese state was bound to this »shintōistically« based *kokutai* ideology which held the *Tennō* at its very center.

Since the onset of the Meiji restoration, the more »modern« Japan became in regard to technology, science, and economics, the more entrenched the Shintō-based state ideology became in regard to its national self-image. The veneration of the emperor was elevated to a state cult, mandatory for the entire nation, and the emperor became the metaphysical and mystic-mythical nucleus of the nation seen as one big family.

3.3 Legitimation of the Imperial House

Two aspects were crucial in this context: the legitimation of imperial power and the formulation, or fabrication, of a truly Japanese antiquity based on the *kokugaku* nativism of Edo times, especially the way Motoori Norinaga and Hirata Atsutane had imagined the past

Let us go back as far as sources will allow us to go. Here, the oldest written documents of Japan are of key importance. One is the *Kojiki*, »Records of Ancient Matters«, from 712 AD, and another is the *Nihongi*, the »Annals of Japan«, from 720 AD. These works are drafted as historical documents and describe the official version of history from its mythical early beginnings nearly to the time of their recording. At the same time, they are regarded, to a certain extent, to be the »holy books« of Shintō by the traditional circles of Shintō since Motoori Norinaga; this applies especially to the *Kojiki*.

The opening chapters of these books are of particular importance as they set down the mythical traditions of the country and therefore the – even today – religiously binding basis of »official« Shintō. Here, we find reports on the creation of the world, the gods and their deeds, the origin of the imperial house, and the consolidation of its power.

Thus, a basic feature of Japanese mythology can already be perceived: it serves to legitimize the power of the imperial house. This is closely linked to events that occurred during Japanese antiquity, specifically during the 6th, 7th, and 8th centuries. Until that time, the Japanese islands were politically dismembered into a number of local territories, which were each under the jurisdiction of the most powerful family and/or clan (*uji*) of that region. The chiefs of these families did not only have a ruling function, but also presided over their clan territory in religious matters. The genealogies of these families have been handed down through the myths, and of course a spiritually

emphasized position was attributed to the politically most powerful family among them.

Yet the situation drastically changed by the 6th century at the latest. The clans combined to form larger and larger territories – whether voluntarily or by force still remains to be seen – until one clan, the so-called »Sun Dynasty« reached hegemony over Yamato, the Japanese central area in the present-day region of Nara.

The question of state administration for this newly created and yet very instable political entity and for control over this vast territory naturally arose as an existential problem. The solution to this problem was found on mainland China, »the Central Kingdom«, with its dominant culture and art of state. Thereupon, everything that promised to guarantee a consolidation of the polity was systematically introduced to Japan. Bureaucratic structures were installed according to the Chinese role model, a development which even appears quite practicable and reasonable in the modern sense. The state was completely sinicized, that is, set up according to the principles of Chinese culture. And Chinese culture in this context means, for the most part, the doctrines of Confucius and his successors.

At the center of this concept was the ideal state led by an equally ideal ruler, the »son of heaven«. Only a truly virtuous ruler could secure the prosperity of the state, because ruler and state are deeply intertwined in a mystical respect. If the emperor lost his individual virtue or turned away from the right path, then he could not only be dethroned, but the people even had the moral obligation to dethrone this ruler who was now dangerous to the polity. These ideas were clearly expressed by Confucian philosopher Mencius and came to Japan as a result of Japan's pervasion with Chinese ideas.

Significantly, it was this one point – the possible dethronement of an emperor – where Japan did not follow the Chinese model. The inertia of the old way of clan-thinking of the »Sun Dynasty«, which now ruled the whole country, was too strong to accept the idea of this loss of power, even if legally sanctioned. The Japanese rulers, called *Tennō* or, »divine ruler« by that time, regarded themselves as being on the same level as the Chinese emperor, and in fact even superior, and the imperial court systematically devised its own form of legitimation of imperial power, which deliberately disassociated itself from Confucianism.

This legitimation was created in the myths that were handed down by the ruling family, which reported the divine origin of the primogenitor of the imperial house and in which the living emperor is manifested as a direct descendant of the sun goddess. According to these legends, the sun goddess commanded the first human emperor and his descendants to rule over the land of Japan for all time and with only the members of a single dynasty

(*shinchoku*). A change in dynasty, as was common in China, was never to take place, and never were they allowed to renounce their claim to power.

This is the »political purpose« to which Ōbayashi Taryō (1982: 135), for example, refers to in his definition of Shintō, which basically defines the Japanese concept of a ruler that was developed by the philosophers at the Japanese imperial court in the 7th century in opposition to the superior Chinese cultural influence. The more the state became formally sinisized, that is, pervaded by Chinese elements, the clearer the image of a particular Japanese emperor in the sense of a descendant of divine nature became. Thus, everything was derived and received its meaning from him and/or from his divine ancestors. This deification of the emperor and eventually of the whole country is the essence of what is described by the word *Shintō*, the »way of the gods of Japan«. »The meaning of the term Shintō can clearly be [...] comprehended«, ascertains Nelly Naumann (1970: 13, translation by K.A.), »in the ideal concept of the Japanese divine emperorship, which comprises the divineness of the reigning emperors and their ruling mandate, which was bestowed upon them by the sun goddess.«⁸

This system, usually referred to as the »great tradition« of Shintō (a large part of folk belief is left out here), was born of the cultural confrontation between Japan and a vastly more advanced foreign culture, which was also considered to be superior by the Japanese. Nevertheless, Japan tried to adopt Chinese ways. An acculturation of these foreign cultural assets was possible without risk as long as the one thing of central importance, in this case the ruling interest of the imperial court, remained untouched. The rulers, who stimulated this process, were all devout Buddhists. However, Shintō supplied them with the political and metaphysical justification of their power, which laid beyond the bounds of Chinese state thinking.

Thus, in regard to the nature of Shintō, a basic political and legitimizing function is apparent from the very beginning.

However, it was not until the Japanese medieval period that an independent theology of Shintō developed. Although the emperor lost his direct ruling power to the warrior aristocracy and the *bakufu*, which nominally ruled on the behalf of the imperial house and was able to maintain this rule to a large extent until 1869, the increasingly distinctive belief of Japan as a country under the special protection of the gods, the *shinkoku* (»land of the gods«), spread within circles of Shintō theology. Through the origin myths, radical proponents of this concept eventually believed in not only a divine descendance of the imperial house, but even in the divinity of

8 Original text: »Die Bedeutung des Wortes Shintō kann [...] konkret erfaßt werden in der Idealvorstellung des japanischen Gott-Kaisertums, welche die Göttlichkeit der regierenden Kaiser und ihren von der Sonnengöttin verliehenen Herrschaftsauftrag umfaßt.«

the entire Japanese nation. For them, Japan was innately different from all other nations, being endowed with a unique, indigenous spirit – *Yamato damashii*, the »spirit of Yamato«. Thus, the Shintō based – or rather with Shintō identified – religious nationalism and traditionalism of modern Japan was born.

With this basis, Shintō theology turned its influence again toward politics at the start of the 18th century at the latest, when it began to shape the initial confrontations of Japan with the major European powers and, especially, with America.

4. Modern Mythological Research

From the second half of the Meiji period to the end of the Pacific War, Japanese mythology represented the spiritual basis of the modern Japanese state, its specific polity (*kokutai*), and State Shintō in general. The modern Japanese ideology of an incomparable »uniqueness« of its polity (*kokutai*), developed mainly by the Mito school of the Tokugawa period, was based solely on the legitimation offered by court mythology, which had been handed down in the records since the 8th century. An objective scientific study of these myths, especially from the perspective of critical cultural-historical comparison, inevitably had to clash with this sacrosanct state self-image, as can be illustrated by any number of cases. Any evidence of connections between the indigenous mythology and the traditions of the continental mainland or the southern archipelago would have shaken up the doctrine of an independent Japanese »divine country«.

Therefore, the importance of a serious comparative study of mythology during the post-war period cannot be overestimated. Instead of dogmatic recapitulations of the origin of the Japanese people and its ruling family, the realization of an extraordinarily complex and historically widely differentiated ethnogenesis and early nation building now became possible.

In light of these comparative analyses, the existence of formerly unrelated mythical groups within the total mythological narrative could be documented, which indicated, in the end, the originally heterogeneous structure of Japanese religions. This branch of analytical and comparative mythological research has only been truly possible since the end of World War II. One of its founders, scholar Tsuda Sōkichi, still had to endure retaliatory measures before and during the war, because contrary to the binding doctrine of that time, he did not regard the myths as historically correct records that legitimized the eternal power of the imperial court, as the *kokugaku* and later nationalists postulated. Instead, he disputed the foundation of the empire by »Jimmu *Tennō*« in the year 660 BC, a topic which is still widely accepted as a historical fact today, and explained the purely legendary character of these records.

Thus, since the end of the war, research on Japanese mythology and Shintō in general received an enormous impetus, and the way to an ideologically unbiased analysis finally opened. The discernment of the original heterogeneity of the mythical totality, very well organized in the literary records of the old sources, can be regarded as the most important result of comparative mythological research. It was realized that the Japanese myths were unique and without parallels in regions outside of Japan in only a few rare cases. And it also turned out that individual mythical episodes, e.g. the records of the origin of death, were also essentially part of the mythologies of neighboring cultures, such as China, Korea, and the Malay-Polynesian region. This resulted in the complete scientific deconstruction of State Shintō and its fundamental ideological basis.

The enlightening effect of this scientific research cannot be overestimated. Without the critical, cultural-historical, and comparative analyses of Japanese mythology,⁹ the dogmatic doctrines of the prewar political Shintō would have remained unchallenged today. These studies recognized the extremely complex and historically graded genesis of the Japanese culture and religions, whose origins were liberated from any artificially constructed and ideologically motivated ethno-centric isolation, and were put into a general framework, not only of East Asian history but of the whole history of mankind. The notion of the »homogeneity« of Japan, which was ideologically rather than religiously founded and was rooted in the traditionalistic (see above) constructions of premodern times, can therefore no longer be sustained. Japan can be considered an »island country« (*shimaguni*) geographically, but certainly not culturally!

Science has been able to document that certain mythical themes, which were interwoven into the systemized court mythology during historical times, originated from different ethnic groups that settled on the Japanese islands from the Asian mainland, Southeast Asia, and the South Seas during prehistorical times, thereby illustrating to the initial heterogeneity of the Japanese culture(s) and religion(s).

It goes without saying that the discovery of »foreign« – that is, Korean, southern Chinese, or Indonesian – elements within the Japanese mythology is not just of academic interest, but affects the very essence of the ideological self-image of Shintō as an explicit ethnocentric religious system and is therefore highly political in its implication.

Within this context, the mythological narratives themselves give perfect hints to understanding the original state of »religion and power« as well as the cultural heterogeneity in early Japan.

⁹ See, for example, Matsumura 1954–1958 ; Naumann 1971 and 1988; Ōbayashi 1973 and 1988.

A very good example is the »Izumo myth cycle« as viewed in the context of Japanese mythology. The Izumo myths open the door for a fascinating aspect of the whole problem of continuity vs. discontinuity in Shintō as well as of the cultural, regional, and political heterogeneity during Japanese history.

4.1 *Izumo Mythology*¹⁰

The *Kojiki* contains a myth cycle about the deity Susanoo and her descendant Ōkuninushi, the »ruler of the great land«, in which Amaterasu, the ancestress of the imperial house, does not play any role. This complex narrative, woven into the strand of mythological chronology, takes place in the landscape of Izumo. In this description of the otherwise wild and heady god Susanoo, the bad and violent aspects of his character are downplayed, and he appears in a considerably friendlier light. His status as the divine ruler of Izumo is eventually taken over by Ōkuninushi.

The deities of the Izumo line appear in the sources as so-called »terrestrial deities«, whereas those of the Amaterasu line pertain to the »heavenly deities«. The assembly of the heavenly gods decided to send a representative down to earth in order to demand heavenly rule on earth, a mythic episode called the »transfer of the land«, *kuniyuzuri*, which is frequently interpreted in historical terms as a clash between the independent region of Izumo and the new central state of Yamato. Several divine messengers are sent, but Ōkuninushi is able to defy them all. Finally, the subjugation succeeds: Ōkuninushi resigns and retreats to his palace in Kizuki. The Kizuki Shrine – today's Great Shrine of Izumo – is considered a historical relic of this divine palace.

After the subjugation of Ōkuninushi, the crucial episode in the imperial legitimation occurs. Amaterasu (Takamimusubi) gives her grandchild Ninigi no mikoto the duty of descending to earth and taking over the rule. No lineage other than that of the sun goddess was to hold sovereignty thereafter. The gods of the Izumo line were thus cast off and put into a subordinated position for the rest of all time.

4.2 *Hirata Atsutane*

It was Hirata Atsutane (1776–1843), probably the most important and also the most radical ideologist of Restoration Shintō, who played a major ideological role in associating the topics of »Izumo«, »legitimation of power«,

10 Much research on the mythology of Izumo has already been carried out; cf. *int. al.* Ishizuka (ed.) 1986; Itō 1973; Matsumae 1976; Matsumura 1958; Mishina 1971; Mizuno 1994 and 1972; Piggott 1989; Satō 1974; Senge (1968); Shintō Gakkai (ed.) 1968 and 1977; Torigoe 1966; Watanabe 1974.

and »the Other World« with the political and religious struggles in modern Japan (Antoni 1998: 147–148). This fanatic propagandist of »pure Shintō« had astonishingly also picked up aspects of Christian thinking and integrated these into his concept of Shintō (Odrönic 1967: 34), seeing an analog to Izanagi and Izanami in Adam and Eve; his reading of Christian texts possibly also influenced his vision of a life after death.¹¹ In Hirata's theology, the counterpart to the visible world, which according to *kokugaku* theology was ruled by Amaterasu herself, was to be found in the realm of the invisible, hidden world, in which no one other than the main deity of Izumo, Ōkuninushi, was regarded as ruler by him and other *kokugaku* theologians.¹² According to Hirata, Shintō ranked higher than all other religions and the divinity Musubi no kami (i.e. Takamimusubi) was the creator of all things; for him, the main divinities of other religions were therefore nothing but local manifestations of this Japanese deity of creation (Odrönic 1967: 35). In his work *Yūgenben*, for example, Hirata remarks on the relationship between the divinities (Takami) Musubi and Ōkuninushi:

When one grows old and dies, one's body will return to dust, but one's spirit (*tamashii*) will not disappear. Returning to the Hidden Realm (*kakuriyo*), it will be subject to the reign of Ōkuninushi no Ōkami, accept his commands, and from Heaven it will protect not only its descendants but all those related to it. These are the »hidden matters« (*kakurigoto*) of man, and this is the Way established by Musubi no Kami and governed by Ōkuninushi no Kami. It is for this reason that the [*Nihon Shoki*] states: »The hidden matters constitute Shinto.«¹³

The problem of Ōkuninushi being the god of the underworld played a surprisingly major role in one of the most complicated matters of religious and political struggles of the Meiji period, the so called »Pantheon Dispute«, an incident that marked a milestone in the development of State Shintō in modern Japan.¹⁴

Besides these questions concerning political theology and the development of State Shintō, there is another major problem in this respect that de-

11 For this topic cf. also Harold Bolitho's observations (2004).

12 Cf. especially the work of Hara Takeshi (1996: 36–66), in which he deals with Hirata's contribution to the development of the »ideology of Izumo« in detail.

13 Quoted from Kamata 2000: 305.

14 Since 1875, the Shintō clergy was split among themselves by the so called pantheon dispute (*saijin-ronsō*, cf. Hardacre 1989: 48ff.). The head priest of Great Shrine Izumo, Senge Takatomi (1845–1918) attacked the predominant role of Ise-jingū, and he demanded that the main deity of Izumo Shrine, i.e. Ōkuninushi no mikoto, should be included into the state-official pantheon as the lord of the underworld. His colleague at Ise-jingū, Tanaka Yoritsune (1836–1897) declined such a request. This cumulated into a dispute which eventually split the Shintō circle into two camps.

mands further research: why was Atsutane Hirata, like the *kokugaku* scholars Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801) and Hattori Nakatsune (1757–1824) before him, convinced that the god Ōkuninushi of Izumo should be the god of the Underworld? A thorough analysis of this question still remains a desideratum, although in recent times, a few works on this problem have been published, e.g. Mark McNally's dissertation (1998) on Hirata Atsutane and the so-called »*Sandaikō* debate«. But it should be noted here that Hattori Nakatsune's major work *Sandaikō* has been a topic of Western research on Shintō for a long period of time, as the publications of Ernest Satow (1882) and of Harry Harootunian one century later (1988) show. In a recent article, Endō Jun (2002), a scholar of Shintō history, gave a comprehensive account of the underlying cosmological strata. In his contribution entitled »The Cosmology of Shintō and National Identity in Modern Japan«, Endō states that there was an urgent need for Shintō to present a theology concerning the Other World (*takai*) in the Meiji era, because Buddhism – the most popular religion at that time – offered salvation after death. As a matter of fact, Endō continues, this kind of Shintō theology had already started to be formulated in the first half of the 19th century, before the Meiji Restoration. The purpose of Endō's research was, therefore, to review the development of these theologies and to examine their variations in the Meiji era. That these problems are not limited to theological thought in the modern or Edo period is shown by the works of Bernhard Scheid (2001 and 2002) on Urabe/Yoshida Shintō, which reveal the deep historical roots of the theological and intellectual dichotomy of the divinities Amaterasu vs. Ōkuninushi in terms of the visible vs. hidden worlds.

Thus, this case shows in a perfect matter that the questions of continuity vs. discontinuity in Shintō theological and political thought are not confined to modernity or even to the Edo period, but extend back to the days of antiquity. I hope to present in the near future a review article on the theological, ideological, and political aspects of Ōkuninushi as the god of the Underworld.

5. Résumé

The »modern age« in Japan did not start suddenly in 1868. The country did not slumber peacefully in the darkness of late-medieval feudalism before the Meiji restoration, waiting for enlightenment by the West. The intellectual framework of the Japanese modernism were already set up in principle by intellectual circles during the Edo period, and it was during the Meiji period when they were put into practice, blended together with the concepts of modernity imported from the West. Without the knowledge of premodern developments, the formation of the modern Japanese empire should be considered a miracle.

As mentioned earlier, Basil Hall Chamberlain published his controversial article on Shintō as an »invented religion« in 1912, long before Hobsbawm's

epoch-making research on »invented traditions«. Current research with a historically differentiated approach centers on the question if Shintō can indeed be said to be the metatemporal, immutable, and ethnically defined religion some believe it to be. In his programmatic essay on the historic development of Shintō, Kuroda Toshio (1993: 26) notes that this concept of Shintō developed simultaneously with the rise of modern nationalism, starting with *kokugaku* to the onset of Meiji era state Shintō and the separation of gods and Buddhas (*shinbutsu-bunri*). In the face of the ahistoric, holistic, and static view of »Shintō«¹⁵ prevalent today, such a historically founded approach, which is guided by scientific principles, hardly ever manages to affect public opinion in Japan nor abroad. In particular, the problem of how ideological constructions since Meiji times have (often subconsciously) helped to form this view of Shintō still needs to be addressed.

Nonetheless, it is hardly surprising that Chamberlain's elucidating contribution was printed in only one edition of his popular book *Things Japanese*. Demythologizing and deconstructing ideological concoctions is an unpopular pastime whereas myth-friendly generalizations and allegedly holistic expertise tend to find many more followers. Any analysis of the role of Shintō in regard to modernity should indeed start with the contributions made by the Hirata school, then shift to the various Edo period schools of Shintō orthodoxy in historic retrogression. Lastly, it should focus on the attempts at putting into practice the different schemes devised since the Meiji era. Yet such a philologically and historically conscious approach is difficult to pursue. As Chamberlain polemically protests, the only solution is to thoroughly scrutinize the body of current, authentic traditions. In order to be able to detect and recognize modernity's constructions at all, we need to take a good look at the »unedited« version of history, that is, at what has been passed down in the shape of literary and documentary texts from classical and ancient Japan. Only then will we get a good idea of the extent to which history has been edited and revised since Edo and Meiji times, making pre-modern Japan vanish behind a screen of dust. As has been recognized in regard to the Chinese history of ideas, there is a need to purge the texts of Chinese classics of the manipulations of the Han epoch. In my view, the significance of the Meiji era as an epoch of intense »re-editing« and distortion of pre-modern Japanese history has not yet been sufficiently appreciated, as illustrated, for example, by the events surrounding the *shinbutsu bunri* edicts of 1868. In the present situation, with Japan falling victim to the reverberations of its own self-image while being encouraged to assume a position of further isolation by the demands of a culturalist debate, Chamberlain's words of warning take on special significance. Regarding this question, all exponents of

15 The concept of Shintō as an ahistoric Japanese national religion has also been endorsed by researchers of Japanese folklore, prominent among them Yanagita Kunio (*koyu shinko*); cf. Kawada 1992 and Göbel 1991: 40, 44 *et seq.*

Japanese studies with a historically critical approach are called upon to make their contribution to improving our knowledge.

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The Study of Japanese Values

Introduction

By strict definition, one might go as far to say that the study of Japanese values by Westerners started as early as in the 16th century, when the first Portuguese came to Japan and reported on what they saw. But the observations of these early Westerners in Japan could, of course, by no means be called systematic academic studies performed according to a method generally approved by social scientists of the academic world. Even so, many of the observations of the Jesuits, or of the German medical doctors in Dutch service, Engelbert Kaempfer and Philipp Franz von Siebold, refer to Japanese values, at least indirectly, since values together with a set of norms form the core of every culture and society. However one sees this, there was a long way to go until the year 1994, when the great study on Japanese values and value change undertaken by the German Institute for Japanese Studies, Tokyo, under the direction of Josef Kreiner was published. This study forms the focus of my remarks today.

I will start this paper with a short discussion of the definition of values, continue with a brief review of the history of research on Japanese values, both in Japan and in the West, and then will try to put the contributions made by Josef Kreiner into perspective within this research history. In conclusion, I will offer a few research desiderata for the future.

The Definition of Values

One of the most difficult tasks in the study of values is to arrive at a good definition of what values are. Almost every essay on values starts by stating this difficulty: Everybody talks about values and changing values, or *Wertewandel* in German, but the concept that social scientists use must be more precise than that what we mean in everyday life. It is interesting to note that the classical definition of value is both rather old and rather simple, and is even tautological. It goes back to anthropologist Clyde Kluckhohn, who collaborated with Talcott Parsons in developing the famous »theory of action«. To Kluckhohn *et al.* (1951: 395)

[a] value is a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of actions.

When dealing with this concept we have to keep in mind that conceptions other than values, too, might influence our behavior and our actions. What, of course, comes to mind immediately are social norms. Interestingly, Parsons' famous book does not deal with norms, which are mentioned only once on page 481 in the 500 page-strong volume (Parsons and Shils 1951:481; for a more thorough discussion of values and value change, see Hillmann 1986).

Why am I mentioning this? If we agree that norms *and* values guide our conscious behavior and actions, we can also say that social norms can be of greater importance than social values, or the other way around. But usually the conflict is not between social values and social norms, because social norms are usually said to be the result of generally agreed-upon social values, but rather between social norms on the one hand and individual values on the other. To put it more clearly, we can construct the following table:

Table 1. Individual and social norms and values

	Norms	Values
Social	<i>Social norms</i>	Social values
Individual	Individual norms	<i>Individual values</i>

Take, for example, the value of cleanliness, which is said to be very important in Japan. Generally speaking, cleanliness is regarded so highly that a number of customs have developed to guarantee cleanliness in certain situations. Religious institutions provide visitors with water at the entrance of shrines and temples to wash their hands and clean their mouths, people take off their shoes when entering a private apartment, even when their shoes are not dirty at all, and they change their slippers to special slippers provided for the toilet when entering a toilet, and probably every one of us remembers the shameful situation when, on our first stay in Japan, we returned to the living room after going to the toilet with the »dirty« toilet slippers on. Stepping on to a *tatami* floor with shoes on is an activity that will be sanctioned, since it means violating social norms that go back to the social value of preserving cleanliness. Of course, there are Japanese for whom cleanliness is not a value, who do not wash themselves frequently nor use a bathtub daily as many Japanese do. They thus behave according to their own individual values, in which cleanliness has no high priority. They may have set their own individual norms like taking a bath to once a week or even once a month. It is likely that a person with such individual values will come into conflict with

the prevailing social norms and values, but it is also possible to act according to social norms in the public and according to one's own values in private.

For the researcher, the hypothetical contradiction in a given society between social norms and individual values can even lead to research questions and programs. If we take, for example, the title of a book published in 1967, Robert O. Blood's *Love Match and Arranged Marriage*, we see a contrast between »old-fashioned social norms« and »modern individual values«, and if we look at the subtitle »A Tokyo-Detroit Comparison«, we readily assume that the researcher in his 1958–1959 study probably worked with the hypothesis that Detroit marriages were overwhelmingly »modern« love matches, while in Tokyo a good number of marriages were supposed to be »traditional« arranged marriages.

If social norms and social values are no longer congruent, this might lead to social change. Traditional social norms without meaning because they are no longer based on generally approved values must be replaced by other ones if they contradict the new values.

Returning to Parsons' book, I think it is remarkable that norms are not dealt with as a motivation of individual action. Many dictionaries of sociology speak of »norms and values« and not of »norms« and »values« separately. Somehow one gets the impression from Parsons that social and individual values provide the only guidelines for our behavior, that values are everywhere, but that norms are not at all important. Of course, Parsons speaks of social control, too, but less frequently than about values.

I personally therefore prefer the definition put forth by George Homans (1960) who divides human relations into five layers: 1) activities, 2) social interactions, 3) affections, 4) norms, and 5) values. Values, according to him, are certain notions that are specific to a certain society, on the conscious or unconscious level, and that direct our behavior to a certain extent. Even if one does not adhere to them, one asserts their validity. They are something akin to cultural implicitness, *kulturelle Selbstverständlichkeiten* (König 1958: 42).

The term »value« in the sociological sense seems to be foreign to Japan. There are, of course, the translated concepts *kachi* 価値 for »value«, *kachi ishiki* 価値意識 or *kachi shikō* 価値思考 for »value orientation«, *kachikan* 価値観 for »view of value«, which sounds a bit ugly and is not generally used in English but is often used in Japan, even on the popular level, *kachi kijun* 価値基準 for »value standard«, *kachi taikei* 価値体系 for »value system«, to list only a few entries that can be found in sociological dictionaries (Mita *et al.* 1988: 144–150).

Interestingly, social norms are often mentioned in regard to Japanese society. From Lafcadio Hearn's *Japan: An Attempt at Interpretation* (1904) onwards, many introductory books on Japan mention the importance of conformable behavior in Japan, which means nothing more than that norms regu-

lating social behavior are of overwhelming importance in Japanese society, or put into other words, that conformity is a major value in Japan. Almost every popular introductory book on Japan contains the proverb *Deru kui (kugi) ha utareru* 出る杭（釘）は打たれる, »the protruding nail is driven in«, to give proof of the existence of an enormous pressure to achieve conformity in Japanese society. When speaking about Japanese society, the importance of *seken* 世間, »society«, or of *seken no me* 世間の目, »the eyes of society«, have been often stressed, for example, in books by sociologist Inoue Tadashi (1977) or more recently by social historian Abe Kinya (1995, 1999). *Seken*, meaning something like »the others around us who know us and watch us« is usually mentioned in a negative way, as though putting constraints on the individual, but there are also people who have a high opinion of the institution of *seken*, such as Satō Naoki (2004), who founded a Nihon Seken Gakkai 日本世間学会, the Association for the Study of Seken, and recently published a book to defend it.

Research History

The study of Japanese values is always in danger of becoming stigmatized as performing *Nihon bunkaron* 日本文化論, meaning »theorizing about Japanese culture« which, especially with foreign researchers of Japanese culture, carries the negative connotation of a non-academic activity without any value (see, e.g., Dale 1986; Yoshino 1992). This is no wonder, because when we say that a certain set of values is specific for a certain society, this sounds similar to saying that a certain cultural characteristic is specific to Japanese society. And we have to admit, that studies of *kokuminsei* 国民性, the national characteristics of the Japanese, for example, are surely to be placed in the proximity of the study of values.

One of the first scholars in modern Japan, who attempted to explain Japanese characteristics, though in a simple descriptive way, was Haga Ya'ichi, a professor of Japanese literature, in his 1907 book *Kokuminsei jūron* 国民性十論 (Gundert 1934). Haga Ya'ichi was said to be one of the last *kokugakusha* 国学者 in modern Japan. As can be expected from a scholar of Japanese literature, Haga gave proof of certain Japanese characteristics by taking all his examples from Japanese literature. Haga's book led to a stream of similar publications, out of which Yoshio Noda's *Nihon kokuminsei no kenkyū* 日本国民性の研究 (1914) deserves special mention. Noda was a scholar of education, and as such he stressed that examples of Japanese characteristics are not to be limited to examples from literature, but had to be taken from every field of Japanese culture and society. Perhaps Noda can be said to be the first Japanese social scientist who was interested in the study of values, and therefore I would like to enumerate his list of characteristic traits of the Japanese. Compared to others, who only listed positive characteristics of the Japanese,

Noda made lists of both positive and negative characteristics. Positive for him are: 1) loyalty (*chūsei* 忠誠), 2) immaculateness (*keppaku* 潔白), 3) bravery (*buyū* 武勇), 4) a sense of honor (*meiyoshin* 名譽心), 5) realism (*genjitsusei* 現実性), 6) liveliness (*kaikatsu* 快活) and frankness (*tampaku* 坦白), 7) subtlety (*eibin* 鋭敏), 8) elegance (*yūbi* 優美), 9) assimilation (*dōka* 同化), and 10) courtesy (*ingin* 慇懃). Perhaps I should draw your attention to the fact that Noda does not speak of collectivism or groupism, which was to become later one of the major characteristics attributed to the Japanese. After the enumeration of the positive traits, Noda tried to show that each of these characteristics can turn into an undesirable trait: too strong a loyalty might lead to narrow-minded patriotism and ethnocentric thinking, the overstressing of immaculateness might result in discriminating against people who do not value cleanliness as much as the Japanese do, and so on. In this way, one cannot fail but to rate Noda's contribution very highly, because he seems to be one of the first thinkers who tried to give a balanced view of the Japanese national characteristics. He can even be said to be a forerunner of famous thinkers such as Tsuda Sōkichi (1873–1961) who, between 1916 and 1921, published his *Bungaku ni arawaretaru waga kokumin shisō no kenkyū* 文学に現はれたる我が国民思想の研究 [Studies on the thought of our people as expressed in literature] or Watsuji Tetsurō (1889–1960), whose book *Fūdo. Ningengakuteki kōsatsu* 風土。人間学的考察 [The climate. Humanistic reflections] (1935) became one of the most influential studies of this kind (Minami 1994: 70–74). And it should be mentioned that the 1923 school textbook for the sixth grade, *Jinjō shōgakkō tokuhon, kan 12*, 尋常小学校読本卷十二, contained an enumeration of the good and bad sides of the national character of the Japanese, so that the young Japanese could develop their good characteristics (*chōsho* 長所) even further and keep their not so desirable characteristics (*tansho* 短所) under control (Minami 1994: 77–78). Thus, the preoccupation with the national character at that time was given a practical meaning.

Fifty years later, Ronald Dore drew our attention in Japanese Studies to the fact that the same traits can be perceived quite differently, depending on whom they refer to or by whom they are made. He compiled a list of Japanese characteristics as compared to British characteristics, which he defined in both a negative and a positive way. The result is really fascinating.

Table 2. Japanese characteristics in comparison with British characteristics according to R. P. Dore (1970: 300–301)

Compared to the British, the Japanese ...

Positive view	Negative view
are less self-confident and more neurotically preoccupied with retaining the good opinion of others	have a keener sense of personal honour and are less complacently self-righteous
are more imitative	have a more realistic willingness to learn from others
are more ambitious	have a keener desire for self-improvement
are more slavishly diligent	are less afraid of hard work
are more submissive to superiors	have a more realistic appreciation of the need to co-operate in society
are less willing to stand up for their individual rights	are less selfish
are more dishonest and indirect in speech	are more sensitive to, and less willing to offend, the feelings of others
are less men of principle	are more willing to forego the pleasures of self-assertion in the interest of social harmony
have less sense of social responsibility to remove abuse in their own society	are less busybody, with a more tolerant willingness to live and to let live
are more childishly naïve	have more good-humoured cheerfulness
are more introverted	are more shy about imposing their views and feelings on strangers
are more sentimental	show greater affectionate warmth and quicker emotional responses in intimate relations

The difference between studies of the national characteristics that make up the national character and the study of values might be summed up in that studies of national characteristics are looking for cultural traits in the Japanese that make them distinguishable from other peoples and that have been in existence throughout Japan's history and are thus »unique« and »unchanging«. This has been often criticized, even to such an extent that such studies are rarely undertaken today, because they are regarded as non-scientific or unscholarly. The problem with such studies is comparison: authors of such studies usually only compare of Japan with the West – with the West often meaning the United States, which is a society with many subgroups exhibiting very different characteristics.

Research on national character, which was a great theme in American cultural anthropology under the heading of »Culture and Personality Studies« until the 1950s, is also similar to the pattern of culture studies by Ruth Benedict. After publishing a book with this title on three North American Indian communities, Benedict was entrusted with undertaking a study on U.S. enemy No. 1 during the Second World War – Japan – by the Office of War Information. The outcome was her famous book called *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture* (1946), which in my opinion goes beyond national character studies and is perhaps the first systematic attempt to look at Japanese social values. Although this book is now 60 years old, research on it still continues in the West as well as in Japan. Benedict made use of a very modern methodological approach: since she could not personally travel to Japan, she collected all materials on Japan that she could get a hold of in order to analyze Japanese society: books, films, reports on Japan, Japanese literature, and interviews with Japanese immigrants in U.S. relocation camps. It is often said that Benedict is responsible for naming Japanese culture a »culture of shame« as compared to the Western »cultures of guilt«, but when reading Benedict, one wonders whether this labeling was not caused by her interpreters rather than by Benedict herself. Although Benedict categorizes Japanese culture as one in which shame has primacy (Benedict 1946: 224), shame is mentioned in her book only very briefly, and she does not elaborate much on this theme. In Japan the expression *haji no bunka* 恥の文化 or »culture of shame« became widely known only some years after the war. By the way, if one takes a look into the internet, many people note that prewar society may have been a society of shame, but that today's world is a society in which shame is no longer known (*haji shirazu shakai* 恥知らず社会) or that the culture of shame developed into a culture of annoyance (*meiwaku no bunka* 迷惑の文化), thus indicating that considerable changes have taken place in Japanese society and culture.

Even though Benedict's study made use of many materials, it is by and large a qualitative descriptive study, but when we think of studies of values, we usually link such studies to quantitative methods, polls, or surveys that

make use of questionnaires. This method is based on the basic assumption that people can be asked about their values or that they can be asked questions from which their values can be deduced. The opinion poll or social survey method is a rather new phenomenon and was only developed in Europe by researchers such as Paul Lazarsfeld, Hans Zeisel, and Maria Jahoda in the late 1920s of the last century in Vienna. After Lazarsfeld's emigration from Austria to the United States, the social survey method developed quickly there, and after 1945 it became the most highly esteemed method in sociological research and is sometimes called the »silver bullet« (*Königsweg*) of social science research. After 1945, empirical social research found its way from the United States back to Europe where it originated, and then spread to all other parts of the world, Japan included.

The first important studies on Japanese values and value change did not use the survey method, but were the qualitative-interpretative type. They primarily dealt with the forced change in Japanese society after Japan's defeat in World War II, the introduction of democracy and of democratic and liberal values as a replacement for the authoritarian *Tennō*-system which offered only a minimum of freedom for the individual. The names of the post-war Japanese intellectuals in the social sciences who took part in the analysis of this tremendous value change are well known and can be dealt with quickly: Ōtsuka Hisao (1907–1996), a scholar of Western economic history and a follower of both Max Weber and Karl Marx, was mainly concerned with the relations between the individual and society, as well as with the question of whether there was a human base for democratization in Japan. One of the few studies of Ōtsuka published in a Western language was, by the way, put out by the DIJ under Kreiner's directorship (Arnold-Kanamori 1992; see also Arnold-Kanamori 1998, and Ōtsuka 1970, 1982). Kawashima Takeyoshi (1909–1992), a sociologist of law, became famous for his studies of the Japanese family and for his critical remarks about the *ie* 家-family system (Kawashima 1985). Best known of all these intellectuals in the West is probably Maruyama Masao (1914–1996), a political scientist, from whom several books were translated into English (Maruyama 1963, 1974, 1988, 1996). His greatest issue was the antidemocratic character of the prewar emperor system or Japanese fascism. Social psychologist Minami Hiroshi (1914–2001), who had spent the war period in the United States, published the study *Nihonjin no shinri* 日本人の心理 in 1953, which was later translated into English, and stressed that the personality structure of the Japanese lacked subjectivity (*shutai* 主体) (Minami 1971). All these books and many similar ones were widely read by the Japanese public and helped the people understand their situation and develop new values.

One of the first sociologists to use the survey method to compare old and new attitudes and values was my own teacher, Fukutake Tadashi (1917–1989), who worked for the democratization of the Japanese villages. Fuku-

take, like many other rural sociologists, starting with Aruga Kizaemon (1897–1979), was of the opinion that there were two different types of rural communities in Japan: the *dōzoku ketsugō* 同族結合 type in northeastern Japan and the *kōgumi ketsugō* 講組結合 type in southwestern Japan. The first type is a very authoritarian assembly of families revolving around one main family. The branch families may consist of relatives or not, but they are dependent on the main family. In the southwestern villages, the households have more horizontal relations, and the relations between the village members are more based on equality (Fukutake 1949, 1962, 1967). Josef Kreiner was the first one to make these theories known in German in his dissertation (Kreiner 1965) and habilitation thesis (Kreiner 1969). Fukutake also was of the opinion that the northeastern type was older and gradually developed into the southwestern type. So by interviewing peasants in Akita as representatives of the northeastern type and in Okayama as representatives of the southwestern type, he attempted to compare the value change in these communities.

I studied under Fukutake in 1968/69 and had the opportunity to accompany him on two field trips to Akita. At that time, though, the land reform was already 20 years old; many of the old structures had disappeared, and with them the old values. The survey was simple: a random sample was not necessary since all household heads were interviewed. The interviewers were students, so many that the whole survey could be done within two or three days. Students received a small payment for their work as interviewers, but I remember that they were dissatisfied with the amount they got. This was at the height of the students' struggle in Japan, and soon thereafter it was no longer possible to use lowly paid students for this kind of work. They had to be paid properly like other interviewers or would no longer work for their professors. I mention this because from the 1970s onwards, social surveys were by and large no longer undertaken by the universities but by special research institutes, the central or local governments, and by the media (newspapers and TV-stations). This meant that many interesting research questions that were once done out of sheer academic interest could no longer be clarified by the social survey method, because empirical research had become too expensive and was thus now primarily oriented toward pragmatic questions.

Back in the 1950s and 1960s, though, many surveys were undertaken using cheap student labor, not only by Fukutake, but also by many others, such as Fukutake's colleague Odaka Kunio (1908–1993), who did research on workers' attitudes towards their employer early in the 1950s (Odaka 1975). But the social surveys that could be used to gain a comprehensive view of values in Japanese postwar society did not come from the universities, but rather from research institutes, among which the Institute for Statistical Mathematics (Tōkei Sūri Kenkyūjo 統計数理研究所) deserves special mention. Founded as early as 1944, it became especially well known for its sur-

veys on the Japanese national character. Between 1953 and 2003, 11 nationwide surveys were undertaken, using a similar questionnaire, which made it possible to grasp changes over a relatively long period of time (Hayashi 2001; Hayashi and Suzuki 1990; Hayashi and Kuroda 1997; Sasaki and Suzuki 2002).

Besides this institute, various government agencies and private research institutes have conducted surveys on Japanese values or attitude surveys, from which we can make assumptions about underlying Japanese values. It is interesting to note that more and more of these surveys try to make international comparisons, so that the results obtained in Japan can be put into perspective. To name just one simple example: The Dentsū Communication Institute has conducted a »Survey on the Value View of the World« (*Sekai kachikan chōsa*) every five years since 1990, and it has conducted an »International Comparative Survey on Value Views« (*Kachikan kokusai hikaku chōsa*) annually from 1996 onwards. This latter survey is undertaken at the same time in the cities of Tokyo, New York, London, Paris, Berlin, Beijing, Seoul, Bangkok, Singapore, and Bombay among people within the age range of 18 to 69 and with a sample of 700 people each. Although we claim that the inhabitants of Tokyo cannot represent the whole of Japan, the results can be surprising. It has been told time and again that the Japanese value economic equality, based on simple statistical facts. Whereas in U.S. companies top managers earn 30 times the average salary of an employee, in Japan the difference is only 10 times as high, and the general income distribution in Japan is much more evenly spread than in the United States. The results of many surveys telling us that 90% of the Japanese think of their own life style as middle class are only too well known. All this might lead to the assumption that socio-economic equality is a supreme Japanese value. But according to Dentsū's survey in 2001, when it was asked in which direction the society should develop, the viewpoint that Japan should head for »a society in which the difference between rich and poor is small« got the least number of positive replies in Japan (15.9%, compared to China 20.0%, US 23.4%, Singapore 33.0%, UK 34.1%, France 34.3%, Germany 35.2%, Korea 40.4%, Thailand 47.3%, and India 66.4%), while the great majority (57.2%) supported the contrary view that »distribution should be made according to one's merit« (Takahashi 2003: 5–9). I do not know how to interpret these data, but they surely show that the study of values is a very complicated and tricky matter.

Since Ulrich Möhwald (2004) has covered most Japanese research on this topic in his chapter on »Values and Social Mentality« in the volume *Modern Japanese Society*, which was published under the direction of Josef Kreiner, it is not necessary for me to discuss the history of value research in Japan any more, so I will turn to Josef Kreiner's personal achievements in this field.

The Value of Josef Kreiner's Contribution

I did not do research on Josef Kreiner's life and I did not interview him while preparing this paper, and therefore I can only make a few assumptions in regard to his interest in Japanese society based on what I have heard in the course of our relationship over the past 42 years. As a student in Vienna in 1959, he came into contact with Sumiya Kazuhiko, a student of the aforementioned Ōtsuka Hisao. Sumiya, then in his thirties, was interested in sociology, ethnology, and in social and economic history (see Sumiya 1963). Another Japanese researcher in Vienna at that time was Anzai Shin, a sociologist of religion, who studied the religious values of the Japanese (see Basabe 1967 and 1968). Anzai was in close contact with one of Austria's early sociologists after World War II, Erich Bodzenta, who was also an acquaintance of Josef Kreiner's (see Bodzenta 1972). Although Josef went to Japan in 1961 to do field work as an ethnologist on Japanese and Okinawan villages, he met there with many social anthropologists and sociologists who must have furthered his interest in Japanese society as a whole, which has never been purely academic, but was clearly much influenced by the discourse on Japan's post-1945 democratization.

Proof of this interest is Kreiner's contribution »On the Problem of Democracy and Democratization of the Japanese Village« to a Fukuoka UNESCO conference in 1977 on »33 Years of Postwar Japan«. In this essay he tried to link the present Japanese villages to their history in the Edo and Meiji periods, and to review the process of democratization from a longer perspective than just from 1946 onwards. Six years later he edited a volume detailing Japan's change from an agrarian to an industrial society (Kreiner, Mathias-Pauer, and Pauer 1983), in which modernization of the rural areas in southwest Japan was the major question. It should perhaps be added that Kreiner's famous study of the *miyaza* (Kreiner 1969) was undertaken in the Wakasa region of Fukui Prefecture, and much of his firsthand knowledge of the Japanese village goes back to this experience and to his research in the Aso region in Kumamoto prefecture in 1968/69. A short essay on »Japanese Thought« at the same time (Kreiner 1985) does not deal with famous Japanese philosophers, but stresses once again the egalitarian nature of the Japanese villages.

When Kreiner was appointed the first director of the German Institute of Japanese Studies in Tokyo in 1988, a position that he held for eight years until 1996, he was faced with the important, but difficult task of finding a great new research topic under which he could combine and concentrate the institute's research resources, in order to establish its status as a major research institution in the world of Japanese studies. At the same time, the new research topic had to be something with a certain social relevance, something that would enable the researchers to leave the new ivory tower set up at Kudan-Minami in the Chiyoda ward. From what I have already discussed, it is

not surprising that Kreiner and his colleagues choose the theme »value change from 1945 to the present time« with the intent of demonstrating that Japanese society is not an unchangeable unity, and that models of interpreting Japanese society, such as those proposed by Kurt Singer, Ruth Benedict, Lilly Abegg, and Nakane Chie are obsolete today (Kreiner 1994: 13). As Kreiner (1994: 20) mentions in his preface to the research report (Ölschleger *et al.* 1994), in the beginning he and his project collaborators were thinking of carrying out some sort of community study, perhaps one investigating the various kinds of communities on a railway line leading out of Tokyo. This would have been in accordance with Kreiner's research experiences, but in the end, the researchers decided to make an opinion poll of a national sample on Japanese values the core of the research and to supplement this with smaller projects. Since a survey of all social values would have certainly been too large and unwieldy, the survey was restricted to the acceptance of the values of individualism and egalitarianism, which could be measured against the recurring argument of Japanese society as basically a hierarchic group society. Perhaps Josef's friendship with Harumi Befu, who never became tired of arguing against the group model of Japanese society, at least from 1982 onwards when the two met at the Taniguchi symposia at the Osaka Minpaku (National Museum of Ethnology) each year, was an influential factor in this decision (see Befu 1987; 2001, Manabe and Befu 1993). On the other hand, this wisely chosen topic can be viewed as a natural outgrowth of Kreiner's work on village society. Another point of consideration: since undertaking a national opinion poll on values has become increasingly expensive, it was certainly a tempting idea to do something then that could not be done by one individual scholar.

I think it is not necessary to repeat the technical details of the survey here, which was carried out by a private opinion poll institute. More interesting are the various supplemental studies: a content analysis of school books, a study on the equal treatment of the sexes in Japanese family law and in the world of work, as well as equality and individuality in income distribution and determination. Through these subprojects, the studies conducted by researchers in various disciplines were integrated into the main project, and it goes without saying that the final outcome is a great addition to the social science literature on Japan. The interdisciplinary approach of this project is reminiscent of those undertaken by the Kyūgakkai Rengō, the Association of Nine Academic Associations in Japan, which was introduced to the West early on by Kreiner's teacher Alexander Slawik (1961). The work of this association was closely and critically watched by Kreiner throughout its existence (Kreiner 1990). The outcome of Kreiner's project is no surprise: the researchers arrived at the conclusion that individualism and egalitarianism are much higher valued today, and that a plurality of attitudes, values, and life styles are characteristic for contemporary Japan. If forced to voice minor criticism of the

project, it would be that the main report, to my knowledge, was neither published in English nor in Japanese; thus, the reception of this outstanding project in the Japanese and international academic world was not as embracing as it should have been.

Given such a large research project, it is no wonder that many other related activities took place at the DIJ at that time. The DIJ Yearbook No. 4/1992 (1993) was devoted to the proceedings of a 1991 symposium on the »Aspects of Value Change in Germany and Japan« at the DIJ (Möhwald and Ölschleger 1993). In 1995 another symposium took place on the »Value Change in Industrial Nations: A Comparison of Germany, Japan and Eastern Europe« the proceedings of which were published one year later in the institute's monograph series, albeit again, unfortunately only in German (Janssen, Möhwald, and Ölschleger 1996).

One important sociological project that was published in English was initiated by Josef Kreiner, which transcended the study of Japanese values – the aforementioned *Handbook of Oriental Studies, Section V: Japan. Volume IX: Modern Japanese Society* (Kreiner, Möhwald, and Ölschleger 2004). This was part of an enormous project started by the late Professor of Japanology, Horst Hammitzsch, immediately after his *Japan-Handbuch* was published in 1981. Although the volume on modern Japanese society was consigned to another author, it did not appear, until its publication was entrusted to Josef Kreiner around the year 2000. Using his team from his time at the DIJ, Kreiner put out a 570-pages, edited volume. After an introductory chapter by Kreiner himself, there are 16 specialized chapters authored by Kreiner's former students and collaborators, such as Ulrich Möhwald, Hans Dieter Ölschleger, Ralph Lützel, Christian Oberländer, and Daniel Dirks. With the exception of one Israeli and one Japanese contributor, all the 17 authors are German, which means that the only comprehensive book on Japanese society in English is by and large a German endeavor. One of the chapters by Ulrich Möhwald focuses on »Values and Social Mentality«, and if I may offer another critical remark, I was disappointed that Möhwald hardly mentioned the great DIJ study.

Concluding Remarks on Research Desiderata for the Future

I hope that I have done justice to Josef Kreiner's achievements in the field of sociological studies on Japan. For me, first and foremost is that he has fulfilled the role of an important instigator and promoter of sociological research on Japan. Believe me, this is no small thing. I even dare say that sociological research on Japan is rather underdeveloped within the realm of Japanese studies. This is partly due to the fact that many Western sociologists have a short-term interest in Japan, and often carry out only small research projects in conjunction with Japanese colleagues. This has created the im-

pression that a Japanese language background and a deeper knowledge of Japanese culture for sociological research on Japan are not necessary. On the other hand, some Japanese sociologists have tried to break into the international scene and have published quite a lot in English, thus creating another argument against Western sociologists specializing on Japan: If Japanese society is explained by our Japanese colleagues, this is much better, because it is more authentic than if Westerners do so. Thirdly, sociological research today is less highly valued internationally than it was 30 years ago. On the other hand, anthropology has become a kind of super science, stretching to include historical anthropology, musical anthropology, and other such sub-disciplines within its bounds. The Japan Anthropological Workshop (JAWS) is a conglomeration of researchers from many differing disciplines, not only from ethnology and cultural anthropology, but they all feel that they do anthropology, somehow. Most anthropologists prefer a so-called qualitative approach and despise the work of sociologists based on quantitative data. At the triannual European Association of Japanese Studies (EAJS) conferences, e.g., JAWS has taken over the Anthropology and Sociology Section and tries to prevent sociological papers from being read there.

By choosing the theme of value change as a major research topic, Josef Kreiner did much for a greater awareness of the sociological dimension in Japan research. In the years under his successor, from 1996 to 2004, sociological research was completely absent at the DIJ, and no major project comparable to that of value change was carried out. Fortunately, like Kreiner, the present director seems to be interested in great societal issues and has defined »The Demographic Change in Japan« as the central project for the coming years. Since the DIJ regularly employs a dozen researchers or so, the research direction of this institution is of great importance for the whole orientation of Japan research in Germany, since a large number of former DIJ employees are always on the Japanese studies' academic job market, and many academic positions are filled according to supply and not demand.

A thorough study of the demographic change in Japan compared to that in Germany is certainly a project of great interest to sociologists and Japanologists as well as to the general public. Of similar interest would be thorough studies on social stratification in Japanese society and on about the effects of the so-called »liberalization of the economy« and of »globalization« on Japanese class structure, although a lot of Japanese research already exists on this topic. However, since this is a very sensitive issue – think of the ongoing dispute of Japan as a middle-class society, an egalitarian society, or a hierarchical society – a study from the outside comparing Japanese conditions with German conditions, for example, could be of great importance and also leave an impact on this kind of research in Japan. Related to this and of equal topical importance would be a study of the different life styles in Japanese society which, like Kreiner's value study, would help to demolish the myth of the

uniform society of Japan. Although a small study was already done by Günther Schönbauer (1997), something comparable to Bourdieu's study on distinction (Bourdieu 1984) on a national scale would be needed, but this clearly goes beyond that what a single researcher can do. To close, I can think of many possible studies on social values. Of greatest importance would be studies on the openness of Japanese society or on its international or national orientation as viewed from the grass roots level and not as it is expressed in the speeches of politicians. Josef Kreiner has given us a good example: let's hope that many researchers will follow in his footsteps as enthusiastically as he always was and still is.

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Axel Klein

Studies on the Japanese Political System

1. Introduction

The study of the political system plays a definitive and important role in both the fields of Japanese studies and political science. Having said that, however, I do admit that the study of the political system in Europe is different, as Japan plays only a minor role in this field. Lacking both the geographic closeness and the intense and recent common history which binds Japan and North America together, the majority of European political scientists is busy concentrating on their own exciting continent and the USA. Add to this the fact that only works written in English have a chance to be noticed on the international scene, many studies on Japan published in German, French, Italian, or other European languages are trapped within lingual boundaries, limitations that British studies fortunately do not have.

It is thus no wonder that it is U.S. American and, to a lesser degree, British work on the political system of Japan that is being noticed and absorbed into political science studies in Japan. It is the dominance of the USA that has contributed to the narrowed view of the subjects at hand, a view that is held by many scientists on either side of the Pacific, as these studies implicitly or explicitly compared the Japanese system to only that in the U.S., thus producing a long list of dissimilarities, whereas a closer look at many European political systems would have yielded many more similarities. Also, the implied conclusion that Japan is very different from the rest of the industrialized world – at least as far as the many structural aspects of the political system are concerned – could only be born of such a U.S.-Japan centered comparison, as a Japan-Europe perspective would have at best qualified the U.S. as vastly different.

Keeping this in mind, the following pages will briefly describe what subjects and studies have dominated the agenda in the last decades, although I will not go as far back as Maruyama Masao and his ideas on the two major driving forces behind Japan's political and social development before and during the Fifteen Year-War, and for the foundation of seemingly stable democracies in the West (Maruyama 1964). There will also be no revisiting of the strong influences of Marxism on social science in general and political science in particular. Instead, I will try to point out here what kinds of comparative political studies of Japan one could embark on in the future to avoid

exaggerated U.S.-Japan comparisons or other approaches that could keep the level of scholarly analysis from reaching international standards.

I will outline some major directions for future research, always keeping in mind that there is no aspect of Japanese politics that has not drawn the attention of at least a small number of observers. Thus, it is not intended to give a complete overview of recent or major publications in the field here, since this information is readily available elsewhere.

2. The Past

During the 1970s, basic questions on the stability and meaning of the new Japanese democracy, which had been dominant in Japanese political science until then, were clearly losing their luster. Democracy – including the constitution and its prominent Article 9 – had been accepted by almost all of the Japanese, and the political struggle between the Socialists and the Liberal Democrats had started to turn into mere rituals. Enormous economic growth in the 1950s and 1960s had convinced most Japanese that the road their country's government was taking was the right one, even though environmental pollution had reached levels rarely seen outside the Communist Bloc (Hayes 2005: 133).

At that time, more and more scholars started to look closer at certain players on the political stage and structures within the political system. One of the major elements of interest was, of course, the long ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP, *jiyū minshu tō*). Factions, for example, were regarded as being of immense significance. Many Japanese and foreign researchers tried to gain a complete understanding of how these inner-party groups worked, especially since THAYER published his critically acclaimed study in 1969. Contributing to the huge amount of attention focused on the factions was the feeling that they were something uniquely Japanese. Lacking a political program that would give them a *raison d'être* to hold their members together, factions were portrayed as mere interest groups, exchanging loyalty for money and career opportunities.

Closely associated to factions and their way of functioning was another broad field of academic research: elections (cf. Klein 1998). Here it was the individually managed and financed local support groups of LDP politicians, the so-called *kōenkai*, that received an enormous amount of attention. Again, this feature of Japanese politics seemed to be unique to the country and well suited to explaining how the system worked. No study on Japanese politics could do without it and especially Gerald Curtis (1971) succeeded in furnishing proof why this was perfectly justified.

The electoral system, a single non-transferable voting system in, to use the Japanese expression, »medium-sized districts« (*chū senkyoku sei*, meaning »multimember districts«), was a third allegedly unique Japanese component

of the system, forcing mainly LDP candidates to compete for votes against one another. As party programs are hardly any help in a situation like this other ways of campaigning had to be relied upon, ways that would mean for the most part personal and apolitical services for individual voters. This included appeals on the ground of common regional origin, having visited the same school or university, etc., or costly presents whenever an anniversary, wedding, or funeral came up.

All of this made it extremely expensive for politicians to maintain their electoral district and defend it from competitors, a fact that was very often cited as the main reason for structural corruption. As Steven Reed (1996) once put it, the level of corruption made Japan appear as though only Italy was worse off in the industrialized world. This seemed especially true since Japanese politicians would turn to industry and companies for financing in exchange for what was generally termed »pork barrel politics« (cf. Woodall 1996). While both sides profited from arrangements of this kind, the general public was paying the bill in regard to trade barriers, protective policies and cartel structures which kept prices for many goods and products high. Many clearly unnecessary public work projects were executed simply for the sake of maintaining the system, thus wasting tax money and accelerating the debt spiral that had reached heights unknown in any other industrialized country.

It was Yanaga (1968) who introduced a broader non-Japanese audience to a third party in this give-and-take arrangement. In his book *Big Business and Japanese Politics*, he coined the term »iron triangle«, and analyzed the role that Japanese bureaucracy was playing in bringing about decisions and policies in the political system. Others have taken this model further, altering it slightly each time (cf. Pempel and Tsunekawa 1979, Muramatsu and Krauss 1987), but all showed that the public servants working in the central ministries regarded themselves and were also regarded by the general public as the true leading elite of Japan. While politicians seemed to be busy with securing the financing of their election campaigns, offering personal services to voters, and taking care of factional politics, bureaucrats appeared to be wise, knowledgeable, and willing to serve not their own interests but that of the country as a whole. It was ironic in a way that some of these bureaucrats helped to destroy their own reputation at the beginning of the 1990s by »scandals«, which were mostly about using tax money for their own entertainment.

The third leg of the iron triangle consisted of the so-called »tribe politicians«, a translation of the Japanese expression *zoku giin* which is not absolutely convincing. One of the most compelling studies on this subject was presented by Inoguchi and Iwai (1987) who explained in detail how LDP lawmakers would work as middlemen between a ministry and one of the industries under their jurisdiction, helping all three sides to profit from the negotiated agreements and the resulting rewards. Subsequently, no study on

the workings of the policy-making process could be undertaken without references to the tribe politicians.

The triangle model in all its variations was one of several used to explain the single-party rule that had characterized Japanese politics from 1955 until 1993. Again, it almost seemed uniquely Japanese to have one party dominate and rule uninterrupted and without virtually any coalition partners for almost 40 years. While lasting economic success, which reached a dubious climax in the bubble economy of the late 1980s, seemed to justify superficially the way the system had been working, and many foreign observers, especially journalists, were led to believe that Japan was equipped with a superior form of governance and democracy, the 1990s destroyed this picture completely and gave way to studies that have become much more critical, not only about the democratic essence of the system, but also about its achievements. Here we can find promising areas for research in the present and the future.

3. The Future

Research in Japanese politics had to deal with a huge challenge in the mid-1990s. For the first time in almost 40 years, the dominant LDP did not rule the country, but had to take its place on the hard opposition benches alongside its political arch enemy, the Japanese Communist Party (JCP, *kyōsantō*). Seven other political parties, almost none of which is still in existence these days, struggled hard to cooperate in a shaky coalition government that did not last very long but still produced one of the most remarkable sets of reform legislation on the basic framework of political campaigning ever to see the light of day in Japan. A decade later, political scientists and japanologists – ideally, the same persons or working together – are now scrambling to get a grasp of what has really changed since then, which old research topics have become obsolete, and which new fields need to be pursued.

At the moment, factions as a research topic seem outdated. When Koizumi Jun'ichirō took the helm of the LDP in 2001, one of the goals he declared was to strip these groups and especially their leaders of their power. Although he himself admitted that there would always be factions within his party, they have since lost a lot of their influence. The new electoral system, public financing of parties, the prolonged recession, and Koizumi's efforts all contributed to this development, which was explicitly demonstrated in the course of the 2005 General Election.

The iron triangle has also lost a lot of its explanatory power. Although reasons for mutual dependencies between the three sides still exist, they have lost considerable strength and importance. The industry has become highly diversified, confronting the LDP and Ministries with sometimes conflicting requests. Companies have reduced their financial contributions to the parties, which in turn are now becoming increasingly dependent on the monies they

receive from the state (cf. Mori 1994). In addition, government politicians are trying harder and harder to control policy making, thus setting themselves in direct competition with the bureaucracy. Furthermore, *amakudari* (»descending from heaven«) – or the change in employment of thousands of public servants in the last third of their ministry career who find jobs with the industries they used to control – also does not work as well as it used to. The number of such public servants has drastically declined as the industry cannot and / or does not want to supply positions in sufficient numbers for them (cf. Nakamura 2001).

A decade ago, Nakano (1997) designed a complex model that was supposed to explain which players on the political stage influenced which areas in the policy-making process under the changing conditions of the times, but events since then have already rendered some of his work outdated. Studies such as that by Bowen (2003) claim with some justification that there is still a huge number of »mini triangles« around, but that in itself is not a contradiction to the conclusion mentioned above that the triangle in its previously described form no longer exists.

The search for a key to the understanding of the present way of decision and policy making is difficult because, first of all, things are changing constantly and at a considerable speed. Many a book has lost a considerable part of its relevance before it hits the market because parties have dissolved, major events taken place like the 2005 General Election, or a new prime minister has evoked a new style of leadership. I myself have tried to cope with this challenge by setting up a website that would keep the readers of my 2006 study on the political system up to date, but I realize that this is a daunting and time-consuming.¹

Secondly, the number of players on the political stage who are trying to influence the decision-making processes is growing constantly, and the relative homogeneity of parties and other institutions and organizations appears more often than not shaky. This development is due in part because the LDP has been dependent on a coalition partner since the late 1990s. Although it held on to 296 seats in the 480-seat Lower House after the 2005 election, the party still needs the support of the New Kōmeitō to get bills through the Upper House. When the seven-party coalition came into being in 1993, journalists and political scientists alike speculated on how the country would fare under something other than a one-party rule. Ōtake (2000) was one of a growing number of Japanese scholars publishing their thoughts on the new and – measured against international standards – seemingly unusual constellation at that time and started the hitherto unknown field of »coalition research.«

1 Cf. www.uni-bonn.de/japanologie/politik.

Even though the LDP has regained some of its strength, the era of one-party dominance seems to be over for now, especially if you subscribe to the view that had it not been for popular Prime Minister Koizumi, the LDP would already be sitting on the opposition benches. The advent of a two-party system has thus been one of the new and very interesting subjects under study by scholars of Japanese politics. The Democratic Party (*minshutō*) believed itself to be very close to victory when Koizumi managed to confront them with a huge setback. But research so far (cf. Reed 2003; Katō 2005) has shown that, for example, the make-up of the electorate does allow for a two-party system, and the new electoral system seems to support this trend to some extent (cf. Hirano and Kōno 2003).

Election campaigning has changed along with the new electoral system. Besides the fact that no party can allow to set up two candidates in a single-seat district, thus effectively eradicating the old form of inner-party competition, the growth of the Democratic Party has partly shifted the focus of campaigning away from personal services towards party programs. The election campaigns since 2003 have paid more attention to these programs (*manifesto*) or at least to a very well-defined political issue (e.g., postal privatization). This development has subsequently been described by scholars and other observers as progress for Japanese democracy, and I believe that it is also responsible for the much cleaner election campaigns. Money is now more often being spent between campaigns for the purpose of taking care of one's electoral district.

The so-called *renzasei* (»system of co-liability«) has had considerable impact on the way politicians conduct their campaigning. As part of the huge reform bill of 1994, this particular piece of legislation went somewhat unnoticed by much of the public and even foreign observers, and its effect has been rather underestimated so far. Japanese politicians, on the other hand, have taken very much notice of this new law (cf. Yasuoka 1996, FBSKK 1996, Iwao 1999) which makes them liable for every misdeed that any of their staff may commit. My impression is that this law has helped to reduce the danger of corruption in Japanese politics more than anything else, although thorough research must still be done.

With corruption on the downswing,² another approach needs to be taken. In the past, and in accordance with the huge majority of studies on Japanese politics, lawmakers and politicians were generally described as the bad guys. In reality, however, voters are the ones who allow their elected representatives to get away with unsavory behavior, especially since the number of re-elected wrong doers has been considerable. Moreover, about 40% of all eligible voters did not cast their vote in the general elections in 1996, 2000, and 2003. The question of responsibility of the people as the sovereign of the

2 For a good review of Japan's history of political corruption, see Mitchell 1996.

state is clearly more than just an educational challenge for the Ministry of Education, and future research would be well advised to look deeper into this matter.³

Closely linked to this topic is the development of civil society in Japan. Kingston (2004) has just recently published a study entitled *Japan's Quiet Transformation: Social Changes and Civil Society in the Twenty-First Century*, and others have done intense research on individual aspects of political participation in Japan (Smith 2000, Vosse 2000, Schwartz and Pharr 2003, Hook 2005, Horiuchi 2005), but there still is a lot of work to be done here. Although difficult in its methodological approach, comparative work may be especially rewarding in this area.

This kind of research would possibly also help in another field that has not received much attention until now: political psychology. Looking at the mind-set of voters, politicians, and other political players is a different approach to understanding the political system, but it looks at the basic element in the system: the human being. Studies that have tried to explain political leadership in Japan have hardly ever taken this point of view into consideration (cf. Shinoda 2000). Instead, cultural components were regularly overemphasized, followed by analyses of inner-party power structures. It could be argued that psychological approaches within political science are uncharted and treacherous territory but that should not stop scholars from having a go at it (cf. Feldman 1998 and 2000).

Not as difficult but still not adequately integrated into research on the political system are studies on the jurisdiction and the »rule of law.« Many debates and confrontations in the system regularly appear and just as regularly vanish unresolved. The Yasukuni issue, unequal representation of electoral districts in both Houses of the National Parliament, or the usage of the SDF are just three of many examples that have been turned into ritual topics of discussion, with the same arguments being repeated over and over again. The courts, above all the Supreme Court, should handle these matters and decide upon them conclusively, but judges have consistently refused to hear them. They call these problems »political« and thus do not feel any responsibility. This situation contributes significantly to the malfunctioning of the »rule of law« in Japan, something a democracy cannot afford and an issue that scholars should get much deeper into (cf. Miyazawa 2001).

4. Conclusion

In many ways, political science has come very close to using the same methods and approaches as are applied in cultural studies. Unfortunately, some of the results of this research have overstated simplified cultural findings and have thus formed an image of Japanese politics of being more un-

3 Like Flanagan *et al.* did in 1991.

usual and particular to Japan than it really is. Groupism, the urge for harmony, or concepts like »*tatema*« and »*hone*« were accorded much more attention than they deserved, considering all the other aspects that were available for research. Concentrating on seemingly different and somewhat exotic behavior of all kinds contributed to an unbalanced perception of Japanese politics, one that was in urgent need of revision.

Since the start of the 1990s, these revisions have largely been made. Many new publications on Japanese politics are well-founded and researched, and show a complete picture of what is happening. Political scientists in Japan have successfully set up new academic journals that work well as outlets for substantial and well researched studies on the political system, which are written by both Japanese and non-Japanese authors. *Leviathan*, first published in 1987 by four outstanding Japanese scholars (Michio Muramatsu, Ichirō Miyake, Takashi Inoguchi, and Ikuo Kabashima), is one example, another one is the *Japanese Journal of Political Science*, published in English by Cambridge University Press since 1999, which often takes a comparative perspective in its articles. *Senkyo kenkyū* (»Electoral Studies«), the journal of the Japanese Electoral Studies Association (*Nihon senkyo gakkai*), should also be mentioned here as it publishes a huge number of well-done empirical studies on elections, most of them by Japanese scholars.

Even though some of these and other recent studies are based on the concept of rational choice (e.g. Ramseyer and Rosenbluth 1993), the majority of experts – broadly speaking – still apply cultural approaches to their work. However, these studies have not picked up much of what is called the »cultural turn« in anthropology and ethnology, which has pushed research into new directions in these fields. Studies on political aspects of Japan should be encouraged to follow this road. There is an interesting set of methods to be discovered and applied, methods that will not allow research to drift back into stagnant culturalistic water. I believe that it would be rewarding to try applying these interdisciplinary methods, especially in regard to my last suggestion for future research in Japanese politics, which follows below.

By definition, politics deal with the creation and implementation of rules (laws) that are binding for a society. Under the new conditions described above, future studies should also pay more attention to how laws come into existence (cf. Ryūen 1999). I do not encourage research on the formalistic legislative process prescribed in the constitution but instead on all those political players that try to exert influence over agenda setting, interest aggregation, the actual process of »policy making«, as well as the always important but very often neglected act of implementation. There are more questions of major importance than ever before, to wit: How precise and detailed are laws passed by the Diet? What is left out and why? How much does a clear political vision lose on its tortuous path way through the committees, informal meetings, and the Diet? And very important with regard to urgent problems

like demographic change are questions such as: How and to what degree is the Japanese state able and willing to react? Political measures in the field of pension system or health insurance give the impression that Japan – like other industrialized countries – is speeding towards a brick wall. Many serious problems are well-known and their consequences can be accurately forecast, but lawmakers do not seem to react appropriately. The question to be answered here is straightforward but intriguing, and the most relevant one of all: Why?

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Ralph Lützeler

German Geographical Research on Japan

Some Remarks on Its Current State and Future Prospects

In the broadest and most traditional sense of the term, »geographical research« would include any study devoted to the physical and/or human features of a specific country. Thus, an account of German geographical research on Japan could start with an appraisal of the works written by Engelbert Kaempfer (1651–1716) or by Philipp Franz von Siebold (1796–1866). Both were medical doctors at the Dutch trading post of Deshima in Nagasaki who used their stay to collect various firsthand information on Japan. This article, however, will concentrate on modern geographical research on Japan that has been conducted since the 1960s when geography became truly scientific at last by destroying »the idea that locations could never be anything but unique« (Bird 1993: 11). Furthermore, while putting special emphasis on studies conducted during the last fifteen years, my idea is that this period of modern research can be split up into at least two phases which were each dominated by different paradigms. Finally, in the last section, some remarks on future trends are made which point to the possible advent of a third phase. Readers interested in a more comprehensive summary and bibliography of older research and studies published up to the late 1990s should turn to Flüchter (2000a).

1. The First Phase: Analyzing Spatial Features of a Highly Dynamic Country (1962–1990)

In Germany, modern geographical research on Japan was kick-started and long-dominated by Peter Schöller (1923–1988), Professor of Geography at the University of Bochum and one of the leading figures of postwar German geography in general. A specialist in urban geography, he first visited Japan in 1959 and started publishing on it in 1962 (Schöller 1962a, 1962b, 1962c). Schöller was particularly fascinated by the high dynamism of urban change as a result of high speed economic growth at the time. His research embraced, among other topics, studies on overall urban development (Schöller 1962b, 1969), internal migration and urbanization (1968, 1970, 1973), centrality (1962c, 1980), problems of regional development (1976, 1984a), and cities dominated by religious functions (1984b, 1986). He is also the author of a problem-oriented regional geography on Japan (Schöller 1978) that is, of course, outdated by now but can still be regarded as the best and most current

attempt published in the German language that covers the various aspects of Japanese geography in an integrated way. Furthermore, in 1969, Schöller, together with his Japanese colleague Taiji Yazawa, established the Japanese-German Geographical Conference series (Nichi-Doku Chiri Gakkai), which since then has been held alternatively in Japan or Germany at intervals of two to six years.

In the mid-1970s, Winfried Flüchter (*1943), one of Schöller's many students who subsequently became a university professor – in this case, Flüchter still holds a Chair in Geography at the University of Duisburg-Essen – joined his teacher in geographical research on Japan. Like Schöller, Flüchter's research interests up to the late 1980s focused on phenomena that symbolized the dynamic and sometimes even overheated character of spatial change during the phase of high economic growth. Examples include intensive land reclamation along the Japanese coast to provide space for heavy industries or urban infrastructure (Flüchter 1975, 1976, 1984a, 1985, 1989), or problems in regional development and regional planning due to an overconcentration of people and administrative as well as industrial functions on the Tokyo Capital Region (1979, 1990a, 1990b).

At the University of Bonn, Gerhard Aymans (1931–1996) continued the tradition of geographical research on Japan in Bonn initiated by Johannes Justus Rein (1835–1919). His major contributions were to coastal marine geography (Aymans 1965, 1976, 1980a) and population geography (1969, 1980b). Unfortunately, since Aymans always viewed Japan as only one research field among many others – he also published on the regional geography of the Lower Rhine area and Great Britain, agricultural geography, modern applied geography, and historical geography – the sum of his work on Japan is rather limited.

Martin Schwind (1906–1991), since 1967 an honorary professor at the University of Bochum, represented a geographical research tradition that was rather typical for the 1940s and 1950s, but since his major publications came out after the start of the 1960s, it is appropriate to mention him here. Schwind's most commendable contribution is a lengthy volume on the physical geography of Japan (Schwind 1967) that is still unmatched today. His volume on the Japanese cultural landscape (Schwind 1981), however, reveals a rather old-fashioned, essentialist approach insofar as he interpreted spatial structures and processes as objectifications of an unchanging Japanese spirit (*kokutai*) (see also the critical review by Flüchter 1984b).

2. The Second Phase: Japan in an International Context (1990–2005)

When a new generation of German geographers interested in Japan started their research activities in the 1990s, they encountered a country that was different in many ways from the country Schöller, Flüchter, or Aymans first

encountered. Instead of still »lagging behind« or »catching up« with the West, the societal and economic level of Japan was now completely on equal footing with other industrialized nations. Moreover, during the 1990s, Japan even entered a lengthy phase of relative economic stagnation which was reminiscent of the situation that many European countries have had to face since the 1970s. On one hand, this meant that there was more time now to direct attention toward less spectacular geographical features which had to be neglected during the stormy period of high economic growth. On the other hand, geographical findings in Japan could now be more easily placed into an international context which opened the door for more comparative research. For instance, as late as the end of the 1980s, there were virtually no studies, not even from Japanese geographers, on the socio-spatial disparities in Japanese cities. Massive in-migration during the high-speed economic era that overran all attempts at well-ordered city planning as well as astronomical land prices that culminated in the so-called bubble economy period (1986–1991) made it impossible for most new city dwellers to freely select their place of residence. This resulted in socially homogeneous urban spaces. It was only during the 1990s, after land prices had plummeted that unemployment rose and foreign immigrants entered the country in larger numbers that the level of social segregation in Japanese metropolises gradually began to resemble – and thus became comparable to – the level found in European cities.

These changes in perspective notwithstanding, the focus of attention during this second phase remained trained on urban problems, population geography, and problems in regional planning and regional development. Papers and books on urban geography were especially numerous. Here the studies by Uta Hohn (*1960), one of Peter Schöller's last students and since 2004 a Professor of Geography at the University of Bochum, stand out in particular. Starting with two papers on town conservation (Hohn 1997, 1998), her masterpiece to date is a voluminous book on urban planning in Japan (2000) which not only contains a thorough description of almost all current measures of urban planning and a number of well-researched and vividly described case studies of urban renewal projects but can also serve as a comprehensive monograph on the structure of Japanese cities. One of the intentions of her study is to point out the strengths and weaknesses of Japanese urban planning in comparison with European and American planning cultures. She concludes that, while on one hand town planning in Japan might have some serious flaws, such as too liberal an attitude toward the interests of the private sector or too hierarchical and confusing a structure, and on the other hand, Japanese town planners were highly creative and at least partly successful in coping with new challenges such as the impending social fragmentation of urban space. In her more recent publications, Hohn has shifted her research focus

slightly toward the analysis of economic and structural change in Tokyo (Hohn 2002a, 2002b, 2004).

In contrast to the comprehensive approach pursued by Hohn, Silke VOGT (*1966), in her monograph on new approaches in Japanese town planning (2001), concentrates on a description and evaluation of so-called *machi-zukuri*, i.e. bottom-up town planning projects often initiated by local citizen groups. Like Hohn in her *magnum opus*, she makes great effort to show strengths and weaknesses by comparing her findings with planning participation realities in Germany. Most of her results were obtained by direct observation, giving parts of her study an ethnographical rather than geographical flavor. Ralph Lützeler (*1961), a student of Aymans and currently a senior researcher at the German Institute for Japanese Studies in Tokyo, analyzed the evolution of socio-spatial segregation in Tokyo from the framework of the global city theory put forward by Sassen (1991) and others. In his *Habilitation* thesis (Lützeler 2005), he concludes that by the start of the new century, the extent of social polarization and segregation in the Japanese capital – exemplified by the settlement pattern of foreign immigrants, upper middle class gentrifiers, and the unemployed – had not yet reached the proportions that can be observed in European metropolises, let alone American cities, but that several indications point to an approximation of the European level by 2010 or so.

In his earlier studies, Lützeler had turned his attention to population geography, thus continuing in one of Aymans' fields of interest. In his dissertation thesis (Lützeler 1994a), he analyzed macro-regional differences in Japanese mortality rates, including those of specific causes-of-death, in order to use them as indicators of regional levels in the quality of life. Other papers include a study of the regional structure of social problems in Japan (Lützeler 1994b, 1995a), investigations in the geography of specific population segments such as foreign immigrants (1995b, 2002a), household types (1996), and the elderly (1997, 2002b), and aspects of Japanese fertility decline in international perspective (2002c). He is also the author of a summary chapter on Japanese demography in the *Handbook of Oriental Studies, Modern Japanese Society* (Lützeler 2004).

Many other recent studies are concerned with the topic of regional planning and development. Flüchter has published several articles that show his continued interest in the unequal development of Japanese regions and the problem of overagglomeration on Tokyo in particular (Flüchter 1994, 1995, 1997, 2000b, 2002a, 2003). One of his main arguments is that the one-point concentration of almost all national functions on the Japanese capital could strike a fatal blow to the functioning of the whole country should a major earthquake occur. Roman Ditzer (*1965) and Volker Elis (*1969), the latter currently a research associate at the German Institute for Japanese Studies in Tokyo, both analyzed the relation between industrial promotion and regional

planning policy in a specific prefecture (Ditzer 1998 on Okinawa Prefecture; Elis 2005 on Shizuoka Prefecture). Carolin Funck (*1961), Associate Professor of Geography at Hiroshima University, investigated the potential of tourism as a tool in the development of the peripheral rural regions of Japan (1999). Traffic infrastructure as an important determinant of national and regional development is a main topic in the studies undertaken by Thomas Feldhoff (*1970), a student of Flüchter and currently a research assistant at the Institute of East Asian Studies, University of Duisburg-Essen (1998, 2000, 2002a, 2002b, 2003a, 2003b). His latest publication is a comprehensive analysis of the regional consequences of construction lobbyism in Japan (Feldhoff 2005). Feldhoff argues that the nontransparent interest balancing between economic actors, the state bureaucracy, and politicians forming the so-called »iron triangle« leads *inter alia* to the realization of bizarre construction projects which might benefit the triangle members but run totally counter to the principles of reasonable regional planning. Another study on infrastructural politics in Japan which is similar in intent but slightly less pointed in its conclusions has been produced by Birgit Poniatowski (2001).

Aspects of economic geography (unless related to regional development) have received less attention during this second phase. The declining importance of Japanese agriculture and manufacturing might at least explain in part this relative lack of studies although it should be noted that »pure« economic geography has never been a dominant topic in German geographical research on Japan. Exceptions are papers by Flüchter on rice cultivation and the rice market (2002b), on changes in the locational network of the automobile industry (Flüchter and Yamamoto 2002), or on the locational behavior of Japanese corporations in Germany (Flüchter 2005a). Similarly, Rolf Schlunze (*1960), currently an Associate Professor on the Faculty of Business Administration at Ritsumeikan University (Shiga Prefecture), analyzed Japanese investments in Germany from a regional point of view (Schlunze 1996). A more recent study of his was carried out on political efforts to attract foreign corporations into the Kansai area (Schlunze 2005). Jochen Legewie (*1965), an economist who was a research associate at the German Institute for Japanese Studies from 1996 to 2000, wrote his dissertation thesis on the geography of freight transportation in Japan (1996) and subsequently turned his attention to Japanese investments in foreign countries, in particular East and South East Asia (1998, 1999). In the mid-1990s, Rolf Sternberg (*1959), currently Professor of Economic Geography at the University of Hannover and not a true specialist of Japan, published on Japanese high-tech regions in an international context (1995a, 1995b, 1997).

3. Future Prospects: Japan as a Shrinking Country (2005 Onwards?)

In his account of German geographical research on Japan, Flüchter (2000a: 13–14) listed five areas in which research should concentrate in the future. Studies should pay more attention to: 1) the human ecology paradigm including research on natural disasters and risk management; 2) the analysis of spatially relevant decisions of policy makers and institutions, such as those involved in the »iron triangle«; 3) the challenges of globalization to national, regional, and local decision makers in the fields of agriculture, manufacturing, or urban structure; 4) the service sector with a special emphasis on hierarchization and regional differentiation; and 5) more theory-based research that puts Japan into an international context.

Although only about seven years have gone by since Flüchter wrote up this list, it can be said by reviewing the entirety of recent studies cited in the previous section that areas 2), 3), and 5) have already been covered by a considerable number of papers and books. On the other hand, we are still in need of more research in the areas of service sector geography and disaster prevention.

However, not unlike the situation found in Germany and other European countries, the new decade has brought new challenges for Japan. With more than 20 percent of its population aged 65 years or older now, demographic aging, long since discussed in Japan, has finally come to show its effects on the economy and society. Furthermore, due to the persistence of extremely low birth rates, in 2005 Japan recorded a net population loss for the first time ever since modern population records were introduced in 1872. These demographic changes as well as the continuing challenges from economic globalization make it highly probable that Japan will experience demographic and economic shrinking phenomena in the near future, not only in the countryside but also in many cities including the larger metropolises.

German geographical research on Japan, with its traditional focuses on urban and population geography as well as regional development, seems particularly well suited to paying more attention to the topic of aging and shrinking cities. Winfried Flüchter, in collaboration with Thomas Feldhoff, has already started on a new comparative research project on shrinking cities in de-industrializing regions of Japan and Germany (cf. Flüchter 2005b). In addition to further studies on urban waterfront development and governance, Uta Hohn, too, will concentrate her future research on the topics of shrinking cities and urban regeneration policy in Japan and Germany (pers. comm. on August 4, 2006). Ralph Lützel plans to conduct a study on the effects of demographic change on aspects of local politics (such as housing, infrastructure, or welfare politics) in a Japanese municipality. Thus, it can be assumed that German geographers will continue to make relevant contributions to modern Japanese Studies.

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Part II: Ethnogenesis, Ryūkyū and
Ainu Studies

Sasaki Kōmei

The Origins of Japanese Ethnic Culture – Looking Back and Forward

In the first essay in his 1996 book entitled *Nihon minzokugaku no genzai: 1980-nendai kara 90-nendai e* [Japanese ethnology today: From the 1980s to the 1990s], Josef Kreiner writes, »Japanese ethnology and cultural anthropology have exhibited a strong tendency since the Meiji era to converge on an inquiry into the origins of the Japanese people«, and »The issue pertaining to the Japanese people and Japanese ethnic identity has always been present as a *basso continuo* [in Japanese ethnological studies]« (original in Japanese). These two points, he argues, are among the marked features of ethnology and cultural anthropology in Japan. »In contrast to the tendency among ethnologists in Europe and the United States to show greater interest in the ethnic origins of other peoples, Japanese ethnologists have been far more interested in the question of their own people’s roots, which I believe is a trait peculiar to Japanese ethnology alone« (Kreiner 1996: 3; original in Japanese).

These remarks by Kreiner, a scholar with a profound knowledge of the field of ethnology in Japan, correctly identify the preeminent feature of Japanese ethnological studies over the decades.

With Japan’s defeat in World War II in 1945, the prewar view of a state centered around an emperor broke down, leaving the field of ethnology without a sense of direction. The publication of a new theory on the origins of the Japanese people proved a strong stimulus to the field. While differing in structure from the previous theories, it marked a fresh start for postwar Japanese ethnology.

1. Oka Masao and Yanagita Kunio

The new ideas were presented by Prof. Oka Masao, who had studied in Vienna and written a major article, »Kodai Nihon no bunka-sō« [Layers of culture in ancient Japan].¹ In May 1948 a landmark symposium led by Oka was held on »The Origins of Japanese Ethnic Culture and Formation of the Japanese State«. Moderated by Ishida Eiichirō, the participants included Egami

1 In his memoir, *Nijūgo-nen no nochi* [Twenty-five years later], Oka (1958) said he had finished the essay in 1933. The contents of the essay is included in *Ijin sonota* [Immigrants and other] (Oka 1979), a collection of Oka’s major essays. For the essay’s content and other details, see Sumiya 1979.

Namio and Yawata Ichirō. The following year, the proceedings of the Symposium were published in vol. 13, issue no. 3 of *Minzokugaku kenkyū*, the Journal of the Japan Society of Ethnology (Ishida, Oka, Egami, and Yawata 1949). The Symposium consisted of two parts: part one on »The Formation of the Japanese State and the Ethnic and Cultural Lineage of the Imperial Household« and part two, »Origins of the Japanese People«. Lively discussion unfolded around Oka's theory, which was augmented by the views presented by Egami and Yawata, both authorities on history and archaeology.²

This symposium was to have a tremendous impact on postwar Japanese scholarship, not just in ethnology but folklore, history, archaeology, and other fields – so recently freed from the constraints of an emperor-centered historiography. Egami's well-known »horse-rider theory« (that a powerful group of horse-riding warriors from the continent conquered ancient Japan; Egami 1967), for example, which grew out of the discussion, was seminal to subsequent theories regarding the formation of the ancient Japanese state.

For his part, Oka refined his origin theory after the symposium and in 1956 published *Nihon minzoku bunka no keisei* [The formation of Japanese ethnic culture] in 1956 (Oka 1979). *Nihon bunka no kiso kōzō* [The basic structure of Japanese culture], published in 1958 (Oka 1958b) after further revision of his thesis, became his definitive work. Oka showed, through analysis using the methodologies of folklore/ethnology and prehistory, that the ethnic culture of ancient Japanese was a complex of five different cultural layers: 1) matrilineal, secret-societal, taro-cultivating, hunter culture; 2) matrilineal, dry-field rice-cultivating, hunter culture; 3) patrilineal, »hara«-clan type, dry-field farming, hunter and livestock raising culture; 4) masculine, age-based hierarchical, wet-rice cultivating, fisherman culture; and 5) patriarchal, »uji«-clan type, ruler culture.

For detailed commentaries and critiques of the Oka theory, see works by Ōbayashi Taryō and other scholars (Ōbayashi 1979, pp. 415–431, 1994, pp. 267–277; Gamo *et al.* 1970, pp. 375–434). Partly because Oka studied in Vienna in the 1930s, Oka's theory was rather schematic, incorporating various »cultural sphere« notions, and some of the sources he used to support his hypotheses would be considered problematic from our vantage point today, so Oka's theory is unlikely ever to be accepted as is. Nevertheless, his idea of organizing a number of interrelated cultural and social traits in cultural clusters and making comprehensive use of previous achievements in folklore, archaeology, linguistics and other fields in order to support such categories made an important contribution to the subsequent development of debates on the origins of Japanese ethnic culture. In that sense, it may be said that the

² The proceedings of this symposium were published in book form entitled *Nihon minzoku no kigen* [The origin of the Japanese people] (Ishida, Egami, Oka, and Yawata 1958) with detailed notes.

emergence of the Oka theory marked the starting point of postwar Japanese ethnology.³

In his last book, *Kaijō no michi* [Paths by the sea], the pioneer of Japanese folklore studies Yanagita Kunio (1961) presented his hypothesis that rice cultivation, which was to form the basis of Japanese culture, was transmitted to Japan via the southern islands (Ryūkyū archipelago, etc.). For details of the sea routes theory and criticisms on it, see my recent work (Sasaki 2003, vol. 1). Two main factors seem to have prompted Yanagita to hasten publication of his theory of rice-cultivating culture as the core of Japanese culture.

One factor was that Yanagita, who upon receiving the Order of Cultural Merit in 1951 had become a leading figure in Japan's academic circles, was strongly concerned with the state of mind of the Japanese people, that is, the question of national identity, following the defeat in World War II. In order to restore awareness of their identity, he considered it urgent to elucidate the origins of the Japanese people and resolve questions pertaining to the introduction of rice cultivation, which Yanagita thought inseparable from the ethnic roots of the Japanese. The other factor was Yanagita's opposition to the views expressed at the aforementioned symposium, especially Egami's horse-rider theory. With the intuition of a poet and the zeal of a true believer, Yanagita asserted that the Japanese people's remote forebears came not from the north but from the south, bringing rice with them.

The sea route theory, however, met with severe criticism from archaeologists, linguists, historians and other specialists, for its lack of empirical evidence. The great scholar's theory failed to gain adequate support in academic circles. Yanagita's equating of Japanese culture with rice-cultivating culture, nonetheless, subsequently took widespread root among Japanese scholars as well as in the press, and became the dominant trend of thought.

2. Approaches to the Culture Formation Discourse

Between the late 1950s and 1970s, the discourse on the origins of Japanese ethnic culture, kicked off by Oka and Yanagita, took major strides forward. This progress coincided with the start of fieldwork by Japanese researchers in southeastern Asia and the Indian Himalayas. A survey team of young scholars for research on southeastern Asian rice-cultivating peoples and cultures was sent to southeastern Asia and India-Nepal in 1957 under the sponsorship of the Japan Society of Ethnology (the society sent two other

3 Besides Oka Masao, other researchers who made major contributions in the field of ethnology on the theories of the origin of Japanese ethnic culture before, during, and after World War II were Mishina Akihide (Shōei), who specialized mainly in the Korean peninsula (Mishina 1970–1974), and Matsumoto Nobuhiro, specialist on Southeastern Asian ethnography and myths (Matsumoto 1971, 1978–1979), among others.

such teams between then and 1964) and, along with a Southeastern Asian research team from Osaka City University, were among the first instances of scholarly overseas studies of that type.⁴

Iwata Keiji, a member of the first Japan Society of Ethnology survey team, produced a book entitled *Nihon bunka no furusato* [Birthplace of Japanese culture] in 1966 based on data from surveys conducted in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and elsewhere. He argued that among the characteristics of housing, food, clothing, and other aspects of the material culture of southeastern Asian peoples as well as their rice cultivating techniques and rites and their annual events and religious rituals, there were many that closely resembled those of Japanese culture. He concluded that »fundamental parts of Japanese culture closely resemble those of southern cultures«.

Whereas Iwata's discussion was based mainly on his fieldwork, Ōbayashi Taryō drew chiefly on his extensive documentary research for ideas that have led debates pertaining to the origins of Japanese ethnic culture since the 1970s. Ōbayashi's achievements were voluminous. Among his many publications were comparative-ethnological explorations into the origins and genealogy of Japanese myths, including *Nihon shinwa no kigen* [The origins of Japanese mythology] (1961), *Inasaku no shinwa* [The mythology of rice farming] (1973), *Higashi Ajia no ōken shinwa* [East Asian myths of the kingship] (1984), and *Shinwa no keifu* [The genealogy of myths] (1986a). His publications also extend to rites and folkways and comparative studies of material culture, including *Yamatai-koku* [The Yamatai state] (1977), *Higashi to nishi, yama to umi* [East and West; the mountains and the sea] (1990), *Hoppo no minzoku to bunka* [Northern peoples and cultures] (1991b), and *Shōgatsu no kita michi* [The roots of New Year's customs] (1992).

Through these and many other works Ōbayashi sought to reconstruct the cultural history of Eastern Asia – covering the northeastern and southeastern regions of Asia – in elaborate detail, incorporating his theory of the origin of Japanese ethnic culture into that framework. His article, »The Ethnological Study of Japan's Ethnic Culture: A Historical Survey« (1991a), which appeared in *Acta Asiatica*, the English-language bulletin of the Institute of Eastern Culture, introducing and critiquing Oka's theory from a comparison with other Asian cultures, argues that wet-rice cultivation centering around native Japanese people (*wajin*) was first to come into being as it was built upon preexisting slash-and-burn culture, and that the formation of a ruling culture

4 With the postwar growth of the Japanese economy and with improvements in the foreign currency situation, the education ministry incorporated »scholarly research overseas« into the Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research program in 1963. Among the seven survey teams that obtained the overseas survey funds that year was the third survey team for research on southeastern Asian rice-cultivating peoples and cultures, led by Kawakita Jirō. As I recall, the rate of support was less than 50 percent.

came after that. The article, in which he also referred to the traits of northern cultures, presented the outlines of his theory on the origins of Japanese ethnic culture.

Emori Itsuo, drawing on Oka Masao's theory, conducted comparative ethnological research on marriage and social structure in ancient Japan. He pointed out that what were considered Japanese characteristics such as »temporary wife-visiting marriage« and bilateral society accompanied by age-based hierarchy, *neyado* (lodgings for young men or women), *yobai* (late night trysting), and *utagaki* gathering were cultural features of southern peoples linked to the ethnic cultures of Jiangnan (south part of Yangtze) and South China. He also held that many folkways and magic rituals that accompanied patrilocal marriage, as well as the *kamado-wake* custom of setting up a branch family and family practices of various sorts – all found in ancient Japan – closely resembled those found among peoples in the northeastern region of China. He thereby insisted that, as an element of northern culture, patrilineal kinship organization also existed as part of Japanese cultural layers (Emori 1986, 1990, etc.)

In the field of folklore studies, Tsuboi Hirofumi wrote *Imo to Nihonjin* [Taro and the Japanese people] (1979), in which he analyzed New Year's rituals, especially the background of the New Year celebrated without *mochi* rice cakes and emphasized that, besides the cultural pattern based on wet-field rice farming, another cultural pattern based on dry-field farming represented by taro, existed in Japanese society. Tsuboi's assertions, which opposed Yanagita's idea that Japanese culture was a homogeneous, rice farming culture, had a significant impact on academic circles over the question of how to understand the characteristics of Japanese ethnic culture.

Archaeologist Kobuku Naoichi, whose interest focused on ethnological and folklore research, published many books, including *Nihon minzoku bunka no kenkyū* [A study of Japanese ethnic culture] (1970), *Kan-Shina-kai minzoku bunka kō* [Pan-China-Sea ethnic cultures] (1976), and *Nihon bunka no kosō* [Ancient layers of Japanese culture] (1992), in which he attempted to understand the formation of Japanese cultural layers in the context of the dynamics of Pan-China Sea culture.

In addition to the several approaches mentioned above, Ōbayashi Taryō noted that »the theory of Nakao Sasuke, the scholar of agriculture, on the broad-leaved evergreen forest culture gave a great impetus to and facilitated new developments in« the discourse on the formation of Japanese culture, and »aroused the interest of not only scholars but readers in general« (Ōbayashi 1986: 2). The Nakao theory holds that cultures in the continuous belt of evergreen broad-leaf forests extending from the mid-slopes of the Himalayas to the Yunnan highlands and the mountains south of the Yangtze River and as far as the southwestern part of Japan have various common elements. Nakao named the cultural cluster of these shared elements the »shiny leaf forest

(*shōyō jurin*) culture« and analyzed Eastern Asian cultural history from that perspective.⁵ He believed that the *shōyō jurin* culture of Jiangnan (region south of the Yangtze) and South China played no small part in the formation of Japanese cultural layers as well.

After Nakao advanced the theory of the *shōyō jurin* culture in 1966 (Nakao 1966), he, along with myself and Ueyama Shumpei, pursued joint research on the theory, co-authoring *Zoku shōyō jurin bunka* [*Shōyō jurin* culture, Part II] (Ueyama, Sasaki, and Nakao 1976). In that work, he elaborated on the »shiny leaf forest culture«. Sasaki also published *Inasaku izen* [Before the introduction of rice cultivation] (1971), in which he employed the *shōyō-jurin* culture theory framework, arguing that farming mainly by the slash-and-burn method and its accompanying culture existed on the Japanese archipelago before the introduction of wet-field rice farming. His arguments on the formation of Japanese culture based on the *shōyō-jurin* culture theory has much in common with those of Obayashi, Emori, and Tsuboi.

3. Comparative Studies on the Origins of Japanese Ethnic Culture: Interdisciplinary Research Centering around the Minpaku

The movement to establish a museum of ethnology with a view to promoting ethnological research in Japan dates back to 1935. After the war, the Japan Society of Ethnology led a campaign to set up a national research museum of ethnology, resulting in the creation in June 1974 of the National Museum of Ethnology (Minpaku) on the former site of the 1970 World's Fair held in Osaka.

Minpaku has a »museum« in its name, but its establishment was based not on Museum Law or the Cultural Properties Protection Law but on the Establishment of National Schools, the basic law for setting up educational institutions like the national universities. Thus it was organized as an inter-university research institute and, as it comes under the direct jurisdiction of the education ministry, has the same research functions as a university. Minpaku, where researchers have the status of professor or associate professor, is intended to serve as a major ethnology research and information center for the entire nation. One of its duties, therefore, is to conduct joint programs with outside researchers.

The Minpaku buildings under construction and preparations for regular exhibitions underway since its foundation were completed in November 1977. On this occasion in 1978 the museum launched a »special research« project by which research themes of importance in the academic world were selected and studied in a comprehensive and systematic manner over a long

5 Regarding the theory of the shiny leaf forest culture, volume 6 (published in February 2006) of *Nakao Sasuke chosakushū* [Collected works by Sasuke Nakao] contains all Nakao's works on the *shōyō jurin* culture, with annotations by Sasaki.

period of time. One of these themes was a ten-year project called »Comparative Research on the Origins of Japanese Ethnic Culture« (headed by Kōmei Sasaki).

During the first year, we worked on the overall concept and plan of the project, and it was decided that every year from the second year on a research topic and a leader would be chosen, a joint research team organized of specialists from Japan and overseas, a four-day symposium held at the end of the fiscal year, and the research achievements compiled by the leader and published in a book form. The research topics and publications in fiscal years 1978 to 1987 are listed in Figure 1.

Figure 1. National Museum of Ethnology Project for Comparative Research on the Origins of Japanese Ethnic Culture

FY	Research topic	Leader and publication*
1978	Research methods and plans	Museum memorandum
1979	Farming culture	Sasaki (ed.) 1983
1980	Shamanism	Katō (ed.) 1984
1981	Music and performing arts	Fujii (ed.) 1985
1982	Housing	Sugimoto (ed.) 1984
1983	Social organization (<i>ie, mura, uji</i>)	Takemura (ed.) 1986
1984	Folklore	Kimijima (ed.) 1989
1985	Hunting and fishing	Koyama (ed.) 1992
1986	The formation of the Japanese language	Sakiyama (ed.) 1990
1987	Conclusions (supplement)	Sasaki and Ōbayashi (eds.) 1991

There is not space here to introduce each of these publications in detail, but the joint study on »farming culture« (fiscal year 1979) produced detailed reports from specialists in crop science and genetics regarding tuber crops, cereals, crops of northern origin, rice farming, livestock, etc., followed by an ethnologist's report on rice-cultivating culture, population, diet culture, and

myths. Joined also by scholars from archaeology, folklore, and other fields, a comprehensive discussion ensued over the origins of Japanese farming culture. This kind of interdisciplinary endeavor, involving various fields including the natural sciences, was a major feature of the entire project.

The study on »shamanism« focused on the lineages of northern and southern cultures and that on »music and performing arts« dealt principally with relations between the characteristics found in the cultural layers of music, such as the »ritsu«-scale, the »min'yo«-scale, and polyphony, on the one hand, and cultural clusters as reconstructed in ethnography (e.g., »shiny leaf forest« culture), on the other. The joint project on »housing«, which drew on an extensive accumulation of data on *minka* (folk dwellings), produced widely acclaimed achievements through collaboration with geographers, archaeologists, and especially, architecture scholars. The »social organization« study consisted of three parts: part 1 elucidated traits of Japanese folklore and society through a social anthropological comparison with other East Asian societies; part 2 discussed »from *uji* to *ie*« from the standpoint of historical science; and part 3 sought to reconstruct images of the pre-historical society of Japan, mainly drawing on archaeological findings. Uniting the three parts was a common thread of inquiry into *ie*-based characteristics of Japanese folklore and society.

The »folklore« study looked at myths, folktales, and legends, comparing them within a broad area from northern to southeastern Asia and exploring the linkages between them. The »hunting and fishing« study tried to capture what Jōmon society was like and uncover its roots, utilizing data from ecology, ethnology, folklore, and archaeology. The study on »the formation of the Japanese language« involved ethnologists, specialists in languages surrounding Japan, as well as Japanese-language scholars. It was agreed among them that multiple languages coexisted for a long time on the Japanese archipelago in the Jōmon period and that contact among these languages resulted in the formation of Japanese as a mixed language. That was one of the valuable conclusions arrived at in the 1978–1987 project.

At the last symposium held in January 1988, in addition to »conclusions«, a supplementary discussion was held concerning the formation of the Japanese people as well as multi-ethnicity in Japan. In the summary debate, moreover, it was argued that the formative process of Japanese ethnic culture had three epochal phases – the early and middle parts of the Jōmon period, the early part of the Yayoi period, and the Kofun period (when the ruling culture formed) – and their significance discussed.

Overall, the Minpaku research project exploring the origins of Japanese ethnic culture was distinguished by its interdisciplinary endeavors centering around ethnology but involving many other fields such as folklore, archaeology, history, linguistics, and music, as well as the field of the natural sciences including ecology, (natural) anthropology, crop science, and genetics.

On the axis of time, the Jōmon period was understood as the starting point of the origin theories, but together with the above-mentioned three epochal phases, the perspective of discussion extended, depending on themes, to medieval and early modern times. In terms of geographical reach, the project made the Eastern Asia region – covering northeastern and southeastern Asia – the major target of comparative research, and a consensus may safely be said to have been achieved on the fact that the multiple cultures that reached the Japanese archipelago via both the northern and southern routes formed a mix of cultural layers that make up Japanese ethnic culture.

The project had great effect on the formation of debates on the origins of Japanese ethnic culture in the 1980s and 1990s. I headed the project, and published *Nihon-shi tanjō* [The birth of Japanese history] (Sasaki 1991), which outlines the formative process of Japanese cultural layers during the period from the Old Stone Age to the introduction of rice cultivation, and *Nihon-bunka no tajū-kōzō* [The multi-layered structure of Japanese culture] (Sasaki 1997), which invokes the concept of cultural types – »shiny leaf forest« culture, »oak [beech?] forest« culture,⁶ and rice-producing culture – and argues emphatically, mainly from the ethnological viewpoint, for the pluralist and multi-layered structure of Japanese culture.

4. Research on Origins of the Japanese People and Culture: Anthropology-led Project

In 1987, the International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Nichi-bunken) was founded in Kyoto as an inter-university research institute like Minpaku. Its establishment was aimed at »interdisciplinary and comprehensive research on Japanese culture and research collaboration with Japanese studies researchers from around the world«. Since its opening, therefore, the Center has sought to carry out interdisciplinary and comprehensive research on Japanese culture with the participation of researchers not only in the humanities and social sciences but natural sciences as well.

One of the leading figures in this endeavor was anthropologist Kazurō Hanihara. He initiated a joint research project called »The Basic Structure of Japanese Culture and Its Natural Background«, and results of the study were compiled in a report entitled, *Nihonjin to Nihon bunka no keisei* [The formation of the Japanese people and culture] (Hanihara 1993). Natural anthropology played the leading role in this project, along with history, Japanese literature, linguistics, archaeology, ethnology, folklore, genetics, ethnology, and so forth. Against the backdrop of this research trend, the »Interdisciplinary Research on the Origins of the Japanese People and Culture« project was carried out under

6 Nakao Sasuke proposed the »oak [beech?] forest culture« theory (advocating the existence of a culture cluster peculiar to the oak [beech] forest zone of mainly Mongolian oak, in northeastern Asia.

the leadership of anthropologist Omoto Keiichi with a »grant-in-aid for scientific research on priority areas« from the education ministry. Starting in 1997, the project lasted for four years until fiscal 2000. In the Summary Team report, I outlined the project, as briefly summarized below (Sasaki 2001: 8).

Four teams were organized to focus on »natural environment«, »anthropology«, »archaeology«, and »Japanese culture« (see Figure 2). Each team engaged in research activities separately, and occasional meetings and symposiums were also held to bring the teams together and facilitate an interdisciplinary research exchange. The natural environment team sought to reconstruct the paleo-environment through oxygen isotope analysis of marine sediments and foraminiferans collected from the Sea of Japan. By means of the carbon and nitrogen isotopic analysis of human bones excavated by archaeologists and the DNA analysis of potted plants, the team also provided various new sources for studying the eating habits and means of plant cultivation and animal domestication of people in ancient times, including how such practices started and through which routes they were introduced to Japan.

The anthropology team, based on Hanihara Kazurō's »double structure« model, analyzed the Jōmon and Yayoi people through both configuration and elements and concluded that the ancient Japanese archipelago did have a double structure of population consisting of natives and immigrants from the outside but that much remains unknown about the origins of the indigenous people.

Figure 2. Interdisciplinary research teams to explore the origins of the Japanese people and culture

Name of team (leader)	Research topic
Natural environment (Koizumi Itaru)	Natural and cultural environments in the prehistory of Japan
Anthropology (Baba Hisao)	The formation and origins of the Japanese people studied through configuration and elements
Archaeology (Harunari Hideji)	Life and culture in prehistoric times
Japanese culture (Senda Minoru)	The formation and origins of Japanese culture studied in comparison with other Asian regions
Summary (Omoto Keiichi)	Coordination of research plans and activities and assessment of achievements

To elucidate the life and culture of each of the major transitional phases of prehistory, from the Old Stone Age to the Jōmon period, from the Jōmon to the Yayoi period, and from the Yayoi to the Kofun period, the archaeology team selected 13 historic sites around the country, conducted excavations and research, and published 29 collections of documents and a collection of essays (*Senshijidai no seikatsu to bunka* [Prehistoric life and culture]). Empirical data based on systematic research were accumulated and new perspectives concerning the formation of Japanese culture provided. Under a common theme (see Figure 2), the Japanese culture team conducted research to compare Japan with the folk culture of China's southwestern region and Yangtze valley, the northeastern Asian and Ainu cultures, and the traditional cultures of the Southwestern Islands. Analyzing foreign cultures and the identity of Japanese culture, the study examined the multilayered aspects of Japanese culture from diverse perspectives.

Overall, in a significant step forward compared with the Minpaku 1978–1987 project, the natural scientists participating in this project – using the latest scientific methods, such as DNA analysis – made the results available to researchers in the humanities. In the area of archaeology, various findings of recent excavations and research were reported and carefully examined. In Japanese culture research, reports on comparing it with China and Korea in the Eastern Asian region drew much attention, giving the strong impression that research on the Japanese people and culture through an Asian perspective has finally begun to get into full swing.

The project was not without problems, however. The four-team project, despite much careful consideration and determination to be interdisciplinary, international, and comprehensive in scope, did not necessarily produce conclusions from an interdisciplinary and overall viewpoint as regards the origins of the Japanese people and Japanese culture. It is unfortunate, too, that no comprehensive report of the project has yet to be published.

Behind this lay a peculiar factor. Immediately after the end of this Nichibunken project, the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) aired a five-installment NHK special series *Nihonjin no harukana tabi* [The long journey of the Japanese people], which enjoyed quite a high viewer rating. A five-volume series, one volume for each aired installment, was subsequently published in 2001–2003 under the same title, *Nihonjin no harukana tabi* (vol. 1, *Manmosu hanta Shiberia kam no tabidachi* [Hunters of mammoths set on a journey from Siberia]; vol. 2, *Kyodaifunka ni kieta Kuroshio no tami* [Giant volcanic eruptions wiped out the people of current Japan]; vol. 3, *Umi ga sodateta mori no ōkoku* [A forest kingdom nurtured by the sea]; vol. 4, *Ine shirarezaru ichiman-nen no tabi* [A ten-thousand-year journey of rice]; and vol. 5, *Soshite ›Nihonjin‹ ga umareta* [And the ›Japanese people‹ were born]). Many of the major members of the Nichibunken project participated in the production of the NHK television program and the publication of the

five-volume series. The five volumes effectively served to make the findings of the academic project available to the public in easy-to-understand form.

That experience shows that questions about the origins of the Japanese people and culture are no longer confined to the world of academics but have become a subject of wider interest that attracts the attention of the general public and is therefore frequently taken up by the media. Including this new development, I will discuss in the following section research issues relevant today regarding the origins of Japanese ethnic culture as well as some future prospects, which may be summed up in four points in the following.

5. Challenges and Prospects of the Discourse on Japan's Ethnic Culture

The above account outlines the major events regarding research into the origins of Japanese ethnic culture, from Oka Masao's proposition of his theory immediately after the Second World War to the recent Nichibunken project. A number of features and issues can be observed here.

- (1) The recognition that early Japanese culture had a plural and multi-layered structure came to be widely shared through postwar research. From the standpoint of country-centered folklore research, Kunio Yanagita defined Japanese culture as a single, homogeneous rice-cultivation culture. By contrast, the ethnology-led discourse on the origins of Japanese ethnic culture, beginning with the Oka theory (based on an increasing body of comparative research on various parts of Asia), asserted that a number of cultures flowed into the Japanese archipelago through different routes from the north and south and were superimposed on one another to make up Japanese culture. Their research into the formation of Japanese cultural layers generally extended as far as the Jōmon period. The Japanese language also came to be viewed as a mixed language and its formation examined from that point of view. This, too, was a new development in research that was coincident with the pluralist theory of Japanese culture.
- (2) The development of the ethnology-led origin theories on Japan's cultural pluralism has been sustained by advances in neighboring disciplines such as cultural anthropology and archaeology. These advances have been made possible by the enormous progress in genetics, ecology, geochemistry, molecular biology, and other fields of natural science, as well as by application of the achievements of such advanced sciences to cultural origin theories. Most notably, the development of research based on DNA analysis has contributed significantly to investigation into the evolution and proliferation of human beings and the origins and spread of crops and livestock. The greater the advances in natural science, the greater the specialization of research, however, and this discourages the dialogue between natural scientists and researchers in the humanities and social sciences. It is expected that it will become

and social sciences. It is expected that it will become more, not less, difficult to discuss the origin of Japanese culture in an interdisciplinary and comprehensive manner.

- (3) At the beginning of this paper, I referred to Josef Kreiner's assertion that »the issue pertaining to the Japanese people and Japanese ethnic identity has always been present as a *basso continuo*« in Japanese ethnological studies. This same issue has apparently turned into the »main theme« rather than the »*basso continuo*«. This is clearly demonstrated by the fact that, as mentioned earlier, the findings of the Nichibunken project led by Keiichi Ōmoto provided the basis for NHK's hours-long television series and that the five-volume *Nihonjin no harukana tabi* based on the television series was virtually a report of the academic project. What lies behind this trend is the considerable spread of interest in the origin of the Japanese people and the identity of Japanese culture owing to the growth of the informed masses and the progress of globalization, with the media adding its enthusiastic support. This phenomenon is structurally similar to the »ancient-history boom« that has continued for decades, especially the dispute over the location of Yamataikoku and the identity of its female ruler Himiko.
- (4) Another factor to consider is that, as numerous findings begin appearing from new studies of various kinds as the result of progress in the fields of natural science, quite sophisticated techniques are needed to explain them comprehensively and organize them in an easy-to-understand way. The task of presenting the origins of the Japanese people and culture in an interdisciplinary, international, and comprehensive manner requires the competence of a producer-type person, of the kind who creates films or documentaries, to deal with the complex media and issues involved.

Systems that provide practical ways of facilitating such research are in critical need. Today is no longer a time when individual researchers can formulate theories on the origin of Japanese culture solo, as did Torii Ryūzō and Oka Masao in the prewar period. Especially in recent years, as discussed in sections 3 and 4, detailed findings have begun to be brought together from various fields of the humanities and the social and natural sciences and integrated into a theory on the origin of Japanese culture. In order to further the development of the origin theories, therefore, a solid system for research collaboration is needed. Capable leaders are necessary first, and they should be backed up by a strong research system.

Under the current conditions in Japan, I believe the National Institutes for the Humanities (NIHU), a giant inter-university research consortium established in 2004 that consists of five research Institutes – the National Museum of Japanese History, National Institute of Japanese Literature, International

Research Center for Japanese Studies, Research Institute for Humanity and Nature, and National Museum of Ethnology – should take the lead in furthering research on the origins of Japanese ethnic culture as a large-scale project across the various fields of science.

In this case, a major problem is the sluggishness of research on this subject among young ethnologists, as Ōbayashi Taryō lamented: »The inactivity of research on the formation of Japanese ethnic culture on the part of ethnologists of a young generation who would take over from this third phase (of research by the postwar first generation such as Ōbayashi, Emori, Sasaki, and others) poses great difficulty today« (Ōbayashi 1996: 165). The number of young anthropologists and archaeologists interested in the origins of the Japanese people and culture is not necessarily small, but this regrettable situation in ethnology is indeed a serious problem. What is responsible for the inactivity of ethnological research into the origin of the Japanese people and their culture is not only a decline in interest in historical ethnology but also the general state of affairs of Japanese ethnology (cultural anthropology), which Kreiner described as a shift of »the object of focus in ethnology [...] from *ethnos* (people) to culture, a more general and universal concept« (Kreiner 1996: 8, original in Japanese). How can this problem be solved? That is the big challenge that confronts the world of Japanese ethnology in relation to the origin and formation of Japanese ethnic culture.

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Patrick Heinrich

Casting Light on the Past: Lessons on the Origin and Formation of Japanese-Ryūkyūan

1. Introduction

Japan before the 7th century is linguistically uncharted territory. In view of the first written sources that appeared soon afterwards, one cannot help but be struck by the linguistic homogeneity in the Japanese archipelago. The lack of autochthonous languages in Japan is also startling. Despite its size and its long-standing relative isolation from its immediate geographic neighbors, there are only ten autochthonous languages in the Japanese archipelago, nine of which are found at the very periphery of what constitute the borders of the Japanese nation today. From north to south, these languages are Sakhalin Ainu, Kurile Ainu, Hokkaidō Ainu, and Ogasawara-Creole-English in the southeast, and in the south the Ryūkyūan language family consisting of the languages of Amami, Okinawa, Miyako, Yaeyama, and Yonaguni. Japanese and Ryūkyūan are genealogically related, having split at some point after 300 BC and no later than AD 700 (Hattori 1959; Uemura 2003). Japanese-Ryūkyūan is usually regarded as an isolated language family, as is the Ainu language family (Grimes 2000). The Ryūkyūan languages are often subsumed under the umbrella term »national language« (*kokugo*), which is represented by, if not even equated to, Standard Japanese (Mashiko 1997). Along the lines of national language ideology, the Ryūkyūan languages are often designated as Japanese dialects by scholars of »national linguistics« (*kokugogaku*). This view was rationalized by early dialectologists, for example, Tōjō (1927, 1938), who were concerned with forming a national Japanese identity based on linguistic grounds (Yasuda 1999 and 2000). Glossaries of world languages, however, refer to these language varieties as languages in their own right (e.g., Klose 1987; Ruhlen 1987; Herbermann 1997; Voegelin 1997; Grimes 2000).

Despite more than 150 years of research, the genealogy of Japanese-Ryūkyūan remains unresolved. This is probably even more surprising in light of the fact that Japan is known to have experienced considerable immigration from continental Asia from 300 BC onwards, bringing about the Yayoi period (300 BC – AD 300) which followed directly on the heels of the Jōmon period (10,000 – 300 BC). Regarding the Yayoi migration to Japan, two basic explanations for the genealogy of Japanese-Ryūkyūan come to mind: (1) the languages of this language family are linked to those of the Yayoi immigrants, or else (2) they are

linked to those spoken by the original Jōmon inhabitants. It is commonly assumed that the Jōmon language must have been related to languages spoken in Southeast Asia whereas the Yayoi languages originated from continental Asia, although attempts to link Japanese-Ryūkyūan to the Austronesian or Altai languages have not yet been successful.

Nevertheless, several lessons can be learned from these attempts, and new directions of research can be identified. To start with, let us consider, however briefly, the major hypotheses on the genealogy of Japanese-Ryūkyūan as well as their constraints. After a summary of the divergent views regarding the origin of the Japanese language, I will turn to a closer analysis of the Yayoi period (300 BC – AD 300) and, more specifically, to the immigration movements to Japan at that time. On the basis of these insights, I will then proceed to define other research directions necessary for unraveling the origin of Japanese-Ryūkyūan.

2. Studies on Japanese-Ryūkyūan Genealogy

In the following brief summary, several marginal hypotheses on the genealogy of Japanese-Ryūkyūan will not be mentioned since they have failed to convince other scholars working in the field. These proposed hypotheses include genealogical relations with the Indo-European language family, Basque, Persian, Greek, or Sumerian.

The Altai-Hypothesis

The longest standing hypothesis on the origin of Japanese-Ryūkyūan connects it to the Altai language family. It was first formulated in 1857 by Boller, who based his research on a Japanese grammar that had been published in St. Petersburg in 1738 with the help of shipwrecked Japanese fishermen. In Japan, Fujioka (1985) promoted and developed the attempts to link Japanese-Ryūkyūan to the Altai language family by publishing a seminal list of 14 linguistic features which, he claimed, were shared by all Altai languages, including Old Japanese (Shibatani 1990: 96, Heinrich 2002: 48–52).

In 1910, that is to say, in the year of the Korean annexation by Japan, Kanazawa (1910) linked Japanese to Korean and argued that Korean was a lost Japanese dialect. Due to a shift in Japanese linguistics from genealogy studies to phonology, dialectology, and early language life studies (*gengo seikatsu*) from the Shōwa period (1926–1989) onwards, concentrated efforts to link Japanese-Ryūkyūan to the Altaic languages and/or to Korean, another language isolate, only restarted after WW II (Heinrich 2002). Due to strained relationships, in particular with Korea, and due to the fact that prewar work such as that by Kanazawa had been politically motivated, this research was, in the beginning, largely launched by Western specialists. Important proponents of a shared Japanese-Ryūkyūan/Altai and/or Japanese-Ryūkyūan/Korean genealogy

were Martin (1966), Miller (1971), Whitman (1990), and from Japan most notably Murayama (1966) in his early post-war work. Murayama later shifted his position (see below). In a recent publication, Robbeets (2005) has conducted a comprehensive review of publications on the Altai Hypothesis, in which she sifted all existing 2055 proposed lexical similarities between Japanese-Ryūkyūan and Korean, Tungusic, Mongolic, and Turkic. With 635 etymologies withstanding her rigorous tests, she concluded that there is sufficient evidence to link Japanese-Ryūkyūan to these Altai languages. Nonetheless, Robbeets' work will not end the debate on the genealogy of Japanese-Ryūkyūan for reasons given further below.

Japanese-Ryūkyūan has also been linked to the now extinct language of Koguryō that originated from the most northern of three Korean kingdoms which coexisted between 37 BC and AD 668. Scholars such as Murayama (1962), Lewin (1973), and, most recently, Beckwith (2004) have studied some 130 words that constitute the only Koguryō material to have survived from this otherwise extinct language. They point out the great similarities to Old Japanese lexemes, its phonemic system, and morphology. Beckwith (2004) claims, essentially, that Koguryō-speaking migrants from northeast China, or more precisely the area around modern Tientsin, emigrated from 300 BC onwards to both Korea and the Japanese archipelago. In Korea the Koguryō language was displaced, leaving some traces due to borrowing, while the language was spread throughout the Japanese archipelago. According to Beckwith, the differences in development of the Koguryō language in Korea and on the Japanese archipelago can be accounted for by Korea's advanced technical development. This rendered the Koguryō immigrants and their languages less prestigious there and, consequently, language shift set in. As a result, Japanese-Ryūkyūan is viewed as the sole surviving branch of the Japanese-Ryūkyūan-Koguryō language family since, according to Beckwith, Koguryō is not related to Korean.

Austronesian

In contrast to the Altaic Hypothesis, the idea of a possible link between Japanese-Ryūkyūan and the Austronesian language family (also called Malayo-Polynesian) started rather late. The first scholar to look seriously into a possible connection was Shinmura (1971). Horioka (1927) picked up on the work of Shinmura and developed correspondences between Japanese-Ryūkyūan and the Austronesian languages similar to those that Fujioka (1985) had pointed out with regard to the Altai languages.

Due to the strong influence of the Altai Hypothesis, the »Southern Theory« (*nanpōsetsu*) became increasingly more often regarded as only having had some influence on the formation of Japanese-Ryūkyūan. Furthermore, Austronesian came to be linked with the Jōmon people. As a matter of fact, only

Benedict (1990) has linked the Austronesian languages to the Yayoi migrants. Consequently, he claimed that what developed into Japanese-Ryūkyūan arrived from the south. In other words, Benedict proposed that proto-Japanese-Ryūkyūan spread from the Ryūkyūs into Kyūshū and then further northeast into the central regions of Honshū. Benedict's work has met with criticism from Vovin (1994), and there are also strong archaeological and bio-anthropological arguments against Benedict's thesis (see Hudson 1999).

Japanese as a Hybrid Language

More often than not, the Southern Theory on the formation of Japanese is associated with the idea of Japanese as some kind of mixed language. The first linguist to have developed this idea was Polivanov, who investigated Japanese-Ryūkyūan in a series of publications (Polivanov 1974). Polivanov's hypothesis that Japanese was a hybrid language challenged the influential principle put forth by Meillet (1925) that such languages could not exist. (Refuting Meillet's claim are, of course, the several cases of hybrid languages known today; see below). In essence, Polivanov argued that Japanese was an amalgam of Austronesian and Altaic elements, and his idea of Japanese as a hybrid language gained credibility due to glottochronological research conducted by Hattori (1951, 1954, 1959). In brief, glottochronology claims that languages lose on the average 19% of their basic vocabulary during the course of 1,000 years. This method thus provides a tool to measure the separation time between genetically related languages. In view of the difficulties in revealing the genealogical affiliation of Japanese-Ryūkyūan, Hattori used this method to assess which languages Japanese-Ryūkyūan could possibly be genealogically related to by looking at the highest number of possible cognates. In doing so, he explicitly paid attention to the possibility that Japanese had emerged from more than one source. His research into the basic vocabulary of Japanese, Korean, Manchu, Mongolian, Tatar, Ainu, Gilyak, Chinese, Tibetan, Tai, Vietnamese, Khmer, Malay, Tagalog, the Formosan languages, Motu, Carolinian, Samoan, and Bongu revealed that each of these languages shared five to ten possible cognates which, he concluded, could have also entered Japanese-Ryūkyūan as a result of language contact or could simply be coincidental (Hattori 1959: 206–226). Further support for Polivanov's view came from the work of Murayama (1978), who shifted from an Altaic position to a hybrid position in the second half of his academic career.

Ōno (1957, 1974, 1980) is the great popularizer of the hybrid language hypothesis. He has refined his views on the origin of Japanese-Ryūkyūan over the course of several decades. Ōno (1957) first developed the idea that an Austronesian language found entry into the Japanese archipelago during the Jōmon period (10,000 – 300 BC). These languages formed the substratum

of what later became Japanese-Ryūkyūan during the immigration of Altai speakers in the Yayoi period (300 BC – AD 300). According to Ōno's model, the Yayoi languages formed the superstratum of Japanese-Ryūkyūan. He argued in favor of a hybrid language because of the relatively small number of Yayoi immigrants who, he believed, could not have succeeded in entirely replacing the languages of the native Jōmon population. Japanese-Ryūkyūan, he claimed, was thus both Altaic (Yayoi), which was manifested primarily in the grammar, and Austronesian (Jōmon), which was mainly manifested in the lexicon. Ōno's work is extremely important because it provides an explanation on how Japanese-Ryūkyūan could be (partly) Altaic despite the scarcity of cognates shared with Altai languages. In a spectacular publication, Ōno (1980) expanded his hybrid hypothesis to include a third language family, Dravidian. He now claimed that the first languages to have shaped what later became Japanese-Ryūkyūan were the Austronesian languages in the early Jōmon period. In the middle Jōmon period, that is around 3,500 BC, Dravidian speakers migrated to Japan and mixed their languages with the Austronesian languages spoken there. In the Yayoi period, finally, Altai-speaking immigrants from Korea reached Japan which led to further hybridization of the Jōmon-Dravidian hybrid language which had emerged in the Japanese archipelago by that time. This new contact situation led to the development of Japanese-Ryūkyūan. Ōno's work proved to be influential in the way that most linguists today consider Austronesian to merely constitute the substratum of Japanese-Ryūkyūan (Shibatani 1990: 103).

The most recent theory on the formation of Japanese posits Japanese as a creole language. Pidgin and creole languages are the result of language contact. Pidgins arise in sustained contact situations as a lingua franca. A pidgin language covers only limited registers and is nobody's native language. It represents a mixture of the languages in contact. Creole languages, on the other hand, are former pidgins that have been acquired by following generations as a native language and serve as their language of identity. The first generation of creole speakers are thus children of pidgin-speaking parents. Through continued usage in a growing number of contexts, creole languages are expanded grammatically and lexically. Creoles are thus fully developed languages and can cover all fields relevant to the communicative needs of their speakers.

Inspired by and based on the work of linguistics such as the above mentioned Polivanov (1974) and Murayama (1978) as well as Chew (1976, 1989), and Maher came forth with the idea of Japanese as a creole, stating that:

Japan's linguistic history cannot be characterized by a linear progression nor by a single event but by successive episodes of language mixing. The view proposed here is that the Japanese language developed as a lingua franca in a multilingual environment. Thus, there is no indexable

substrate language for Japanese since there was no single substrate; instead, Japanese developed from several speech communities possessing more than one language variety. In recasting Japanese as the product of heterogeneous sociolinguistic pressures, I suggest that the most suitable characterization of Japanese is that of a pidgin-creole. (Maher 1996: 31)

Maher thus questioned the prevalent, although rarely openly articulated view, that Japan had been linguistically homogenous in the Yayoi period (300 BC – AD 300). In the absence of a centralized state, Maher argued, multilingualism was the more likely scenario.

It is important to note here that the views of Japanese as a hybrid language or as a creole language are usually not clearly differentiated from one another. There are, however, vast differences between and implications arising from these two different positions. Hybrid languages and pidgin languages both require a bilingual or multilingual context in order to come into existence. The major difference between the two is that pidgins do not serve as an identity marker whereas hybrid languages do. More concretely, pidgin languages emerge as a lingua franca when communication between two different language communities becomes necessary, although the native language continues to serve as the marker of identity. It is only when children acquire this lingua franca as their native language (i.e., as a creole) does this language start to serve as an identity marker. Hybrid languages, on the other hand, arise when two languages are in contact and there is a high percentage of fluent bilingual speakers who, for the sake of forming an identity independent of the other two speech communities involved, chose to create a third, hybrid language (Kaye and Tosco 2003: 22). In hybrid languages, the vocabulary might come from one language, such as from Spanish as in the case of *Medina Lengua*, and the grammar to a large part from another language, in this case, Quechua. The lexicon or grammar of hybrid languages could also come, however, from two languages at the same time, such as in the case of *Medny Aleut* where the lexicon is composed of both *Medny* and *Aleut* (Kaye and Tosco 2003: 99). As mentioned earlier, several hybrid languages are known today. They combine lexicon and grammar to varying degrees in order to create a new language. In short, hybrid languages are not formed for the sake of communication but to set their speakers apart from other speech communities. Other mixed languages include *Cappadocian Greek* (Greek and Turkish), *Jopará* (Guarani and Spanish), *Mbugu* (Cushitic and Bantu), and *Yeniche* (German and Romani). Needless to say, it seems unlikely that a constellation of bilingual speakers in the Yayoi period would have chosen to develop a mixed language for reasons of identity formation.

Before investigating the constraints of the different views on the origin of Japanese-Ryūkyūan in more detail, let us briefly review the research on Ainu genealogy.

Ainu Genealogy

Ainu is typologically an incorporating language and not an agglutinative one such as the Altai language family, the Austronesian language family, Korean, Japanese, or the Ryūkyūan languages. Thus, a shared genealogy between Ainu and one of these languages or language families is rather unlikely. One of the working hypotheses of historical linguistics is that typologically different languages cannot share a parent language.

Ainu is often, albeit loosely, connected to its neighboring languages, Gilyak and Yukagir, and is somehow associated with the Paleo-Siberian languages (Shibatani 1990: 5), in spite of the fact that such a genealogical relationship awaits to be established (Patrie 1982: 6). The myth that the Ainu languages are part of the Indo-European language family is a long-standing and widespread one. There is, nonetheless, no evidence supporting such a view. Vovin (1993) has hypothesized on an Austronesian connection with Ainu, but no satisfactory evidence supporting this view has ever been established (Robbeets 2005: 24). Hattori (1951) speculated on a possible genetic affiliation of Ainu with Japanese-Ryūkyūan, which, if it existed, must have been at a very early stage. According to Hattori, Japanese-Ryūkyūan might be related to Korean, and Japanese-Ryūkyūan/Korean might then related to the Altaic languages. However, if there is any relation at all between Ainu and Japanese-Ryūkyūan, then the connection should be sought beyond this distant point.

On the basis of a sound correspondence with 140 Ainu lexical elements, Patrie (1982) hypothesized on the possibility of an Ainu-Altai linkage, arguing that the initial split occurred between Korean-Ainu and Japanese-Ryūkyūan. In other words, he claimed that Korean and Ainu are more closely related than Korean and Japanese-Ryūkyūan or Ainu and Japanese-Ryūkyūan (Patrie 1982: 121). Therefore, the Altaic elements he proposed to have found in Ainu must have entered directly via Korean and not via Japanese-Ryūkyūan. This presupposes that the Korean-Ainu language split must have occurred on the continent, that is, before Ainu migration to Sakhalin, the Kuriles, and Hokkaidō. While his work is of enormous interest, it has failed to convince other scholars working in the field. As a result, Ainu continues to be regarded as an isolated language family.

Constraints on the Altai and Austronesian Hypotheses

While most of the studies touched upon in the brief review above are in themselves quite convincing, particularly to outsiders of the field, the very existence of several theories calls for a closer inspection of their constraints. Specifically, the likelihood of whether (1) a Japanese-Ryūkyūan genealogy can be established by linking it to either the Altai or Austronesian language families, or (2) whether one must account for the formation of Japanese-

Ryūkyūan by reconstructing influences from several languages and language families deserves attention.

Attempting to solve the genealogy of Japanese by linking it to one specific language family is the more orthodox approach of the two. Thus, let us consider this case first. A major dilemma involving two arguments thereby emerges. Firstly, there are too few cognates to render a language split in the Yayoi period (300 BC – AD 300) a likely scenario and, secondly, the linguistic situation we find in 7th century Japan is too homogenous for a language split to have occurred more recently. If Japanese-Ryūkyūan had split from its sister languages at a period farther back in time than the Yayoi period, we should find many more languages in the Japan archipelago as an effect of language diversification. The conclusion thereof is this: if Japanese were related to one language or language family only, we would have either a much more linguistically diverse situation in Japan or more sets of cognates. Since neither is the case, affiliation to one language family appears unlikely. The only way to support this view is to relate Japanese-Ryūkyūan to an otherwise extinct language or family of languages.

The constraints pointed out above are, as a rule, ignored by scholars working in the field. Hence, unlikely hypotheses abound. One example will serve as an illustration here. Shibatani (1990: 117, with my emphasis in italics) writes: »[T]he likelihood of *an enormous time depth lying between the time of Old Japanese and the time when it was in close affinity with other languages* is perhaps the major reason why the comparative method has not been as effective as in other situations involving languages of recent splits.« On the contrary, nothing in the linguistic situation in Japan in the 7th century hints at a recent split. Rather, the linguistic homogeneity on the Japanese archipelago points out the fact that Japanese-Ryūkyūan is of relatively recent origin. It could have developed no earlier than in the Yayoi period (Hattori 1959, Hudson 1999, Uemura 2003, Beckwith 2004). On the basis of glotto-chronological research, Hattori (1959) pointed out that a Japanese-Ryūkyūan-Korean language split could not have occurred in the Yayoi, but must have been as distant as 4,700 years back in time. It is beyond this point in time that a possible proto-Japanese-Ryūkyūan-Korean – Altai language divergence may have occurred. In other words, based on the analysis of shared cognates, any possible linkage of Japanese-Ryūkyūan to the Altai language family must be fairly distant. As a consequence, Japan should have several hundreds languages resulting from this long period of language diversification.

The possibility of a shared Japanese-Ryūkyūan – Austronesian genealogy appears, at first glance, to be slightly more convincing, since the Austronesian languages are linked to the Jōmon culture (10,000 – 300 BC). This would explain the paucity of cognates. If Japanese originated from the Jōmon languages, however, we should still expect to find several hundred languages in the Japan archipelago. The linguistic situation that we do find is, however,

too homogenous to render credibility to this hypothesis. In view of this problem, it is therefore of little surprise that most scholars today acknowledge that the origin of Japanese-Ryūkyūan must be accounted for by more than one source (Heinrich 2002: 108). Nonetheless, in concrete terms, only few scholars such as Ōno (1980) attempt to link Japanese to two or more sources. Most scholars continue to work on one single source, acknowledging only in passing, the possibility of influences from other language families due to language contact (see e.g. Miller 1971).

To decide whether a hybrid language or a mixed language scenario would have been more likely for the formation of Japanese-Ryūkyūan, we need to know much more about the period in which these languages were shaped. For the reasons given above, this could have taken place only in the Yayoi period (300 BC – AD 300).

3. Migration and Communication in the Yayoi Period

No one studying the Jōmon period (10,000 BC – 300 BC) doubts today that the Japanese archipelago was multilingual at the time (e.g., Kidder 1993, Barnes 1999, Uemura 2003).

The Japanese archipelago was populated then by hunting and gathering communities with no or very limited contacts to the outside world. Hunter and gatherers have distinctive communicative needs that shape the linguistic situation of such communities. Retracing the language history of the world, (Ostler 2005: 9–10) wrote that

[...] before the discovery and expansion of agriculture, human communities were small bands, just as the remaining groupings of hunter-gatherers are to this day. These groups all have languages [...]. The density of the human population, wherever people are living, would have been far less than it is today. It is a commonplace of historical linguistics that related languages diverge when contact ceases between groups, so we can also presume that in this early period each self-sufficient community, of up to a few thousand people, would by and large have had its own language.

Language historians assume that the number of languages once spoken must have been as much as one hundred times greater than today and that language diversity started to shrink dramatically to the 6,000 spoken languages of the present day when humans became sedentary farmers.

Linguistic uniformity in the Yayoi period is often taken for granted. As a rule, no explanation behind this assumption is given. The linguistically homogenous situation on the Japanese mainland in the 7th century, when the first written traces of Japanese show up, has apparently led scholars to assume that the islands have been strictly monolingual since the end of the Jōmon period. There are, however, others who doubt this view. Maher (1996: 40), for instance, wrote that there is »no reason to believe that there was a

single Yayoi language«, and pointed out that there was almost a millennium of migration to the archipelago.

Migration movements from the late Jōmon period to the 8th century are attested to by genetic, historiographical, philological, and archaeological evidence. Hanihara (1991, 1992) has convincingly argued in favor of a dual-structure hypothesis underlying the formation of the Japanese. Analyzing the distribution of blood groups, serum proteins, viruses, and mitochondrial DNA, Hanihara showed that the Jōmon, Ainu, and Ryūkyū populations display genetic differences when compared to the Yayoi immigrants and to modern mainland Japanese. Furthermore, Jōmon, Ainu, and Ryūkyūans cluster genetically with Southeast Asians, while the Yayoi and mainland Japanese cluster with northeast Asians. Japan's oldest extant chronicle, the *Kojiki* (712), and the oldest official history, the *Nihon shoki* (720), both include legends reflecting military invasions from Kyūshū, the center of the Yayoi immigration, to the central Kinai region on Honshū. In these works we also find accounts depicting ongoing emigration from the Asian continent, in particular the immigration of two powerful clans of Chinese origin, the Aya and the Hata, who settled in the northeastern end of Honshū (Lewin 1962). Migration movements at that time were responsible for driving the Ainu continually northwards. Studies in biological anthropology and archaeology also support large-scale migration to Japan during the Yayoi period (Hudson 1999). The incoming immigrants then spread from Kyūshū to the central parts of Honshū. Barnes (1999: 176) observes that a new kind of pottery and an agricultural society

[...] expanded explosively throughout the western insular lowlands. This diffusive process is usually understood by archaeologists in terms of actual migration of Yayoi people out of Kyushu – a reasonable hypothesis since the new agricultural technology surely triggered a population boom on the circumscribed plains of north Kyushu. Nevertheless, how these Yayoi people interacted with the Jomon people already ensconced in the western Islands in the 3rd and 2nd century BC is as yet a little-explored topic.

Insights into the interactions between the Jōmon people and the Yayoi immigrants are of utmost importance when studying the formation of Japanese-Ryūkyūan, as it was the very advance of the Yayoi that had unifying effects on the linguistic situation (Takeuchi 1999: 4). Hokkaidō (Barnes 1999) and the Ryūkyū Islands (Uemura 2003), in particular Miyako and Yae-yama, were less strongly influenced by Yayoi culture. Wet rice farming and social stratification emerged there much later. Although the view that the transition from the Jōmon to the Yayoi period was caused by continental migration is undisputed nowadays, quantifying the extent of migration at that time is extremely difficult (Barnes 1999: 171). So far, Hanihara (1987) is the only one to have proposed a migration model for the Yayoi period.

According to Hanihara, the most plausible scenario appears to be an average influx of 1,300 Yayoi migrants per year between 300 BC and AD 700. He thus calculated a total number of 1.3 million Yayoi immigrants to Japan in the course of one millennium, taking into account an annual population growth of 0.2% of those already residing in the archipelago. Within 1,000 years, the population rose from 160,000 to 5.4 million inhabitants. Accordingly, the Jōmon-Yayoi population ratio would have risen from 100% Jōmon in 300 BC to 1:4.7 Jōmon to Yayoi in ad 700. It is in this specific context of Jōmon and Yayoi contact that we have to discuss the formation of Japanese-Ryūkyūan.

4. The Yayoi Period: Language Shift or Creolization?

The hypotheses of an Altai or an Austronesian genealogy of Japanese were initially formulated before anything about the Yayoi migration to Japan was known or before the implications of the Yayoi artifacts for the prehistory of Japan were fully understood. Up to now, most approaches to solving the genealogy of Japanese-Ryūkyūan pay little, if any, attention to the communicative problems that arose due to Yayoi immigration. All those trying to elucidate the formation of Japanese via its genealogy, to either the Altai or to the Austronesian languages, implicitly assumes that language shift took place in the Yayoi period (300 BC – AD 300). The fact that the Japanese language emerged over the course of a millennium of immigration to Japan makes it essential to consider the linguistic situation at that time more thoroughly. Specifically, the issue is whether Japanese is the result of a shift from the Jōmon to Yayoi languages or if it was formed by a creolization process. As mentioned above, the linguistic situation in the Yayoi period makes it extremely unlikely that it came into being as a hybrid language. Therefore, a closer look at how pidgin and creole languages emerge is necessary here.

Pidgin and creole languages are not unknown in the Japanese context. Several such varieties exist today, for example, Hualien-Pidgin-Japanese in Taiwan or the Hawai'i-Creole-English once spoken by Japanese immigrants in Hawai'i. Furthermore, pidgins are also known to have formed in Japan itself, as is evidenced by the Japanese-Pidgin-Englises in Yokohama and Nagasaki. In the case of the Ogasawara Islands, an English creole developed there and is still spoken by the old generation. There can be no doubt that in the Yayoi period countless pidgins must have also formed as an effect of language contact resulting from the Yayoi immigrants' advance from northern Kyūshū into the central parts of Japan. The crucial questions are these: What happened to these pidgins? Did they evolve into creole languages? Or were they replaced by a Yayoi language in the following generations?

The very fact that migration continued over the course of one thousand years suggests that the communication problems ensuing from Yayoi migra-

tion could not have been settled quickly but that communicative solutions needed to be created throughout this entire period of time. Since a few settlers in the Japanese archipelago might already have had some knowledge of the Yayoi languages due to former contacts, different pidgins and creoles must have sprung up over the centuries (Maher 1996: 34). In view of this millennium of migration, Koizumi (1998) was skeptical of whether the languages of the Yayoi could have replaced the Jōmon languages rapidly and argued that the idea of a possible connection between Japanese-Ryūkyūan and the Jōmon languages should not be dismissed too quickly.

As mentioned before, pidgins are nobody's first language. They are jointly fabricated in »non-intimate social contexts between groups of unequal power« (Holm 2000: 68). Note that the power of a group and not its number of speakers is crucial here. The contact situations between the Jōmon populations and the Yayoi immigrants are constellations in which the Yayoi had more power due to their cultural superiority, although they were outnumbered for many centuries by the Jōmon population. In the case of the Yayoi period, numerous Jōmon-Pidgin-Yayoi languages must have formed, many of which did not allow for mutual intelligibility because different solutions to communication problems emerged.

How should we imagine communication in the Yayoi period? Certainly, the pidgin languages that arose due to Jōmon-Yayoi contact were not full fledged languages but covered only those registers in which Jōmon-Yayoi communication was necessary. Consequently, these varieties enjoyed little prestige in either the Jōmon and Yayoi speech communities where the native languages continued to serve as the language of identity. The genetic make-up of modern Japanese shows that at some point the Jōmon and Yayoi populations started to mix. The descendants of Jōmon-Yayoi parents must have spoken their parents' pidgin as their first language in many cases. In other words, they became speakers of creole, developing these languages with regard to language system, lexicon, and its range of registers. Such creole languages served as the language of identity and were passed on to the following generations. These languages became, as a result, more complex during the course of time. Migration movements within Japan must have led to numerous creole-creole contact situations. Furthermore, due to the continuous arrival of new immigrants, these languages must have been subject to the constant process of relexification, that is, the replacement of existing words with new words. Quite contrary to the ideas of Hudson (1999: 84) who believes that Japanese must either be an Altaic or an Austronesian language despite the Jōmon-Yayoi language contact, creole languages are known to have »overlapping memberships« (*Doppelzugehörigkeit*) (Stein 1984: 102). In other words, they have an affiliation to their lexical and grammatical source language(s) as well as to their own language family, i.e. Jōmon-Creole-Yayoi. Such constellations have never been considered in historical

comparative linguistics, for in the tradition of historical comparative linguistics, kinship among languages are established on the premise that the core of a language's grammar and vocabulary is derived from one single source. Creole languages, thus, do not have parent languages from the standpoint of historical comparative linguistics. Moreover, through the processes of simplification and contact, pidgin and creole languages eradicate a large number of the linguistic features that would otherwise reveal their linkage to the languages involved in the contact situation. It is possible that exactly this happened on the Japanese archipelago in the Yayoi period (300 BC – AD 300).

The processes responsible for the formation of pidgin and creole languages are hotly debated in contact linguistics. There are two general positions. One faction, most prominently represented by Bickerton (1981), argues in favor of a universalist or bio-program hypothesis. In other words, it is thought that innate and abstract universal grammar rules form the basic framework of the pidgin and creole language structures. Pidgin and creole languages thus make use of the abstract rules underlying all natural languages while using the lexicon of one, two, or more languages involved in the given contact situation. The ideas of Bickerton and his followers are challenged by supporters of the substratum language hypothesis, that is, those who believe that one of the languages involved serves as the grammatical matrix from which the new language is developed (see Muysken and Smith 1986). In this case, the emerging creole is seen as being the direct result of the confrontation of three (or more) language systems in question (language A, language B, A-Creole-B). Usually the native language, in our case the Jōmon languages, leaves strong traces in the emerging creole grammar, while the newly arrived language (here, a Yayoi language) provides the major part of the lexicon (Kaye and Tosco 2003: 58).

If the supporters of the bio-program hypothesis are right, it should be possible, in principle, to draw up an inventory of structural features that all pidgin and creole languages share. This has, however, never been achieved. In other words, it is not possible to tell from the structure of the Japanese-Ryūkyūan languages whether they are creole languages or not. Holm (2000: 240) considered a compromise between the universalist and the substratum hypothesis, stating that creoles appear to »function like any other languages in developing a systematicity and complexity of their own which is, in the final analysis, something quite distinct from that of either their superstrate or their substrate«. In any case, research into the creole languages of the Atlantic and the Pacific have proven that these languages cannot simply be related to the European colonial languages (Muysken and Smith 1986). If the Japanese-Ryūkyūan languages are themselves the result of creolization processes, the question of their *genealogy* is an invalid one. It needs to be replaced by investigations on the *formation* of Japanese-Ryūkyūan.

5. Lessons from Japanese-Ryūkyūan Genealogy Studies

So far, undisputed sound correspondences along the lines of historical comparative linguistics have not been established, this being the only existing means of linking Japanese-Ryūkyūan to any other language or language family. Therefore Japanese-Ryūkyūan continues to be regarded as an otherwise isolated language family. The present paper argues that more attention needs to be directed to speakers and their communicative needs in prehistoric Japan. The formation of the Japanese language should not be seen as a specific event but as a process that took an entire millennium to complete. To further elucidate the formation of Japanese-Ryūkyūan, the following questions need to be clarified. Until now, these issues have not been put on the research agenda of historical linguistics in the Japanese context.

- More needs to be known about the Jōmon-Yayoi contact situations, for example, the number of immigrants, and their distribution over time and space, from disciplines such as archaeology, anthropology, and philology. Deeper insights into these issues would make it possible to conclude more firmly whether a language shift took place, or whether it was due to a creolization process. Such information is also important in understanding which languages would have served as the grammatical sources, and which ones as the lexical.
- It needs to be determined how far southward the Ainu languages ever extended on the Japanese archipelago. It has been speculated that Ainu was once spoken all the way down to the Ryūkyū Islands and that toponyms such as Sonai on Yonaguni and Pinai on Ishigaki may have Ainu origins (Uemura 2003: 177).
- Dialectology and the formation of the varieties of Japanese-Ryūkyūan can provide important insights as well. The major question is in which ways the differences between regional languages and language varieties found on the Japanese archipelago today can be accounted for by the languages that were spoken there in prehistoric times.
- More detailed information on the formation and development of the Ryūkyūan languages would provide us important insights into the formation of the Japanese-Ryūkyūan language family. Questions such as when and where the Ryūkyūan languages first emerged remain largely unresolved (Uemura 2003: 171). This is partly due to the fact that the Ryūkyūan languages continue to be treated as dialects rather than languages in their own right in much of Japanese linguistics. In particular, the huge differences between the languages spoken in the Miyako and Yaeyama island groups on one hand and those spoken in the Amami and Okinawa island groups on the other represent an interesting issue with regard to the formation of Japanese-Ryūkyūan.

- Models from the field of creole linguistics, which would predict when a language shift or creolization took place, would be appreciated. Chaudenson (1995), for instance, draws attention to the fact that Spanish-based creoles are largely absent despite the long history of Spanish colonialism. Thus, while a French-based creole emerged in the French part of Haiti, no creole has emerged in the Spanish part of the islands, i.e., today's Dominican Republic. The existence of a policy to spread the Spanish language in the colonies of Spain appears to have been essential for triggering language shifts in its colonies, while the absence of such a language policy led to creolization in the French part. Needless to say, language policies did not exist in prehistoric times, and prehistoric creolization, as a consequence, must have occurred more often than is commonly assumed.
- Finally, it should be realized and accepted that many genealogy studies have been highly influenced by nation-imagining ideology that has claimed linguistic unity in Japan (Oguma 2002). Much of the historical linguistic research today continues to spout this view despite the fact that Japan is multilingual and has always been (Maher 1995). This monolingual bias can be ascertained in statements such as Takeuchi's (1999: 6, my emphasis added) comment on the possibility of more than one language being used in the Yayoi period: » [...] linguistic diversity – *the exact nature of which is unknown* [...]«. On the contrary, it appears more and more probable that linguistic unity in that period was highly unlikely.

With respect to the 150 years of research into the genealogy of Japanese-Ryūkyūan, the results that we have today are rather disillusioning. It seems that the question of Japanese-Ryūkyūan genealogy cannot be solved by the existing methodologies of historical comparative linguistics. Moreover, it appears that the very question of the genealogy of Japanese-Ryūkyūan might be an invalid one. This was pointed out as early as the 1930s when Tokieda (1932: 211) criticized large parts of modern Japanese linguistics for naively applying Western research questions to a Japanese context. He argued that it needs to be considered whether research questions such as genealogy, which had arisen in a Western context, are applicable to the Japanese context. Tokieda had a point there.

Creole languages are inappropriate objects of research in genealogy studies within the framework of historical-comparative linguistics. On the formation of pidgin and creole languages on one hand and the method of historical-comparative linguistics on the other, Rickford (1992: 224) wrote that the

[...] usual focus in historical/comparative linguistics is on very old languages, assumed to have descended genetically from a smaller number of proto-languages by gradual linguistic divergence; by contrast, extant pidgins and creoles are relatively young languages [...] in which change has been rapid and primarily convergent, particularly in their formative periods. Pidgins and creole languages challenge some of the basic as-

sumptions of historical/comparative linguistics – e.g., that all languages can be genetically classified, or that language mixture is limited and rare.

Kaye and Tosco (2003: 100–102) also pointed out that creolization processes prior to colonization have not yet been sufficiently studied and that this constitutes a new and challenging field to historical linguistics; this includes evidence that can only be discerned from accounts of the socio-historical situations which gave rise to pre-colonial pidgins and creoles.

It will always be impossible to prove irrefutably that creolization processes underlie the prehistoric formation of a given languages. (Note, however, that in the Japanese context, the same applies to proving that it was instead a language shift in prehistory). All that can be done is to summarize all evidence on the formation of a specific language and to weigh the arguments to decide whether a prehistoric creolization process or a pre-historic language shift took place. The present paper comes to the conclusion that it is highly likely that Japanese developed and emerged as a Jōmon-Creole-Yayoi during the course of the millennium of Yayoi immigration and must be considered more seriously by scholars in the field than it has been done so far. Furthermore, the idea of Japanese being a hybrid language, such as for instance Medina Lengua or Medny Aleut, is untenable. This must be refuted. If Japanese-Ryūkyūan are mixed languages, then the languages became mixed to overcome communicative problems (creolization) and not to overcome identity problems (hybridization).

Scholars in the field of historical-comparative linguistics must account for why they consider Japanese-Ryūkyūan to have developed from one single source. Since the Jōmon languages cannot be regarded as the ancestor languages from which Japanese-Ryūkyūan derived, the split from Japanese-Ryūkyūan from the other languages of their language family must have occurred in the Yayoi period (300 BC – AD 300). For, if Japanese-Ryūkyūan were related to a single source, there would be sufficient cognates. The fact that these do not exist point to two conclusions: (1) Either Japanese-Ryūkyūan is not related to a single language family, i.e. it is a creole, or (2) Japanese-Ryūkyūan is the sole surviving language of an otherwise extinct language family. Future studies on the origin or the formation of Japanese-Ryūkyūan must concentrate on these two possibilities. While the question of the origin of Japanese-Ryūkyūan remains unresolved, it continues to represent a relevant and challenging issue in the field of Japanese Studies, for what the Japanese once were and what they spoke can be put to good use in the redefinition of the Japanese identity in this age of globalization and internationalization.

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Takara Kurayoshi

Mainstream and Future Tasks of Studies in Ryūkyūan History

1. The Five Stages of Okinawan Studies

The study of Ryūkyūan history already looks back on one hundred and twenty years of accumulated achievements and shows a number of characteristic stages in its evolution.

The first stage was strongly related to the political incidents in 1879, i.e., the abolishment of the Kingdom of Ryūkyū and the establishment of the Okinawa Prefecture by the modern state of Japan. On that occasion there was a clear necessity to illuminate the history and culture of the islands of Ryūkyū, which were about to be integrated into the Japanese territory. In the wake of the establishment of the Okinawa Prefecture, the historical background of Ryūkyū needed to be elucidated for the purpose of assessing, reforming and adapting the traditional system of the Ryūkyūan kingdom to the Japanese system. As a result, investigation as well as research were mainly entrusted to Japanese government officials and marked by their political and administrative intentions.

The publications *Okinawa-shi* (»The History of Okinawa«, published in 1877) by Ijichi Sadaka, a native of Kagoshima who took part in the establishment of the Okinawa Prefecture, and *Okinawa-ken kyūkan sozei seido* (»Traditional systems of taxation in Okinawa Prefecture«) by various prefectural officials (Shuku 1882), who had come to Okinawa from the main islands of Japan, are representative of this stage. Ijichi's work introduces the history, culture and geography of Ryūkyū, which was to be included in the Japanese state. The report prepared by the Okinawa Prefectural Administration consisted of investigations into the old systems of taxation from the time of the Kingdom of Ryūkyū that treated them as objects of reformation.

A collection of essays by Iha Fuyū, published in 1911 under the title *Ko-Ryūkyū* (»Old Ryūkyū«), represents the second stage. It was an age of active research conducted by indigenous academics, aiming to assure their own identity. While accepting that Okinawa was part of the Japanese state, these authors claimed that the region of Okinawa was highly unique, one that could not be satisfied by the given role as one of many Japanese prefectures. They emphasized the dual nature of Okinawa seen from the historical and cultural point of view and the fact that Okinawa existed »within Japan« as well as »outside Japan«.

Iha Fuyū and his contemporaries started their work at a time when the old systems of Ryūkyū had been completely abolished and Okinawa Prefecture had been fully integrated into the framework of modern Japan. As Okinawa had become one of Japan's prefectures, its inhabitants had acquired a sense of being »Japanese«, while at the same time keeping a stronger sense of their regional identity than in any other part of the country. They lived with a double identity. Research into Okinawa's history and culture was a way of practically engaging with this issue. Apart from Iha, other scholars representative of this period were Majikina Ankō and Higashionna Kanjun.

The third stage began with the publication of Yanagita Kunio's work *Kainan shōki* (»Short description from south of the sea«) in 1925, marking the beginning of Okinawa's recognition as an important entity in the research of the *kosō* (»ancient strata«) of Japanese culture. While it was still accepted that Okinawan studies should help to shore up the identity of Okinawans, these studies were now also valued as an indispensable part of research into ancient Japan. The discipline was now evaluated from a »Pan-Japanese« perspective.

Yanagita Kunio organized a study group of Okinawan studies in Tokyo and emphasized the importance of Okinawan cultural studies in its journals and in his books. Due to his influence as the leading figure in contemporary folklore studies, Okinawa began to draw the attention of mainly Japanese anthropologists. Many research reports and papers were written on the subject, which share the general view on Okinawan culture, not as a distinct entity of its own, but as a resource for investigating the »ancient strata« of Japanese culture.

The fourth stage consists of a research trend that emerged from Okinawa's peculiar situation after the Second World War. As a result of Japan's defeat, Okinawa was separated from the area of Japanese administration and placed under direct U.S. military rule. This condition prevailed for 27 years, from 1945 until 1972, but the Okinawan people themselves led an active political movement that protested against US rule and in favor of a return to Japan. The Okinawan Studies of this period characteristically focused on elucidating »why we [i.e. the people of Okinawa] desire a return to Japan«. Concerning history and culture, they heatedly argued that Japan was the mother country of Okinawa and therefore the islands were an inseparable part of Japan.

The policy of »de-Japanization«, which was one of the fundamental elements of the American administration of Okinawa, formed the background of this trend. The Americans had decided that Okinawa and Japan were culturally different entities, and that separating the former from the latter and placing it under their own direct administrative rule would not infringe upon the identity of the Okinawan people. Institutions set up by the U.S. Government like the »Government of Ryukyu«, the »Bank of Ryukyu«, or »Ryukyu University« all bore the name of Ryūkyū, while the term »Okinawa« was no

longer used. In contrast, the powers opposing US administration and demanding a return to Japan without exception used the name »Okinawa«, styling themselves as »Okinawan Teacher's Union« or »Council for the Return of Okinawa Prefecture to the Motherland«, and the like. It is ironic that under U.S. administration, »Ryūkyū« and »Okinawa« politically opposed each other. Okinawan Studies in this period was part of the antithesis towards American intentions.

The return of Okinawa to Japan in 1972 marked the beginning of the fifth stage, which continues until today. This period saw a rapid progress in research, with accumulating results, which shall be analyzed in closer detail below.

2. Major Changes in the Studies of Pre-Modern History

Studies in Ryūkyūan history conducted around 1972 had two special features. One was the appearance of young researchers of the post-war generation, who contributed to the rapid progress of the study of modern history. The main themes of the research were the abolishment of the Kingdom of Ryūkyū and the establishment of the Okinawan prefecture, as well as the process of »Japanization«. In the spring of 1879, the Kingdom of Ryūkyū, which had existed for about 500 years, was forcibly integrated into Japan and the Prefecture of Okinawa was born. The archipelago that had become Okinawa Prefecture and its inhabitants were required to adjust themselves; structures and mentalities had to become »Japanese«. Step by step, the process of »Japanization« evolved. This problem was examined by young Okinawan researchers who had studied history in Japan, and subsequently began to present many remarkable theses. The journal *Kindai Okinawa no rekishi to minshū* [History and the people in modern Okinawa] published by members of the Research Society of Okinawan History (1970), is a work representative of this period. Exemplary scholars are Kinjō Seitoku, Gabe Masao, Hiyane Teruo, or Nishizato Kikō, who started to publish prolifically from the end of the 1960s. As university students, Kinjō and Nishizato had studied Chinese history, Gabe and Hiyane modern Japanese history. They very profoundly analyzed Okinawan history from that basis.

Modern historians did not so much see the inclusion of Ryūkyū into Japan in 1879 as a justified »integration of a people«, but took issue with its elements of violence and state authoritarianism. They began to portray the realities of the modern history of Okinawa and its contradictions, based on the verification of several problems that had emerged during the process of »Japanization« following the establishment of the Okinawa Prefecture. The argument that Japan was Okinawa's motherland quickly lost credibility.

Another characteristic of the study of Ryūkyūan history around 1972 was that the field of pre-modern history fell far behind the study of modern his-

tory. Classic publications dating from before the Second World War, represented by the works of Iha Fuyū, were still widely accepted as established works and hardly any new studies appeared. By and large, the study of modern history had reached a high standard, yet the subject of pre-modern history remained stagnant with few creative approaches. The works *Shin Okinawa-shi ron* [A new theory of Okinawan history] by Araki Moriaki, and *Ryūkyū no jidai* [The epoch of Ryūkyū] by Takara Kurayoshi, both published in 1980, marked a genuine attempt to break this dominant pattern. Araki and Takara summarized the hitherto known research and submitted the following insights concerning pre-modern history:

Japan and Okinawa may share common »ancient strata« of their culture. But what was more important was the emergence of a completely different state form compared to the mediaeval Japanese state, namely the Kingdom of Ryūkyū, encompassing the islands of Okinawa, from the 12th to the 16th century. The Kingdom of Ryūkyū had its own ruling system and created its own regional principles, whilst maintaining cultural exchange with China and other Asian countries. Araki and Takara consciously differentiated this period of the appearance of the Ryūkyū Kingdom on the Asian stage by calling it »Old Ryūkyū« (*ko-Ryūkyū*), in comparison to the term *chūsei* (»mediaeval«), commonly applied to the same period in Japanese history. In the spring of 1609, Okinawa was attacked and defeated by the Satsuma army. Araki and Takara apply the term »Early Modern Ryūkyū« to the subsequent 270 years up to 1879, explaining that Ryūkyū managed to maintain its system of kingship during this period, whilst being a dependency vis-à-vis the two states of China and Japan, each on a different level. The establishment of the Okinawa Prefecture in the spring of 1879 was a measure to complete the incorporation process of the islands, hitherto called Ryūkyū, into Japan. It replaced the Ryūkyūan kingship with leadership under the modern Japanese state, as well as instigated the resulting break in the diplomatic relations with China. Araki and Takara positioned the incorporation into Japan of the independent kingdom of Ryūkyū, which was established in the »Old Ryūkyū« period, as a process that took place in two separate steps: the first the period of Early Modern Ryūkyū, the second the events of 1879. Owing to their vision of history, the study of early modern history, which had hitherto been conducted on a low level, was finally able to connect to the standard upheld by the research of modern history.

3. New Tendencies in Research

After the problem had been stated by Araki and Takara, the study of Early Modern Okinawan History experienced great changes, and its development even exceeded that of the study of modern history. One trend was the emergence of an even younger generation of researchers than those involved in the

study of modern history. They initiated full-fledged research into the real aspects of the Kingdom of Ryūkyū at various levels. Clarification of the domestic situation of the Kingdom of Ryūkyū and research into the history of its exchange with Asian countries such as China and Japan made rapid progress. Uehara Kenzen, Dana Masayuki, Tomiyama Kazuyuki, Maehira Fusaki, and Asato Susumu were representative of the researchers at the time. Uehara investigated the relations between Ryūkyū and Satsuma, Dana the domestic system, Tomiyama and Maehira Ryūkyū's relations with Japan and China, and Asato the establishment of the Kingdom of Ryūkyū.

While it is true that researchers hailing from Okinawa played a major part in the study of Ryūkyūan early modern history, the participation of researchers from mainland Japan and foreign countries in this subject deserves to be mentioned as the second trend, which led to many excellent results. For 15 years now, researchers from Taiwan, China, and Korea have vigorously published works on the history of the exchange between the Ryūkyū and other Asian countries. The study of Ryūkyūan history has by now become an »open stage«, on which researchers from various backgrounds participate.

The third trend was the exhaustive collection of data material that is indispensable in assessing early modern history, much of which was later published. There is no doubt that it brought great improvement to the convenience of research studies. This movement has been apparent since the 1980s, and by now there are so many existing publications that it is increasingly difficult to digest all of them. Examples are the *Ryūkyū ōkoku hyōjōshomonjo*, a collection of administrative documents from the Kingdom of Ryūkyū (Ryūkyū Ōkoku Hyōjōsho Monjo Henshū Inkai 1988–2003), the *Rekidai hōan*, a collection of diplomatic documents (Okinawa Kenritsu Toshokan 1992–2006), or various collections of family chronicles.

The fourth trend was the efforts of local self-governing bodies all over the inner territories of Okinawa to compile their own history, which has become popular since the 1980s. Through this work, which was conducted on all levels from the prefectural government down to cities, townships, and villages, various kinds of pre-modern historical sources that had lain forgotten in each region were dug up and many of which subsequently published. This last step broadened the landscape of historical information immensely. But the fruits of this history compilation did not stop at broadening the basis of available source materials. A new way of looking at the whole of Ryūkyūan history from a local viewpoint was established through the consideration of local history. Thus it became possible to examine the anatomy of Ryūkyūan history from within. Together with three younger researchers, I have conducted an investigation of this movement. In our report *Okinawa-ken ni okeru chiiki rekishisho hankō jigyō no seika to sono igi* [Results of the efforts to publish local historical materials in Okinawa Prefecture and their meaning]

(2003), we clarified its major points and compiled a database of relevant materials.

The fifth trend is the increasing number of symposia and conferences, which has led to an active exchange of information and opinions. This might seem only natural in the academic world, but indeed was quite a rare occurrence in the field of Ryūkyūan History in the 1970s. To cite one example, there has been an annual international conference held since 1986 that was targeted by Okinawan, Taiwanese, and Chinese researchers. This conference has been held in such locations as Naha, Taipei, Fujian, and Beijing, offering a venue for an exchange of the latest research on the history of the Chinese-Ryūkyūan relationship. International conferences such as this were nowhere to be seen in the study of Ryūkyūan history prior to the 1970s. It is a new movement symbolic of the trend of the fifth stage.

4. Intentions of the ›Old Ryūkyū‹ Theory

The characteristic achievement of the fifth stage in the study of Ryūkyūan history was that it revealed the rich and manifold nature of early modern Ryūkyūan history through careful reassessment of Okinawa's actual condition before its incorporation into Japan in 1879, whilst introducing the Asian viewpoint. In other words, it pursued the actual nature of Okinawa prior to the Japanese annexation on the one hand, whilst determining the historical significance of the Ryūkyūan Kingdom that vanished with the 1879 incident, on the other. Here I would like to focus on my own steps within this current research. After returning to Okinawa from studying on the Japanese mainland in 1973, I traveled extensively within the regions and islands of Okinawa, beginning my research by bringing to light and investigating buried materials. The material I gathered was not a huge amount, yet all richly transmitted the realities of farm life or the regional government systems during the era of the Ryukyuan Kingdom. I also traveled to the islands of Amami (contemporary Kagoshima Prefecture, Amami Island region), which belonged to the territory of the Ryukyuan Kingdom until ceded to Satsuma as a penalty for the defeat of Ryukyu, to find precious material dating from the Ryūkyūan rule. In addition to that, I actively participated in the local-history-compilation campaign headed by the Okinawa Prefecture and its cities, towns, and villages. My effort not only resulted in publishing the various, newly confirmed, assembled material, but my experience gave me the opportunity to gain a comprehensive view of Ryūkyū Islands history, based upon the knowledge of concrete circumstances in various regions. I also spared no effort in attempting to introduce the Asian viewpoint into the study of Ryūkyūan history. In 1974, I conducted research on Southeast Asia for the first time (to be more precise, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, etc.), tracing the history of Southeast Asian relations with Ryūkyū. Upon my first visit to

China in 1981, I conducted field research in areas and sites that had strong ties to Ryūkyū. Since then, I have been given many opportunities to conduct research in Southeast Asia and China. Yet the task I pursued most energetically was to set up a network with Chinese researchers. The organization of various projects and symposia, or international academic congresses, was based on my efforts to establish a standpoint that enabled the assessment of the history of Ryūkyūan-Chinese relations that considered the viewpoints and interests of both parties involved. Throughout these ongoing activities I pursued the issue of how the Kingdom of Ryūkyū was shaped as an individual state during the 'Old Ryūkyū' period, with its background of networks with other Asian nations. In my work *Ryūkyū no jidai* [The epoch of Ryūkyū] I emphasized the history of Ryūkyū during the »Old Ryūkyū« period as a period generally excluded from Japanese history, a history »foreign« to the »standard history of Japan«. This was done with the critical purpose of clarifying the issue of the »image of Japan«, one recognized by the greater part of the Japanese people. It was a critique of an attitude that merely extracts and evaluates the component of the »old Japanese strata« within Okinawa and that takes an uninterrupted genealogy of Japanese state tradition since antiquity for granted. The essence of this attitude is that it devalues the history and culture of Okinawa in its entirety as something »local« and »peculiar«, except for and despite the part of »ancient strata« that it valued highly in a general Japanese context. I strongly sensed a danger of Okinawan values being sealed in the super-historical category called »ancient strata«, whilst the entirety of Okinawa would be undermined if this type of attitude was allowed to prevail. Even if there were a framework of Japanese state tradition unbroken since antiquity, it would belong to the past. Japan, after the incorporation of Okinawa in 1879, should at least be seen as an entity that comprises a region, Okinawa, which possesses a distinctly individual character. I have consistently argued that, after the events of 1879, we have to think of Japan as including the individual entity of Okinawa with the addition of various other elements and, ever since, being in a state of constant evolution. It has been necessary to firmly elevate the image of the epoch of the Kingdom of Ryūkyū, and introduce the new category of 'Old Ryūkyū' as a replacement for the older notion of »ancient strata«.

5. Future Tasks

The study of Ryūkyūan history is conducted in a more refined manner these days and its results maintain a high level. Foreign and native researchers commonly accept the significance of this kind of research. It has developed into a flourishing academic field in a way unimaginable thirty years ago. Needless to say, there are a multitude of future tasks left to be done. As to the fields of early modern history, the history of shipbuilding, naval tech-

nology, industry, and science, there have been almost no studies within these fields at all. It will also be necessary to position Ryūkyū within the network of Asian sea areas and to examine the real existence of Ryūkyū from the open viewpoint of pan-Asian history, and not persist on a rigid position for Ryūkyūan history. Confirming the existence of these researches in individual fields, as well as the problem of the paradigm, I would still like to focus on the existence of two other tasks.

First of all the task of compiling a volume of comprehensive Ryūkyūan history of a certain prestige and competence based on the latest academic results and suitable for a broad audience. Moreover, this volume of Ryūkyūan history should not only be published in English, but also translated into Chinese and Korean at the very least, to provide information to foreign researchers. There are many publications on the history of Ryūkyū, but unfortunately no volume fulfilling these conditions has yet been published. In 2004, six authors including myself have contributed to the history volume *Okinawa-ken no rekishi* [The history of the Prefecture Okinawa]. This work nevertheless still contains many problems in its contents and structure, and the task of a less flawed history remains, and so does the realization of any translation into foreign languages.

The second task is the necessity to consider the fundamental problem of the significance of Ryūkyūan history studies for present-day Okinawa. It is true that the study of Ryūkyūan history continues to develop as an academic subject through its fifth stage and has become an »open arena« for all researchers, foreign and native alike. This development has been pure delight to a researcher dedicated to Ryūkyūan history such as myself. The task I would like to indicate is the necessity to provide answers to the question of why the study of Ryūkyūan history is important to Okinawa, not only based on the process of all four stages that this subject has hitherto experienced, but also as a problem of the fifth stage. Why is Okinawa part of Japan? How should Japan and Asia conceive a future Okinawa? Researchers of Ryūkyūan history should have their own opinions concerning these important questions. But another important problem remains: how can the significance of discussing Okinawa as an historical entity assure the contemporary as well as the future state of Okinawa? Native historians from Okinawa, at least, should be aware of this problem. Contributions towards this task cannot be measured in the numbers of papers or the evaluation within academic society. The historian is also challenged to deliver responsible actions as a member of present society, as a person belonging to the contemporary age.

From the Japanese by Tomoe Steineck

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Gregory Smits

Recent Trends in Scholarship on the History of Ryūkyū's Relations with China and Japan

The concrete details of Ryūkyū's foreign relations – its interactions with Ming and Qing China on the one hand and Satsuma and the *bakufu* on the other – are the key to understanding royal authority between 1609 and 1879. The changing nature of royal authority is also the key to comprehending the logic behind the major changes that took place in Ryūkyūan society and domestic politics during this time. Ryūkyū's foreign relations serve as a lens through which we can view the limits of Satsuma's power and the extent of Ryūkyūan autonomy. Zooming out and looking at the broader context of East Asia, the lens of Ryūkyūan foreign relations can provide insights into the nature of the kingdom's larger neighbors. Tomiyama Kazuyuki (2004: 302–303), for example, concludes *Ryūkyū ōkoku no gaikō to ōken* in part by characterizing Japan's *bakuhān* state as a »small empire«, one that included foreign countries and peoples from Hokkaidō through the Ryūkyū Islands. Tomiyama's main task, however, is not to use Ryūkyū to shed light on Japan or China, but to examine Ryūkyūan autonomy and royal authority through the details of foreign relations, broadly defined. Early-modern (*kinsei*) Ryūkyū existed as a quasi-autonomous country because of its active engagement with a far-flung network of foreign relations. The major trend in recent studies of Ryūkyūan history has been to re-evaluate the nature of the Ryūkyūan state through its interactions with China, Satsuma, and the *bakufu*. With an emphasis on Tomiyama's recent masterful synthesis of research in this area, this paper discusses some of the recent trends in scholarship on Ryūkyūan history. I begin first by briefly placing these trends in their own historical context, starting with the period of postwar United States occupation of Okinawa.¹

Historical Scholarship in the Service of Reversion

Between the end of the Pacific War and Okinawa's reversion to Japan in 1972, a foreign army occupied and controlled Okinawa. Particularly in light of mainland Japanese economic prosperity, Okinawans pressed with increas-

1 My summary of the history of historical writing about the Ryūkyū Kingdom in the following sections loosely follows a similar analysis presented by Tomiyama (2004: 2–13), but with some modification and additions.

ing vigor for a political reunification with Japan. Historical scholarship of this period often reflected the realities and pressing issues of the day. In the broadest sense, historians tended more often to examine Okinawa's post 1879 history than to deal with the Ryūkyū Kingdom, whose very existence suggested at least some degree of separation from Japan. Historical writing about the early-modern kingdom tended to minimize the cultural, diplomatic, and political significance of Ryūkyū's relations with China, often echoing Higashionna Kanjun's tendency to dismiss the Chinese investiture of Ryūkyūan kings as mere pro forma ritual in the service of trade.² Similarly, there was a strong tendency to regard the early-modern Ryūkyūan state as a puppet of Satsuma.³

In the realm of culture, the emphasis was on Japanese influences on Ryūkyū. The earlier views of Higashionna, and to some extent Iha Fuyū, regarding the development of Ryūkyūan culture continued to influence interpretations during the immediate postwar decades. Higashionna explained the cultural differences between Okinawa and the Japanese mainland as unnatural artifacts from Satsuma's selfish policy of using Ryūkyū in the manner of a cormorant to extract wealth from China. Iha, relying on notions of »racial« similitude, also regarded Ryūkyūan culture as having a natural affinity with that of the Japanese mainland.⁴ The basic message of the pre-reversion period was similar: Okinawans should properly be part of Japan. Historical scholarship tended to emphasize this point.

A good example of this point is the treatment of Ryūkyū's 18th century. This century was a time of strong Chinese and Confucian influence on a wide range of material and non-material culture, including royal symbolism and ritual, the ideological basis of royal authority, the writing of official histories, tombs, the introduction of *fungshui* (Jp. *fūsui*), and even the design of ships (the Ryūkyūan *maaran-sen* of the late 18th century). Consider the description of this era in a well-known general history published in 1972. Shinzato Keiji, Taminato Tomoasa, and Kinjō Seitaku devote an entire chapter to »the flourishing of culture« (*Bun'un no ryūsei*), mainly during the eighteenth century, in *Okinawa-ken no rekishi*. The discussion begins with:

Following Shimazu's invasion, Okinawa took in Japanese mainland (*Nihon hondo*) culture anew, digested it, and gave birth to its own distinctive culture. While there were aspects of Ryukyuan subjectivity (*shutaisei*) that withered away before the wall of Shimazu's vast power, owing to regular contact with Shimazu, mainland culture came into Ryukyu,

2 See, for example, Chapter 9 (»Chōkō kankei«) of Higashionna 1978b: 33 or section 4 (»Sakuhō shinkō wa keizaijō no giman kōdō nari«) in Higashionna 1978a: 205–7; see also Tomiyama 2004: 7–8.

3 A good example of this approach is Higuchi 1975; although published in 1975, much of the research for the volume predated reversion; see also Tomiyama 2004: 2.

4 See, for example, Smits 1999: 151–152 and Higashionna 1978c: 224–235.

which stimulated a cultural revival. (Shinzato, Taminato, and Kinjō 1972: 119)

What about China? It seems almost conspicuous by its absence in this passage. Although there were some Japanese elements in Ryūkyū's cultural revival, the main influence was overwhelmingly Chinese. The chapter in *Okinawa-ken no rekishi* ends with a discussion of the *kanshō* system of sending Ryūkyūan students to China, but otherwise it minimizes any mention of Chinese influences. Notice also the awkwardness of the quoted passage in dealing with Ryūkyūan subjectivity and in the repeated use of the word »mainland« (*hondo*), implying, of course, that *kinsei* Ryūkyū was Japan. Although this usage (and, in other works from this period, terms like *waga hondo*, »our mainland«, or *sokoku*, »the motherland«) was common in the 1960s and early 1970s, it is rare in works from the 1980s and later. Finally, notice that it was »Shimazu« that invaded Ryūkyū and caused its subjectivity to wither, not »Satsuma«, a term that might suggest a foreign geographical entity.

By contrast, recent histories of Ryūkyū typically devote extensive coverage to the influx of Chinese culture during the eighteenth century. Akamine Mamoru is typical in this regard. *Ryūkyū ōkoku: Higashi Ajia no kōnaasutōn* includes a chapter called »The Sinification of Ryūkyū« (»Chūgokuka« shite yuku Ryūkyū«). It begins with the complex dynamics of Ryūkyū diplomacy vis-à-vis Japan and China and then discusses such topics as the introduction of Chinese ritual forms, *fungshui*, the diffusion of Confucian morality, Chinese-style official histories, the spread of popular Daoism, and Chinese maritime culture, including *maaran* ships (Akamine 2004: 114–131). Later chapters discuss Ryūkyū's tribute trade with China in detail. Viewed from the vantage point of 2004, *kinsei* Ryūkyū looked much more Chinese than it did in 1972. A major reason for this difference was changes in political concerns following reversion. By 1980, a new generation of historians was beginning to make its presence known.

Paradigm Shift: 1980 Through the Early 1990s

In 1976, Taminato Tomoaki adumbrated a vision of early-modern Ryūkyū as a foreign country within the territory of Satsuma. In 1980, Araki Moriaki refined Taminato's basic idea, and, later in the decade, Takara Kurayoshi proposed the influential formula of Ryūkyū as a foreign country within the *bakuhān* system (*bakuhān taisei no naka no ikoku*). Not only with respect to this point, but in many other ways, the work of Araki and Takara during the 1980s was so influential that Tomiyama speaks of an Araki-Takara schema causing a paradigm shift in the study of Okinawan history. Among other contributions, Takara's close study of the documents used to appoint royal officials (*jireisho*) led to a more nuanced understanding of the similarities

and differences between »Old-Ryūkyū« (*ko-Ryūkyū*, i.e., Ryūkyū prior to 1609) and early-modern Ryūkyū. Takara stressed the historical significance of Old-Ryūkyū in shaping the nature of early-modern Ryūkyū.⁵ During the 1980s, Dana Masayuki investigated *kafu* of Ryūkyū's aristocratic households, a type of source largely overlooked by other historians. His major work, *Okinawa kinseishi no shosō* was published in 1992. It went a long way toward clarifying the nature of Ryūkyūan status distinctions (*mibunsei*), the working of local government, and offered a sophisticated analysis of Ryūkyū's official histories.⁶

In contrast with previous decades, during the 1980s there was increased interest in Ryūkyū's connections with China. Miyata Toshihiko, for example, examined trade between Ryūkyū and Qing China through the *Rekidai hōan* and published his results in 1984 (Miyata 1984). Because Miyata did not consider Satsuma or any other aspect of the broader context of Ryūkyū's trade relations, his study is of limited value. More important is Uehara Kenzen's *Sakoku to han bōeki: Satsuma-han no Ryūkyū mitsubōeki* (1981). Although Uehara focuses mainly on interactions between Ryūkyū and Satsuma, his study also had much to say about Ryūkyū's interactions with China. Perhaps the most sophisticated work on Ryūkyū-China interactions during the 1980s was Itokazu Kaneharu's research on the spread and influence Neo-Confucian in Ryūkyū. Itokazu performed a philosophical analysis on the major writings of Sai On, analyzing them in terms of the thought of Cheng Yi and Zhu Xi. Furthermore, he contextualized Sai On's Cheng-Zhu Neo-Confucian thought in the local circumstances of Ryūkyūan history.⁷ Other important research during the 1980s on aspects of Ryūkyū's interactions with China was conducted by Shimajiri Katsutarō, Kubo Noritada, Harada Nobuo, Tsuzuki Akiko, Xu Gongsheng, Maehira Fusaaki, and others.

The 1980s was also a time of advances in our understanding of the intricacies Ryūkyū's connections with Satsuma and the *bakufu*. In addition to the work of Uehara mentioned above, Kamiya Nobuyuki's 1990 monograph *Bakuhansei kokka no Ryūkyū shihai* was a major contribution, which took into account the broader East Asian context. He examined the nature of Ryūkyū-Satsuma relations in the context of the Ming-Qing transition as well as *bakufu* objectives (Kamiya 1990 and Tomiyama 2004: 4–5). Kamiya's research was instrumental in laying the foundation for the view of early-

5 Tomiyama 2004: 2–3, 10; Araki 1980; among Takara Kurayoshi's many books, a good example of his use of *jiresisho* and his argument that pre-1609 Ryūkyū contributed much to the nature of *kinsei* Ryūkyū is *Ryūkyū ōkoku no kōzō* (Takara 1987). For an explanation of his characterization of early-modern Ryūkyū as a foreign country within the *bakuhan* system, see Takara, *Ryūkyū ōkokushi no kadai* (Takara 1989: 392).

6 See also Tomiyama 2004: 3–4.

7 Representative examples of Itokazu's essays are 1986 and 1989.

modern Ryūkyū as existing within a geo-political »space« created in part by the lack of formal diplomatic relations between the Chinese court and the *bakufu*.⁸ Other important research in Ryūkyū-Satsuma/*bakufu* relations during the 1980s was conducted by Miyagi Eishō, Kishaba Kazutaka, Umeki Tetsuo, Nakachi Tetsuo, Maehira Fusaaki, and others.

Broadening Trends

One of the characteristics of the boom in scholarship on Ryūkyū during the 1980s and beyond was the exploitation of new sources and the re-interpretation of old ones. Another contributing factor to the sophistication of this work was greater appreciation for and knowledge of the complexities of the *bakuhatsu* state and its foreign relations, as well as similar depth with respect to China. In 1980, for example, it was still common to employ the term *sakoku* as an important characteristic of the Tokugawa state. A decade later, however, the notion that foreign relations were an insignificant component of the *bakuhatsu* state was no longer tenable. Today, the sub-field of Tokugawa-period foreign relations is a vigorous area of academic inquiry that has produced a large literature. Not only is it now common to regard Ryūkyū as fully part of a network that extended throughout East Asia, but it is also common practice to view Japan's *bakuhatsu* state in the same manner.⁹ Ryūkyū, of course, figures prominently in this literature on Tokugawa foreign relations.

Itokazu's research in intellectual history mentioned above is another example of scholars of Ryūkyū broadening their range of expertise beyond local matters. In this case, Itokazu familiarized himself with the major scholarly works in Chinese Neo-Confucianism, which made possible his sophisticated analysis of Sai On's essays. Prior to Itokazu's research, scholars of Ryūkyū often noted the influence of Confucianism on figures like Junsoku Tei or On Sai, but only Maeda Giken made any serious attempt to analyze Ryūkyūan Confucianism. Maeda's lack of depth in Neo-Confucianism and Chinese intellectual history, however, tended to limit his analysis to formal aspects of academic life such as lineages of scholars.

8 This view can be found in Smits 1999 and in Tomiyama 2004.

9 The first monograph to challenge conventional understandings of *sakoku* was Ronald Toby 1984; a Japanese translation appeared in 1990 as *Kinsei Nihon no kokka keisei to gaikō*. Nishijima Sadao's important *Nihon rekishi no kokusai kankyō* (1985) covers the Tokugawa period as well as earlier eras. The work of Nagazumi Yōko has been especially important in establishing the sub-field of Tokugawa-period foreign relations; see, for example, Nagazumi 1990. Another important early study was Yamamoto 1989. Among scholars specializing in Ryūkyūan history, Maehira Fusaaki has been especially active in contributing to the literature on Tokugawa-period foreign relations; see, for example, Maehira 1997.

Benefiting greatly from the 1980s boom in historical scholarship, I began researching early-modern Ryūkyūan history, first from the perspective of intellectual history and Confucianism and later with respect to questions of Ryūkyūan identity and royal authority.¹⁰ Among other things, I argue that Sai On's Confucianism and his political agenda was based on the concept of *quan* (Jp. *ken*, »situational weighing«). Furthermore, despite his stance as a vigorous opponent of Buddhism, Sai On admired Shakyamuni (or his peculiar image of Shakyamuni), and, indeed, seemed to have regarded himself as Ryūkyū's Shakyamuni. With respect to royal authority, I argue for a strong influence of Shingon Buddhism in Old-Ryūkyū conceptions of solar power and its relations to royal authority (i.e. *tedako shisō*). During the early-modern period, I stressed the Sinification and Confucianization of Ryūkyūan elite society as Sai On's vision of Ryūkyū became dominant. Furthermore, looking at the larger picture, I argue for »a substantial degree of Ryūkyūan autonomy and agency within a political and diplomatic matrix commonly described as ›dual attachment to Japan and China‹ (*Nitchū ryōzoku*)« (Smits 1999: 155).

It is precisely this point – that *Nitchū ryōzoku* and similar slogans are insufficient because they overlook the key element of Ryūkyūan autonomy – which Tomiyama emphasizes in *Ryūkyū ōkoku no gaikō to ōken*. His notes, however, list only Japanese-language sources. Tomiyama's earlier work was a major contribution to my conclusions in *Visions of Ryukyu*, and clearly the similitude of the two books is a case of researchers of similar orientations coming to the same conclusions. Tomiyama is typical in his reliance only on Japanese-language sources. There is some truth to the claim that Ryūkyū/Okinawan studies has become »international«. After all, there is a small but growing body of scholarship in Chinese, English, Italian, and other languages.¹¹ While all of this scholarship naturally draws heavily on Japanese sources, the various languages of the final products present genuine barriers to a full exchange of ideas. Translation is probably the only practical solution to overcoming these barriers.

Ryūkyū ōkoku gaikō to ōken

For the remainder of the paper I will examine select aspects of Tomiyama's *Ryūkyū ōkoku gaikō to ōken* (2004), a book that constitutes a major advance in the conceptualization of Ryūkyūan history. The overall goal of the

10 An example in the realm of intellectual history is Smits 1996; for a study of royal authority that includes both Old-Ryūkyū and early-modern Ryūkyū, see Smits 2000; Smits 1999 combines both of these topics to examine competing conceptions of Ryūkyū as a state and a society, mainly during the eighteenth century.

11 Rosa Caroli (1999), for example, has written a comprehensive history of Okinawa in Italian.

book is to move beyond the view of Ryūkyū as a country with dual attachment or subordination to Japan and China (*Nitchū-ryōzoku*) or as a foreign country within the *bakuhān* state by assessing royal authority and the extent of Ryūkyūan autonomy in a variety of areas. One key methodological point is that such an assessment requires a close look at concrete details to see the precise boundaries of the king's authority. Although occasionally Tomiyama engages in entirely new research, in many instances he draws on the work of other scholars for the needed details. In this way, *Ryūkyū ōkoku gaikō to ōken* serves as a synthesis of major research to date. It is much more than a compilation or summary of past research, however, because at all times Tomiyama brings the research of other scholars to bear on the problem of royal authority and Ryūkyūan autonomy. Additionally, Tomiyama frequently points out areas in need of further research.

The general organization of *Ryūkyū ōkoku gaikō to ōken* is to examine Ryūkyū's relations with a focus on China and then to do the same with a focus in Satsuma and the *bakufu*. A final section combines both approaches to create a Shuri-centered composite image of royal authority and its limits. The result is that instead of seeing Ryūkyū as a puppet or subordinate state to either China or Japan, it emerges as a vigorous actor in its own right, using its role as a link between China and Japan to maximum advantage. Within this general organizational scheme, Tomiyama discusses a remarkable array of specific topics, including royal clothing and accouterments, the influence of the Ming court on the government structure of Old-Ryūkyū, judicial affairs, maritime disputes, repatriation of shipwrecked sailors, diplomatic crises, post 1609 Ryūkyūan resistance to and cooperation with Satsuma, taxation, finances, changes in the form of royal rites, ceremonies, and official oaths, expansion of royal authority within Ryūkyū, and much more.

Owing to limited space, I will discuss only three of the many topics in *Ryūkyū ōkoku gaikō to ōken*, each of which serves as a good example of Tomiyama's approach and contributions. The topics are: 1) Shō Nei's resistance to Satsuma *after* his return to Okinawa in 1611; 2) Shō Hō's understanding of the new East Asian order in which Ryūkyū found itself and his attempt to create a »space« for Ryūkyū between China and Japan; and 3) networks of authority as revealed by oath swearing.

On the twenty-eighth day of the 10th month, 1611, less than ten days after he had returned to Shuri from Kagoshima, a letter from the Shimazu *daimyō* arrived for King Shō Nei. After making reference to Satsuma's recent invasion of Ryūkyū and explaining its cause as improper conduct on Ryūkyū's part, the letter went on to say that Ryūkyū should devote itself wholeheartedly to establishing trade between the Ming China and Japan out of gratitude for Shimazu having allowed Shō Nei to return to his throne. It explained that during the time Shō Nei was in Japan, Tokugawa Ieyasu was thinking about dispatching soldiers from Kyūshū to China. Thanks, however, to Shimazu's

intervention, telling Ieyasu about Ryūkyū's potential for restoring trade with China, he suspended these plans. The letter went on to lay out three possible courses of action for this restoration of trade, which Ryūkyū was supposed to discuss with Chinese officials. The letter ended on an ominous note, saying that failure of diplomacy would mean war and bloodshed, and that Ming must choose between commerce or invasion. Two years later, Satsuma's advisor on foreign affairs, Bunshi Nanpo, composed another letter to Shō Nei. Commonly known as the »Gunmonsho«, it was nearly identical in content to the previous one from Shimazu. The Gunmonsho, too, stated that a failure in diplomacy would result in the shōgun assembling a large force in Kyūshū and invading China (Tomiyama 2004: 147–149).

Did Shō Nei's government bow to this pressure and cooperate in the manner specified by Satsuma? Different historians have offered different answers, but Tomiyama argues that Shō Nei did not convey the Gunmonsho to the Ming court. Instead, his officials worked vigorously to restore Ryūkyū's tribute trade, then following a once in ten year schedule, to its normal schedule of once in two years. Moreover, a 1614 letter from Shō Nei to the Board of Rites stated that Ryūkyū had severed all ties with Japan. No Chinese or Japanese documents indicate that Ryūkyū pursued the approach specified in the »Gunmonsho« and one clearly states that Ryūkyū rejected it. By 1615, Satsuma seems to have resigned itself to failure in restoring direct Ming-Japanese trade, and settled for a restoration of the normal tribute trade as the next best option. Not only did Shō Nei refuse to facilitate Ming-Japanese trade, he actively worked against it. Indeed, Shō Nei discovered a plan by Nagasaki *daikan* Murayama Tōan to invade Taiwan and use it as a base for trading with Ming China, and the Ryūkyūan king sent a letter or warning to Ming officials. Murayama's attack proved ineffective (only one of his 13 ships reached Taiwan owing to unfavorable winds, and local resistance drove it away), but Ming officials praised Ryūkyū's loyalty, likening it to an earlier warning about Hideyoshi's invasion. In short, even while ostensibly under Shimazu control, Shō Nei continued to pursue the same policy as he did before 1609, providing intelligence about Japanese actions to Ming China (Tomiyama 2004: 147–157).

Here we see a remarkable degree of defiance of Satsuma, but there was little direct action Satsuma could take in this situation without jeopardizing Ryūkyū's link with China altogether. Shimazu hoped for a more compliant king to succeed Shō Nei and worked behind the scenes to expand the role of Prince Zashiki, the likely crown prince, in the royal government. Prince Zashiki eventually took the throne as Shō Hō (r. 1621–1640) and proved much more willing to work with Satsuma. It is important to note, however, that the royal family and top Ryūkyūan officials had de facto veto power over any attempts by Satsuma to impose its choice of king. The reason was that the king would not be able to receive investiture from China unless the royal

family and leading officials endorsed his taking the throne via a document called a *ketsujō*. Satsuma could and did try to influence the process of royal succession and the appointment of leading officials but the final decision was mainly a function of internal Ryūkyūan politics. Indeed, it proved difficult to convince the Ming court to invest Shō Hō owing to suspicions of Japanese interference. Ultimately Ming authorities required the submission of three separate *ketsujō* before they became sufficiently convinced of Shō Hō's legitimacy to order his investiture (Tomiyama 2004: 67–69, 159–162).

Shō Hō's reign took place at approximately the same time that *bakufu*-imposed restrictions on trade in Japan made Ryūkyū's link to China all the more valuable. It was also at this time that Satsuma sought to alleviate its growing financial crisis, in part by expanding trade with China. Shō Hō seems to have been the first prominent Ryūkyūan who fully understood the kingdom's new international circumstances. Specifically, he realized that Ryūkyū's continued existence as a quasi-autonomous entity – something other than just a territory in Satsuma's domains – was a function of investiture of Ryūkyūan kings by the Chinese emperor and service to Satsuma. Service to Satsuma mainly meant serving as a conduit for trade. Although obvious in hindsight, the link between investiture and Satsuma's control was not obvious to many Ryūkyūan officials in the 1620s and 30s.

Recognizing the importance of Ryūkyū's economic service to Satsuma was one thing, but putting it into practice proved much more difficult. One problem was that many of the kingdom's officials, especially those who handled the China trade, consistently sought to undermine Shimazu's interests by focusing on their own personal trade while in China and buying inferior goods for Satsuma. Indeed, as a result of these actions, Satsuma's initial attempts to profit from the China trade were unsuccessful. Shimazu laid the blame for this situation on Ryūkyū (Tomiyama 2004: 68–69).

Shō Hō attempted to repair this rift with Satsuma in various ways. In the eleventh month of 1632, the king announced in a series of memos that, as a group, the Ryūkyūan officials in charge of the China trade are hostile to Satsuma and that henceforth any dereliction of duty would be punished. A series of specific punishments – often confiscation of property or banishment but sometimes the death penalty – for a variety of officials followed almost immediately (Tomiyama 2004: 176–177). Shō Hō took these measures in anticipation of arrival of investiture envoys in 1633. This crackdown on anti-Satsuma trade officials was part of a larger plan orchestrated by the king, his top officials, and Satsuma for taking maximum advantage of investiture to engage in trade. The *bakufu* itself endorsed such efforts, having told Shimazu that trade with China via Ryūkyū could be an effective way to alleviate the shortage of certain Chinese goods in Japanese markets (Tomiyama 2004: 70–71).

Shō Hō's move against obstructionist trade officials was only one aspect of the preparations for arrival of the investiture envoys. At the end of the eighth month, 1662, a directive from Satsuma arrived in Shuri. Addressed to the Sessei and Sanshikan, it specified in great detail a wide range of financial and shipping logistics in the context of aggressive strategies for maximizing the tribute trade with China. In one example, Ryūkyū was to propose that it send a congratulatory envoy to China at the start of each year and on the emperor's birthday. Tomiyama points out that historians have often cited this directive as evidence that Ryūkyū was a puppet of Satsuma. Such a reading, however, is at odds with the language of the document, which clearly makes reference to past discussions between Ryūkyūan and Satsuma officials and acknowledges Ryūkyūan input. The document summarized what was in effect a joint economic venture, with Satsuma providing most of the capital and Ryūkyū providing expertise and the ability to execute the plan. Incidentally, Ryūkyū was able, for the most part, to follow the plan laid out in the document, and it managed to send four ships to China in the space of one and a half years between 1633 and 1635. Ultimately, however, the Ryūkyū-Satsuma plan aggressively to pursue trade in China caused a backlash of restrictions by Chinese authorities. For example, when Ming officials discovered that Ryūkyūans had exceeded the limit on raw silk purchases by 600%, they confiscated the silk. The matter then led to a ban on Ryūkyūan purchases of raw silk that was not lifted until 1645 – just in time for trade to stop owing to the fall of the Ming dynasty (Tomiyama 2004: 274–280). Satsuma struggled throughout much of the seventeenth century to realize a profit from the Ryūkyū-China trade.

Shō Hō understood that Satsuma's capital was essential for funding Ryūkyū's tribute trade and that investiture and the tribute trade were essential for the continued viability of Ryūkyū as a distinct country. Although the plans that he and his officials made with Satsuma failed to produce the intended results in the short term, they helped forge the basic logic of the early-modern kingdom. In a letter to a Ryūkyūan envoy on his way to China in 1640 to petition for an end to the ban on the purchase of raw silk, Shō Hō explained that he had personally visited a variety of religious sites and prayed for the success of the petition. He next explained the shortage of Chinese goods in Japan in the wake of the *bakufu*'s 1639 prohibition of Portuguese vessels has created a potentially profitable opportunity for Ryūkyū. Realizing that profit, however, depended on cooperation with Shimazu (Tomiyama 2004: 70–71). Shō Nei demonstrated one variety of Ryūkyūan autonomy via his refusal to cooperate with Satsuma. Whatever his personal feelings for Shimazu may have been, Shō Hō knew that Ryūkyū's future as a kingdom depended on acting judiciously to create and occupy the geo-political space between the *bakuhān* state and the Chinese empire.

Tomiyama examines the contours of Ryūkyūan royal authority from a variety of angles. One of them is oaths (*seiyaku*). The custom of swearing oaths of fealty almost certainly predates the Satsuma invasion of 1609, but the details are unclear. According to the *Ryūkyūkoku yuraiiki*, we can conclude that early Ryūkyūan oath swearing, like similar practices in medieval Japan, often consisted of drinking »sacred water« (*jinzui*) into which the ashes of the burnt text of the oath had been placed. The range of officials swearing oaths circa the turn of the seventeenth century was limited to the royal government in Shuri and did not extend beyond the capital. During the early-modern period, the practice of swearing oaths of fealty to the king expanded to the whole of Ryūkyū, and often took on coercive overtones when officials dispatched from the capital required local leaders to swear loyalty to the king.

Oath-administering officials (*jinzui kensha*) were apparently dispatched to each magiri and to the major islands. For example, we know that in 1632 (11 years after Shō Hō ascended the throne), Ueekata Tomigusuku of the Sanshikan was dispatched to Yaeyama as a »royal oath envoy«. Then, in 1645 (Shō Shitsu took the throne in 1641), »sacred water« envoys were dispatched to Yaeyama and Miyako. When Shō Tei took the throne in 1669, »sacred water« envoys were dispatched to Kunigami, Iejima, and Iheya Island, and they also inspected those regions to report on the extent to which their conditions had deteriorated. Shō Eki took the throne in 1710, and three years later loyalty oath ceremonies were enacted at Yaeyama at Tōrinji. Similar oaths would have been carried out in Naha and in each magiri soon after a new king ascended the throne.

Significantly, Satsuma promoted these loyalty oaths. For example, in conjunction with formal approval for Shō Shitsu to become king in 1648, it decreed that »sacred water« rites be performed throughout Ryūkyū following past examples. We see here an interesting link to the practice of the Ryūkyūan king submitting a document to Satsuma swearing loyalty to Shimazu. In other words, officials from throughout Ryūkyū would swear loyalty to the king, who would in turn swear loyalty to the rulers of Satsuma, who, of course, swore loyalty to the *bakufu*. Loyalty oaths within Ryūkyū reflect the expanding power of the Ryūkyūan king within his domains. This expansion of power, however, was in large part the result of Ryūkyū's ties to Satsuma. We see a similar pattern in many other realms such as Satsuma's financial support for Ryūkyū's tribute trade (Tomiyama 2004: 286–288).

Ryūkyū's relationship with China and Japan's *bakuhān* state was complex, evolving and multifaceted. It is difficult to describe accurately in sweeping generalizations. In *Ryūkyū ōkoku no gaikō to ōken* Tomiyama advances our knowledge of early modern Ryūkyū by painstakingly mapping out the contours and boundaries of royal authority in many different realms, relying on the wealth of empirical research that historians have produced in recent decades. In the process he gives full weight to the reality of Ryūkyūan autonomy without denying or marginalizing Satsuma's power and interests or those of any other

entity in the web of diplomatic and economic relations that extended from Beijing through Fujian, across to Ryūkyū, and up to Satsuma and then to Edo.

In addition to rejecting simple formulae such as »*Nitchū-ryōzoku*«, Tomiyama's mapping process identifies numerous areas where more research is needed. Indeed he ends his book with a call for more research on trans-oceanic relations between China, Ryūkyū, and Japan below the level of official trade. One topic he mentions is drifters and shipwrecked sailors (Tomiyama 2004: 303). The recent work of Miki Watanabe on this topic is a good example of research that will expand, and possibly modify, the contours Tomiyama has laid out. For example, Watanabe's investigation of Ryūkyūan repatriation of shipwrecked Chinese and Koreans led her to conclude that Ryūkyū used the necessity of concealing its connection with Satsuma from foreign eyes in part to shield itself from interference by Satsuma, thus creating a zone for autonomous action (Watanabe 2005: 28–29). With respect to Ryūkyū's 1694 decision to change the way it repatriated Chinese and Korean castaways (implemented from 1697 onward), sending them directly to China instead of through Nagasaki, Watanabe and Tomiyama come to somewhat different conclusions. Tomiyama stresses Ryūkyū's making the decision on its own, without consulting Satsuma (much to Satsuma's irritation), and reads it as an example of Ryūkyūan autonomy (Tomiyama 2004: 81–84). Watanabe interprets the change in terms of a clash of two different international orders, Japanese (*Nihon-gata ka-i kannen*) and Chinese (*Chūgoku-gata sekai chitsujō*). Given the circumstances, there really was no choice but to change to direct repatriation. Therefore, the matter was not really a case of Ryūkyū exercising its autonomy (Watanabe 2006: 24–25).

Obviously debate over difficult and contentious issues such as early modern royal authority and the extent of Ryūkyūan autonomy will continue. It is likely that, at least in the near future, Tomiyama's *Ryūkyū ōkoku no gaikō to ōken* will play a major role in framing the terms of this debate.

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Rosa Caroli

Recent Trends in Historiography on Modern Okinawa

The development of historical inquiry is always connected to both the possibility of collecting new sources and to the political, economic, social, or cultural changes intervening in the context where the historian works. It thus implies a continuous re-visiting, re-reading, and re-interpreting of historical facts in light of current reality and conditions. It happens especially when drastic changes occur, affecting the preexisting order and involving people's daily life in a direct way both in material and emotional or ideal terms. Hence, the relevance of historiographic activity is not limited to scholarship, since it also has a dialectical interaction with the world outside of the academic and intellectual realm.

When we look at the history of Okinawa in the last century and a half, it seems quite evident that the path it took is marked by continual changes and fractures: the dismantling of the Kingdom of Ryūkyū and the establishment of Okinawa Prefecture in 1879; the reform of political, economic, and social institutions carried out by the new administration; the economic crisis that affected this region in the 1920s; the war experience which ended with a battle decimating the local population; the 27 years of American military rule during which large areas of the islands were transformed into military bases; the reunification with Japan in 1972 and the post-Cold War realignment. Such changes deeply affected the political, economic, social, and cultural life of this region, and imply a continual redefinition of Okinawa's position within altered contexts.¹ The complexity characterizing the history of Okinawa in roughly the last century and a half is reflected in the subject matter, the methods and, often, also in the attitude adopted by historical inquiries on Okinawa that have been produced during this entire period of time. Hence, it is in light of these drastic changes and the challenges they presented to Okinawa and to the subjectivity of the Okinawans that it is possible to consider the development of historiography on modern Okinawa and its trends in recent times.

1 The way in which Okinawan subjectivity has been repeatedly induced to answer the needs of both national policy and strategic priorities of the United States has been analyzed by Glenn D. Hook and Richard Siddle (2003).

Time and Space of *Okinawa kindai*shi

However, before considering recent trends in the historical research on modern Okinawa, it seems useful to delineate the temporal frame of Okinawa's modern history. There is quite a general propensity to recognize the end of the war experience in 1945 as the conclusive phase of *Okinawa kindai*shi, since it coincided with the dissolution of administrative, economic, social, and cultural institutions that were created in Okinawa after 1879. With regard to the start of *kindai*, it should be remembered that the view that still prevailed in the postwar years was that of establishing a connection with the so-called *Ryūkyū shobun*, i.e. the measures adopted by the Meiji government in order to affirm Japan's sovereignty on Ryūkyū (Nishizato 1981: 3–13). Such a perspective also dominated the debate that scholars of Okinawan history opened when the reversion of Okinawa to Japan became a priority on Tokyo's political agenda after the formation of the Satō Eisaku Cabinet in 1964. It was correlated to the problem of elucidating the meaning of *Ryūkyū shobun*, which Shinzato Keiji regarded as a process of a series of reforms carried out from 1872 to 1897, marking the starting point of *kindai*. On the other hand, Kinjō Seitoku compared it with the measure adopted by the Meiji government between the establishment of the *Ryūkyū han* in 1872 and the Sino-Japanese negotiations for dividing the Ryūkyū Islands in 1880.² The political context surrounding this debate generally induced scholars to focus their attention mainly on the meaning of *Ryūkyū shobun* in relation to Japan's policy.³ At the same time, however, various scholars also started to call for a reconsideration of Okinawa not only as a »counter-culture of the *hondo*«, but also as an integral part of the East Asian culture. In this regard, the proposal presented by the Society of Historical Research on Okinawa (Okinawa Rekishi Kenkyūkai) at the symposium promoted by the Historical Science Society of Japan (Rekishigaku Kenkyūkai) in December 1971 is worthy of mention, as it recommended that East Asian regional history be considered part of world history and underlined its importance for the investigation of Okinawan history.⁴

The idea of analyzing the history of Ryūkyū and Okinawa within a broader geographic and historical context had relevant effects on the research of both premodern and modern history. In fact, it implied a reconsideration of the history of the Ryūkyūan Kingdom not merely as an appendage of Japan's historical process but as a part of the cultural, political, and economic

2 See Shinzato 1970 and Kinjō 1978; for the different meanings assigned by various scholars to the *Ryūkyū shobun*, see Shinzato (ed.) 1972.

3 For the political conditions affecting historical inquiry on Okinawa before and after the reunification with Japan, compare Gabe 1992 and Okinawa Rekishi Kenkyūkai 1975.

4 Cited in Ōsato 1995: 66; in this regard, compare also Nishizato 1984.

network among Asian countries (Takara 1980b and Araki 1980), it also induced some scholars of Okinawan modern history to look at both the dissolution of the kingdom and the incorporation of this region into the Meiji state as a part of a longer process, which had first started with the Western pressure upon the kingdom in the 1840s.⁵ In this way, the *Ryūkyū shobun* could also be considered as a reflection of the more general process that caused the disintegration of the China-centered system founded upon the tributary relationship. The adoption of such a perspective implied both the backdating of the start of Okinawan modern history and the vision of it as a part of East Asian and world history (Nishizato 1995). Indeed, the demise of the East Asian world system itself was a consequence of a broader process which spread from Europe and North America by assuming the shape of a world system where peripheries and the center came to be linked by an unequal and interdependent relationship.⁶ Since the effects produced by such a process affected East Asian societies with different forms and modalities, the new perspectives that place Okinawa within the framework of East Asian history and world history do not represent a challenge to the subjectivity of Okinawan modern history. Indeed, as Takara Kurayoshi noted, it is necessary to adopt at the same time both a macro point of view (*makuro no shiten*) to understand the overall meaning of Ryūkyūan and Okinawan history, and a micro point of view (*mikuro no shiten*) to perceive the complexity and the variety of what happened throughout the Ryūkyū Islands.⁷ These methodological developments of historiography are clearly reflected in the subject matter of much research on the modern history of Okinawa published in the last few years, in which a *macro* point of view is adopted, for example, to reconsider the entire history of Ryūkyū and Okinawa, or to reexamine the meaning of *Ryūkyū shobun* from the perspectives of political history, diplomatic history, and international law.⁸

Japan in Okinawa kindaiishi

Nevertheless, the adoption of a broad context while looking at the modern history of Okinawa does not correspond to a rejection of the perspective within which the Okinawa *hondo* dialectic takes place. In this regard, it does not seem superfluous to say that *Japan* continues to be the major interlocutor of both Okinawa and Okinawans, in addition to the scholars who put Okinawa

5 Compare for this, Nishizato 1994 and Ikuta 1992.

6 For a different view of the factors causing the end of the China-centered tributary relationship, see Hamashita 1997: 8–9.

7 Takara 1983: 216, cited in Ōsato 1995: 67.

8 See, for example, Tomiyama (ed.) 2003; Nishizato 2005; Akamine 2004. For a review of *Ryūkyū shobun* from the perspective of international law, see Uemura 2003.

nawa at the center of their research. It happens not only because it is a reality in a political or an administrative sense, but also because research on Okinawan subjectivity during the modern period began to develop within the dialectic with the *hondo*. It does not seem possible to overlook such an aspect when one makes inquiries about the modern history of Okinawa or about the contradictions that were produced by it, since research on the modern history of Okinawa started within such a dialectic too. In other terms, from the very beginning, research on modern Okinawa was conditioned by the need to answer basic questions such as »Who are we?« and »Who are you?« Such questions were formulated by both the Japanese and the Okinawans who, when starting their inquiries on Okinawa, also affected the relationship between the Japanese and Okinawans, as well as the definition of their own identity.⁹ Actually, even though it is rather difficult to separate research on the history of Okinawa from the more general studies on Okinawa carried out during the first decades of the Meiji period, it is possible to say that the reflection of such questions is perceptible in the literature on Okinawa written throughout the modern period.¹⁰

Indeed, the first inquiries regarding Okinawa's history, customs, laws, and so on, were carried out by Japanese bureaucrats and scholars and were often commissioned by the central or prefectural government; in any case, they were aimed at serving their own interests (Shinzato 1972: 5–7; Takara 1980a: 191–192). One could mention, for example, the *Ryūkyū shinshi* [New record of Ryūkyū] (1872) of the Japanese linguist and historian Ōtsuki Fumihiko (1847–1928), the *Ryūkyū shobun* [Disposal of Ryūkyū] (1879) by Matsuda Michiyuki, the *Nantō kiji gaihen* [Supplement to the *Account of the Southern Islands*] (1886) by Nishimura Suzetō, or the *Nantō tanken* [Exploration of the Southern Islands] (1894) by Sasamori Gisuke.¹¹ Their interest towards Okinawa had specific goals, such as legitimizing the new administration; collecting data to carry out reforms; supplying information useful in governing a

9 In this regards, it seems useful to keep in mind not only the research by Japanese anthropologists (such as Tsuboi Shōgorō or Torii Ryūzō Torii) or Okinawan scholars (mainly Iha Fuyū), but also a work of the Okinawan poet Yamanoguchi Baku (1903–1963) entitled *Kaiwa* (»The Conversation«) which efficaciously describes the inability of an Okinawan who migrated to Japan mainland to reveal his origins. The poem is quoted by Tomiyama Ichirō twice (1997: 23, 1998: 175–176).

10 For a review and a chronological periodization of the research on modern Okinawa, see Takara 1980a: 189–222. Here he distinguishes three stages: the first characterized by the dominance of investigation by Japanese bureaucrats and academics, the second at the beginning of 20th century with the birth of *Okinawa gaku*, and the third starting with the development of historical research on Okinawa as a specific discipline in the 1920s.

11 For an English account of what Takara Kurayoshi (1980a) defines as »government and municipal enquiries«, see Sakamaki 1963: 105–146.

region which in many ways was still unknown. The methods and the object of these inquiries, which examined not only the legal, social, and economic conditions of Okinawa but also the racial characteristics and the anthropological features of the people residing in this new territory, seem to forerun the »regional research« which accompanied and supported Japan's colonial policy in East Asia (Ōsato 1995: 59). In other words, even when research on Okinawa started to assume an academic approach (for example with the works of Tashiro Antei and Torii Ryūzō)¹² or when historical investigations with a more rigorous methodology began to appear (as in the case of Shidehara Taira),¹³ they were far from either recognizing the subjectivity of Okinawa or looking at it in light of the different meaning that Okinawa had for the *hondo*. These tendencies and approaches were also reflected in the way in which Japan projected onto Okinawa the self-image it was forging. Thus, for example, the stage of development, civilization, and progress of Okinawan society was determined by individualizing characteristics that were defined through their affinity with or their contrast to *Japan*.

The birth and development of the so-called *Okinawa gaku* (research on Okinawa carried out by Okinawans) are closely linked to this context. This research appeared to be a reaction towards the tendency to collocate Okinawa as an object on to which both Japan's administration and investigations pro-

12 Tashiro Antei (1857–1928), a botanist native to Kagoshima, first went to Okinawa in 1882, when the Minister of Agriculture and Commerce instructed him to test the planting of the cinchona tree. In 1885 he started his own research on the local religion, customs, and language which were published in the monthly *Jinruigaku zasshi*; his *Okinawa ketsujō kō* [On the Okinawan knotted cords] was published posthumously in 1944. The long career of anthropologist Torii Ryūzō (1870–1953), who conducted ethnological research on Sakhalin, the Kuriles, Korea, Manchuria, China, Mongolia, Taiwan, and Okinawa, followed the arc of Japanese imperial expansion. His survey of Okinawa (where he traveled in 1896 and 1904) was conducted in conjunction with his survey on Taiwan, and it had a significant impact on Iha Fuyū's *Ko Ryūkyū* [The old Ryūkyū] (1911); see Okinawa-ken Kyōiku Iinkai 1977: 355, 409–410; Tomiyama 1998b: 169–172.

13 Shidehara Taira (Hiroshi) (1870–1953), the eldest brother of Shidehara Kijūrō, is considered the first scholar to investigate Okinawan history with an academic approach. He wrote several works on Okinawa, the most important one entitled *Nantō enkaku shiron* [Treatise on the history of the Southern Islands] (1899) which was reprinted several times. He also collected historical material during his travels in Okinawa in 1894–1895. Nonetheless, the need to legitimize Japan's sovereignty on Okinawa and his vision of Okinawa as a »land belonging to [...] our *hondo*« led him to undervalue historical events testifying to the cultural and political autonomy of the Ryūkyūs. Shidehara Taira also wrote several books on Manchuria and Korea, and was the first president of the Taihoku (Taipei) Imperial University; compare Takara 1980: 195–197; Okinawa-ken Kyōiku Iinkai 1977: 434; *Kokushi daijiten*, vol. 6: 901.

jected their own interests, expectations, and anxiety. In this sense, it can be read as the will to affirm Okinawan subjectivity as well as the recognition of a »new position« of Ryūkyūan–Okinawan history, especially in the wake of the unsuccessful attempts to achieve it by political means, as happened in the case of the *minken undō* and Kōdōkai, both of which were silenced by the Japanese authorities.¹⁴ Thus, the research which Iha Fuyū (1876–1947), Majikina Ankō (1875–1933), and Higaonna (Higashionna) Kanjun (1882–1963) initiated at the beginning of the 20th century seemed to share the common aim of altering the position of Okinawa as an object of Japan’s investigations and political aims. They tried to transform Okinawa into a historical subject capable of expressing its own interests, expectations, and anxiety within a national and imperial context and subject to rapid evolution. This produced continuous challenges to the political, economic, social, and cultural life in Okinawa as well as to their own individual lives.

Rethinking *Okinawa gaku*

In light of what has been said above, it is not difficult to understand why such research (or that on linguistics, folklore, or literature) is relevant to historical investigations on modern Okinawa. It also helps to explain why many of the studies on the modern history of Okinawa which still continue to be done concentrate on the literature produced by Okinawans during the modern period. On the other hand, the heritage of *Okinawa gaku* heavily influenced the development, the tendencies, and the methods of historiography on Ryūkyū and Okinawa until at least the 1950s.¹⁵ At the same time, popular opposition to the U.S. military rule refused to accept »the >Ryukyuzation< campaign« carried out by the American administration to legitimize its control on the region.¹⁶ Still, from the 1960s onward, the new generation raised and educated in the postwar period started testing new approaches and methodologies in the investigation of the history of Okinawa and the elucidation of its relation with Japan’s history.¹⁷ As mentioned above, the political topicality of Okinawa’s reunification to Japan made the *Ryūkyū shobun* a central theme of research conducted in the 1960s and 1970s. During this period, scholars started to question the theory that the extension of

14 For the effects of the failure of these political experiments on the birth and the development of *Okinawa gaku*, see Shinzato 1972: 15–16. The start of *Okinawa gaku* is generally considered as a watershed between the first and the second phase of research on Okinawan modern history; see Takara 1980a: 200.

15 This is perceptible, for example, in some general works on Ryūkyūan and Okinawan history which were written in this period by Okinawans scholars residing in Tokyo such as Nakahara 1952–1953; Higashionna 1957; Higa 1959; Ōsato 1995: 61–62; Sakamaki 1963: 158–160.

16 This expression is used by Rabson 1999: 146.

17 Kinjō and Nishizato 1972; Okinawa Rekishi Kenkyūkai 1970.

scholars started to question the theory that the extension of Japan's sovereignty on Ryūkyū had to be seen as ethnic unification, a concept that had previously dominated both historical research and Okinawan political activism fighting for the return. By reexamining various features of the historical relations between Japan's national state and this peripheral prefecture, they emphasized the elements of violence characterizing both the establishment of the Okinawa Prefecture and the following policy of Japanization. While such research was influenced by the political dimension of the »Okinawa problem«, the terms of the reversion to Japan, which caused anxiety and discontent among the local people, induced scholars to focus on other elements that characterize the historical process of *kindai*.¹⁸ It also implied a reconsideration of the traditional meaning of *Okinawa gaku*, one that took into regard the search for identity and emancipation of Okinawa and Okinawans. This was made evident by various essays contained in the book *Okinawa gaku no reimei* [The dawn of *Okinawa gaku*] edited in 1976 by the Iha Fuyū Seitan Hyakunen Kinenkai and in particular by the contribution of Ōta Masahide to this book (Ōta 1976).

The growing interest in the literature on *Okinawa gaku* is also documented by the publication of collections of works written by Okinawans during the modern period, such as the *Iha Fuyū zenshū* (Iha 1974–1976) and the *Higashionna Kanjun zenshū* (Higashionna 1978–1982). Historical inquiry into Okinawan modern thought produced interesting results from a methodological point of view as well. In this regard, the book by Hiyane Teruo entitled *Kindai Nihon to Iha Fuyū* [Modern Japan and Iha Fuyū] which was published in 1981 is worth mentioning.¹⁹ Indeed, by arranging material in a chronological order and following Iha's intellectual path in the context of the time in which he lived, the Okinawan scholar offers a comprehensive look at the thoughts of Iha, whom he considered to be an intellectual reflecting the distinctiveness of this peripheral region and a thinker of »Taishō democracy«.

In the following decade, other selected or complete works of modern Okinawan intellectual and political figures appeared. These were often only due to a meticulous activity in collecting and organizing material. The selected works of Ōta Chōfu (1865–1938) edited by Hiyane Teruo and Isa Shin'ichi (Hiyane and Isa 1993–1996), for instance, was a three-volume collection of Ōta's writing on politics and self-government, economy and society, and society and culture, respectively. Here, the profile of the journalist and politi-

¹⁸ Compare Kano 1993: vi–vii.

¹⁹ This work also contains detailed lists of both Iha's works and the literature on him. An interesting account of the research on Iha and other Okinawans of the modern period is Yakabi 2000.

cal leader who was chiefly known for his *kushameron* or »sneeze theory«²⁰ is analyzed from a fresh perspective which sheds new light on all of his political and social activism. For example, his support of both the policy of assimilation (*dōka*) and the imperialization of the Okinawa subject (*kōminka*) is evaluated by taking into account the role he undertook in improving the condition of Okinawan society within the political, economic, and social context of his time.²¹

Another piece of work by Isa Shin'ichi, published in 1998, brought together important materials regarding Jahana Noboru (1865–1908) by utilizing new documentary sources. In this book, Isa reconsiders the political and personal life of Jahana, whose image as the father of the Okinawan civil rights movement and as a »righteous person« fighting against governor Nara-hara Shigeru's policy and collusion with the former local elite was first drawn in a biography by Ōsato Kōei in 1935. This image of Jahana had survived for many decades.²²

***Okinawa kindaiishi* As Seen From the »Outside«**

A valuable contribution to the study of Okinawan modern thought also comes from scholars of the *hondo*.²³ In 1993, Kano Masanao, who had already broadened his research to include Okinawan history in some of his previous work (Kano 1983, 1987, 1988, 1989), reexamines Iha in a book aptly called *Okinawa no fuchi. Iha Fuyū to sono jidai* [The abysses of Okinawa. Iha Fuyū and his epoch] (Kano 1993). As Kano himself declares, his work owes much to the previous research on Iha (1993: vii, xi). Nevertheless, by adopting an innovative approach to Iha's writing, Kano is able to explore his thought in a new way, considering it more of »a work to be read« than as

20 In 1900, Ōta wrote that »if one wonders what the pressing needs for today's Okinawa are, then they are completely the same as for the other prefectures. In extreme terms, they are just like those of the other prefectures even in what they sneeze« (cited in Hiyane and Isa 1993–1996, vol. 2: 58).

21 Such an aspect is also emphasized by Ishida Masaharu (1997: 62–75) who, by remarking on the link existing between the modernization of Okinawan society and its assimilation to Japan, puts Ōta's support of *dōka* policy in relation with his longing for a modernization of Okinawa.

22 Jahana's political activity and behavior was reexamined by Akira Arakawa in 1971 and in 1981, vol. 2: 3–76; for a reconsideration of Jahana in light of the results of Isa's work in Western languages, see Smits 2002 and Caroli 2005.

23 In this regard, it would be useful to remember that the topic of Okinawa's return to Japan gave not only a strong impulse to the research on the modern history of Okinawa in regard to subject matters and approaches, but also stimulated a deep interest in *Okinawa mondai* among scholars from the mainland to such a degree that the following years were defined as a »period of popularization« of Okinawan studies; see Nakamata 1992: 7, cit. in Ōsato 1995: 66.

»a source to be used«. ²⁴ This method is particularly successful in its application to the work of Iha, who used to revise and sometimes rewrite his work. Kano, in fact, interprets Iha's thought not only by considering the message of Iha's final texts, but also in light of Iha's revisions of his own writing.

While utilizing different approaches and methods, the works mentioned above share the common aim of analyzing Okinawan modern thought by considering both the general context in which it was formulated and the different paths that Okinawan intellectual and political leaders have followed in their research for Okinawa subjectivity. These works also allow us to go beyond the immediate meaning of the ideas, theories, and opinions expressed by the leading figures of modern Okinawa, in order to grasp the ambitions and aspirations as well as the anxieties and contradictions that characterized each of their public and private lives.

In this regard, the works on Iha Fuyū produced by Tomiyama Ichirō in the last decade are the result of a positive exchange of theories and methods of analysis developed outside Japan, especially in the field of cultural studies and post colonialism. ²⁵ Tomiyama's analysis is of particular interest because he focuses his attention more on »how Iha speaks« than on »what Iha speaks about« (Yakabi 2000: 10). In other words, he is more interested in the *subject* than in the *object* of the narration, and this allows him to listen to other forms of language, such as the interior language, the language of consciousness, and the language of memory. This approach is especially fruitful when Tomiyama compares the works that Iha wrote before and those he wrote after he arrived at his »intellectual turning point« in the wake of the economic crisis of the 1920s, which produced a »massive proletarianization of Okinawa« (Tomiyama 1977: 17, 25, 1998b: 172, 178). It is well known that Iha's »turning point« was the cessation of his search for the uniqueness of the Ryūkyūans and the adoption of a new perspective of them as a branch of the Japanese ethnic tree, »southern islanders« characterized by exoticism and primitiveness. Tomiyama explores the reasons for this change by considering the problem of »a premonition of doing violence« or the »presentiments of violence« manifest in »the psychological relations between the colonizer and the colonized«. ²⁶ Tomiyama's research not only highlights new elements within Iha's intellectual and personal dilemma, but is also a valuable contribution to the history of thought and social history, as well as to the fields of cultural studies and research on the national state. Actually, the ambiguities and the contradictions characterizing the construction of Japan as a national state (in which Tokyo while constructing a *kokkashintō* founded on the as-

²⁴ This is noted by Yakabi 2000: 18; see also Gabe 1993: 342.

²⁵ See for example Tomiyama 1998a and 1999.

²⁶ Tomiyama 1998b: 165; this problem is analysed in Tomiyama 1997: 5–10, and in even greater detail in Tomiyama 2002: 3–42.

sertion of racial exclusiveness of Japanese people, also created a multiethnic empire by assembling new territories and populations) were mirrored in Iha's trouble. For Iha, as well as for his mainland colleagues, the never-ending search for a theoretical formulation capable of defining the idea of self can be regarded as an attempt at chasing after the development of Japan's colonial policy and fortune.

Reflection on these themes also comes from non-Japanese scholars, such as Alan Christy (1993) who, like Tomiyama, recognizes ethnicity as a historically contingent category. He emphasizes the ambiguity of Okinawa's position which, although clearly located within Japan's territorial and administrative boundaries, was considered in ethnic terms as outside of Japan's limits, and thus not any different from Taiwan and Korea. In this regard, Christy mentions the »House of People« representing Japan's Empire at the 1903 Fifth Industrial Exhibition in Osaka, where a Japanese man with a whip presided over Koreans, Ainu, Taiwanese, and two Okinawan women, underlining the Okinawans' »uncomfortable proximity to colonized ethnic groups in the Japanese social imaginary« (Christy 1993: 607–608).²⁷ Christy's view that Okinawa should be included in studies on Japanese colonialism is shared by Gregory Smits who, in examining the »national« and international dimension of the *Ryūkyū shobun*, defines it as »the first step on Japan's way to becoming a colonial power« (Smits 2001: 281). Smits also states that Japan's annexation of Ryūkyū and its subsequent administration of the islands reveal »many of the tensions and contradictions inherent in the modern state's effort to forge the people of the Japanese islands into a national project« that he calls »making Japanese« (Smits 2001: 281). The complex set of relations between Okinawa and Japan is also considered by Julia Yonetani (2000), who investigates the historical conditions under which assertions of Okinawans came to the fore, i.e. the transformation of Japan into a modern state. In stressing the ambivalence of the concept of »sameness« on which the assimilation policy, the assertion of common ancestry and the Okinawans' search for an Okinawan identity were founded, she states that such ambivalence »reinforced unequal power relations both in assimilationist rhetoric and anthropological studies« and, at the same time, »could be used as a tool to reconcile contradictory assertions or inconsistencies within a tenet of »sameness« (Yonetani 2000: 17).²⁸ The way in which the assimilation policy interacted with Okinawans during Meiji period, as well as how such a policy

27 Christy also mentions the reaction of Okinawan newspapers against the inclusion of Okinawans in such a display, which considered it to be a denial of them as »real Japanese«; in this regard also compare Smits 1999: 150. As well as this, Christy asserts that »representing the colonized (territory or people) as feminine is yet another standard trope of colonialist representation« (1993: 621).

28 Yonetani also argues that »the obscuring of difference and attempted neutralizing of opposition were also an essential part of Japanese discourse on Okinawa«.

and the response from local people were reinterpreted and reconstructed in the following years, are examined by Steve Rabson (1999: 140), who, while recognizing the elements of coercion characterizing Meiji assimilation policy, also points out the voluntary, and often vigorous, efforts by Okinawans to identify with Japan, especially in the wake of the successful war against Qing China.

The intellectual and political dimension of the complex question of identity is investigated by Gregory Smits who, although focusing on the prenational modalities of identity construction in early-modern Ryūkyū, also offers interesting suggestions in elucidating the process of constructing Okinawan identities in the modern period (Smits 1999: 3–9, 143–162). Identity in modern Okinawa is also examined by Richard Siddle (1998) by considering the »contrasting paradigms« of colonialism and modernization. Actually, he agrees with Tomiyama Ichirō's idea that »a clear conceptualization of [internal colonialism] is usually lacking«, and wonders whether »modernization (albeit delayed) as a region of Japan [could not be] a more suitable paradigm than colonialism« for analyzing the Okinawan case (Siddle 1998: 120–121). Siddle, who is also the author of a book on the assimilation of the Ainu (Siddle 1996),²⁹ notes that although Hokkaidō and Okinawa enjoyed different forms of administration and occupied different positions in the »evolutionary ladder of becoming ›Japanese‹«, both the northern Ainu and the southern Okinawans represented »peripheral Others« in opposition to which Japanese scholars tried to define the origins and the identity of the »Japanese race« (Siddle 1998: 124–125). The tendency to relate the Okinawan case to the assimilation of Ainu is evidenced by the growing number of works published in the last few years,³⁰ as well as by the presence of a book section dedicated to both Okinawan and Ainu studies in many Japanese bookshops. Some works focus on the political construction of the boundaries of both *Japan* and the *Japanese* that have resulted from the inclusion of regions and people that were formerly considered outside Japan and the Japanese in several aspects. The problematic position of both the Okinawan and the Ainu was caused by the dynamic of »inclusion/exclusion« which characterized the process of territorial extension of Japan, as well as by the construction of the concept of being *Japanese* through a simultaneous process of inclusion/exclusion.³¹

29 Here (p. 51) he defines the incorporation of Hokkaidō into the Japanese state as »a long-term colonial project«.

30 See for example Hirota 1990; Sawada 1996; Tanaka, Kuwabara, and Gabe (eds.) 2001.

31 Compare Nishizato 1992, who reconsiders the ethnic and racial dimension of the *Ryūkyū shobun* in relation to the construction of Japan's frontiers. In this regard, other well-known works should be remembered, such as Morris-Suzuki 1998 and Oguma 1998, 2003.

The Crisis of National Histories

In general terms, the development of new methodology and approaches of historiography on modern Okinawa is also one result of a more general reconsideration of the relationships among regional history, national history, and world history. It is also the reflection of several processes that began around 1980, such as the affirmation of the subjectivity of difference which, in the academic field, is translated into cultural studies and gender studies, as well as the relativization and the deconstruction of national histories.³² Undoubtedly, the process of constructing a national state is still central to a historical inquiry that does not cease to investigate the problems of the genesis and development of a national state, modern nationalism, or the construction and preservation of identity, and that considers the centrality these themes continue to occupy in the political agenda. The new orientations that historiography has adopted, in regard to Japan as well, allow one to look at such a process in light of the different meanings it has assumed in different geographical, social, or cultural contexts. Indeed, despite the reiterated and clumsy attempts to adopt a Yamatocentric vision to depict the history of the Japanese as a linear and coherent process, it becomes more and more difficult to look at the history of Japan without focusing on the regional, social, and cultural polycentrism throughout the region known today as Japan.

The contribution of historical inquiry on Ryūkyū and Okinawa to the historiography on Japan in the last decades and, more broadly speaking, the relevance of research on Ryūkyū and Okinawa to studies on Japanese culture are significant. By claiming a new role for Okinawan history in Japanese history, for example, as a center from which to observe the historical development of Japan, historiography on Okinawa has represented a challenge that also involves scholars on Japan. Indeed, looking at the history of Okinawa and, above all, at how Okinawans wrote their own history means listening to a narration that contains many and significant divergent points from the official history told by the center. In short, Okinawa is able to tell one of the other histories generated by the building of Japan's national state and colonial empire or, alternatively, by the modernization and the industrialization in Japan.

The vitality of historiography on Okinawa also derives from the dialectical and fruitful relations it maintains with historians who are not specialists on

³² In Japan, the major contribution in this regard came from the eminent historian Yoshihiko Amino; in English, see his *Deconstructing »Japan«* (Amino 1992). Worthy of mention is Oguma 1995 which was translated into English with the title *A Genealogy of »Japanese« Self-images* (2002). The approach aiming at deconstructing the image of Japan as a monoethnic and homogeneous nation is also adopted in many English works such as Dale 1986; Weiner (ed.) 1997; Maher and Macdonald (eds.) 1995; Lie 2001.

Okinawa. This collaboration has produced interesting works on the history of Japan and Asia which recognize the historical subjectivity of Okinawa by adopting a polycentric approach.³³ At the same time, historiography on Ryūkyū and Okinawa also shows that it can maintain its own autonomy, which is also demonstrated by the relevance that it accords to certain events in order to distinguish the different periods within the historical process. With regard to the modern period, for instance, the land and fiscal reforms applied between 1899 and 1903, which produced the definitive dismantling of the system that had survived up to the kingdom's dissolution, are viewed as an event marking the passage from the first modern period (*kindai zenki*) to the second modern period (*kōki kindai*), in which Okinawa was fully incorporated into Japan's imperial system (Nishizato 1995: 57). Hence, such a change is considered to be significant not simply because it testifies to the delay of the Japanese administration in carrying out economic reforms in this prefecture, but because of the consequences it generated in the social and economic life of the Okinawans.

In conclusion, by utilizing fresh methodologies and approaches, historical inquiry on Okinawa has made considerable progress in both reexamining issues and in investigating new topics. Nevertheless, many questions are still to be considered, and further progress in historical discipline is needed. In the field of the history of thought, for example, Yakabi Osamu has drawn scholars' attention to the problem of the conceptual rules, by underlining the tendency to make a quite generalized use of some concepts, such as those of *kōminka* or *dōka*, which instead require a more specific social and temporal contextualization (Yakabi 2000: 14–15). He also notes that research on the members of *Okinawa gaku* mainly focuses on those who resided in the *hondo*, but overlooks the activity of those living in their native country, whose literary productions are mostly unpublished and whose thoughts have still to be explored (Yakabi 2000: 12–14). Indeed, there are still many gaps in the historical research on modern Okinawa, including those caused by the objective difficulty of collecting materials. This problem particularly affects a region where the tragic experience of war has dispersed and often obliterated many traces of its past. Hence, in Okinawa the problem of collecting, preserving, and utilizing historical sources is of crucial importance in the preservation of its history, its past memory and its cultural heritage. In this regard, one should remember the vivid activity with which many local institutions and organizations in Okinawa continue to collect material by putting together documentary fragments or by transcribing oral narratives. In some cases, this

33 In this regard, it should be remembered, for instance, the series entitled *Umi to rettō bunka*, in eleven volumes edited by Amino *et al.* between 1990 and 1993, and *Ajia no naka no Nihonshi*, edited by Arano *et al.* in six volumes 1992–1993.

activity resembles a homemade history, and indeed it is exactly in this where its great value lies.

***Okinawa kindaiishi* Between Historical Subjectivity and De-Historicization**

What has been said above does not aim to give an exhaustive review of the historical studies on modern Okinawa, which are larger in scope than described here. Much could still be said on recent research on the social and economic life of Okinawans during the so-called period of preserving old customs (*kyūkan onzon*) or after the revision of the land and fiscal assets between 1899 and 1903, on the migration of Okinawans and the conditions they confronted far from their native soil or, also, on the tragic experience of war. Still, as Takara Kurayoshi notes in his contribution to this volume, the progress achieved by historiography in the last few decades has affected research on modern Okinawa to a lesser degree than those on early-modern Ryūkyū. He also notes that, although this progress benefited from the relevant role of researchers from mainland Japan and foreign countries, a major part was played by Okinawan scholars. Actually, while the number of scholars from both mainland Japan and abroad who are engaged in Okinawan modern history has grown considerably in the last years, such a trend is not perceptible in the generation of young Okinawans.

In this regard, one must ask oneself why the progress achieved by historiography during the last decades does not correspond to an increase of attention among Okinawans toward such a past. Surely, the motivations that stimulate the interest toward Okinawan modern history today are quite different from those initiating studies during the 1960s and 1970s, as is perceptible in the topics and methods prevailing in current research. Actually, after the reversion, historical investigation on modern Okinawa has been purged of much past political and ideological conditioning, and it seems as though it is hard for young Okinawans to find new motivation to investigate the past of their region. Still, even if political, economic, social, and cultural contexts have changed in the last three decades, the *Okinawa mondai* continues to have some consequence in the islands' life, although the media discourse tends to de-politicize and de-historicize Okinawa's past and present.

Such a trend is apparent in the »Okinawa boom« that started in the 1990s, when Japan's mass media began to pay more attention to Okinawa and Okinawan culture (music, cuisine, art, and so on). The discourses prevailing in this phenomenon suggest an image of Okinawa as an »exotic paradise« characterized by a slow life style, a tropical nature, and a gentle people, which has not only proved advantageous to the islands' tourist industry, but has also created a kind of *furusato* where Japanese from mainland can »go back« and find their original and uncontaminated identity. It is exemplified by the representation offered by the serial *Chura san* broadcast by NHK in 2001 where the female protagonist is presented as a quasi-unreal, innocent

where the female protagonist is presented as a quasi-unreal, innocent person coming from a place where true genuineness can still be found. As has been noted, even if the peripheral position and culture difference of the »gentle southern islanders« living on »comfort islands« are firmly established, Okinawa and Okinawans are not represented as »the other without« but as »the other within« (Tanaka 2003). Also, the life of the protagonist, who was born the day of Okinawa's return to Japan, seems to reflect an image of the history of post-reversion Okinawa where neither the past of wartime and U.S. military rule nor the presence of military bases undermine the Okinawan paradise. Such a stereotype image, which is also recurrent in many recent magazines and books on the »Okinawa culture« clearly omits various serious issues, for instance, the heavy concentration of U.S. military bases, the consequences it generates on the daily life of people living in near them and the political tensions it causes both inside and outside Okinawa.

It is difficult to determine to what degree the de-politicization and de-historicization prevailing in such a representation of Okinawa and Okinawans have affected their vision of the surrounding world, their perception of themselves, and their attitude toward their present and past. Still, since the media play a powerful role in every mass society, it is quite hard to believe that the stereotype image of Okinawa proposed by the media could be inefficacious in obliterating or reconciling the problematical and conflicting relationship that has existed between Okinawa and the *hondo* since the time of *Ryūkyū shobun*. Hence, the future of historical research on modern Okinawa depends not only on the progress achieved by academic activity in recognizing Okinawa as historical entity, but also on scholars' capacity to maintain a dialectic relationship with the rest of society by both providing fresh stimuli and illuminating the many other sides of this »exotic paradise«.

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Part III: Images of Japan, the Role of
Museums and Collections, and
Japanese-European Contacts

Ulrike Schaede
Japan's Business Practices in the 21st Century
What We Thought We »Knew« That Is No Longer So^{*}

1. Introduction

This paper argues that between 1998 and 2006, Japan's political economy has undergone a »strategic inflection«. It introduces this argument by taking the perspective of the manager of a large Japanese company. In short, the competitive setting – laws, rules, regulation, markets, competitors – in Japan has been fundamentally altered such that corporate strategies of the postwar period (1945–1990s) have been replaced by new strategic thinking. Whereas previously, Japanese corporate executives were successful if they maximized market share and sales revenues, in the 21st century strategies are directed at profitability and nimble strategic positioning.¹

By early 2007, Japan had experienced its longest »boom period« since record-keeping began: with over 60 consecutive quarters of GDP growth, this was longer even than the fabled »Izanagi Boom« of the late 1960s that propelled Japan from a developing to a developed industrialized economy. During the 2000s boom, news from Japan began to change in dramatic fashion. For example, in 2005 we were suddenly confronted with stories of an internet startup company named »Livedoor« launching a spectacular hostile takeover bid for an old, established broadcasting station. Just a few months later, the media could not get enough of another takeover attempt, when Oji Paper tried to gobble up its second largest competitor. What was so spectacular about these events was that they combined many things hitherto unheard of in Japan: hostile takeovers (at least fought out in the open, in a nation so con-

* It is my great pleasure to have been invited to Professor Kreiner's 2006 Bonn conference, and to contribute to this *Festschrift*. My years as a student at Bonn University in the 1980s were truly formative, and I am indebted to Professor Kreiner for his insistence that every discipline, including economics, can benefit from the research tools of the *minzokugaku-sha*. Upon his arrival in Bonn, Professor Kreiner challenged the existing definition of »Japanese Studies« in Germany and, together with his team of hard-charging assistants, invited students to explore whatever area of Japan they were most interested in. These trailblazing moves and the re-definition of Japanese Studies they brought about have shaped my career.

1 This chapter represents a summary of my forthcoming book, *Japan's Corporate Renewal: New Business Strategies in the 21st Century*.

cerned about »saving face«), startup companies striking it rich, and old stuffy paper-industry giants engaging in a *sumō*-bash of sorts. What had happened?

Since the late 1990s, Japan has undergone a transformation in financial markets, business organization, and regulation that has required successful Japanese firms to adapt their strategies towards market mechanisms. During this period, of Japan's roughly 1,700 laws more than 1,200 were rewritten and revised.² While a large portion of these changes were simply due to government reorganization and renaming of ministries, which required just rewording of the preamble, the Commercial Code in particular was substantially amended annually between 1997 and 2006, and in 2006 was replaced by the new »Corporation Law« (*kaisha-hō*). In addition to other new laws, such as regarding bankruptcy, financial instruments and labor relations, Japan's legal and regulatory environment has been drastically altered. Perhaps most important is a shift in the underlying logic of legal doctrine: whereas previously, everything that was not explicitly allowed in the law was therefore automatically prohibited, in 21st century Japan everything is allowed, with disputes to be settled in the courts. For a corporate manager, this opens up great possibilities: everything goes – unless, of course, it is illegal in a criminal sense in which case there will be prosecution.³ Thus, in 2005 mergers, acquisitions, hostile takeovers, spin-offs, and other possibilities of reorganization and become possible, accessible, and viable.

A comparison with Germany is interesting in this regard: Germany, too, has undergone great regulatory revision and has significantly revised its rules on banking, corporate governance, financial markets, labor, and many more. Most of these changes were triggered by harmonization pressures from the European Union. Yet, while new and encompassing, in comparison with Japan most of the revisions remained incremental in nature, in that they built on the existing cornerstones of Civil Law. In contrast, Japan's legal changes in the early 21st century were disruptive, as they mark a move away from Civil Law thinking, and towards a more case-based, market-oriented way of legal interpretation.

What this means for the Japan observer is that our previous ways of interpreting Japanese business have to be adjusted if we want to understand what drives Japan's political economy.

2 Interview, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, 2007.

3 Whereas very few Japanese business executives were jailed in the postwar period, the early 21st century has already seen a number of cases where executives were unceremoniously sent to prison, including Mr. Horie, the CEO of Livedoor, the startup which raided Nippon Broadcasting System.

2. What We Thought We »Knew«

Japan business research reached a high point in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when Japan's economic success resulted in growing trade imbalances that triggered trade negotiations, often vitriolic, with the United States and to a lesser extent Europe. Research abounded on specific Japanese business features, and many scholars to this day rely on that research.

One dominant feature of Japanese business in the postwar period was the horizontal *keiretsu* (business groups). These were »inter-market« groups, meaning that they combined companies operating in different markets which cross-owned shares and engaged in preferential trade and mutual corporate governance (e.g., Gerlach 1992, Lincoln and Gerlach 2004). Consisting of independent firms, these were not conglomerates, but they formed tight-knit networks difficult to penetrate. The main strategic purpose of these groups was to provide insurance against business fluctuations in a rapidly growing economy: by locking in shareholders and trading partners, companies could ascertain a minimum degree of stability in share prices and sales revenues. The foregone return on investment in cross-held shares was the insurance premium.⁴

Moreover, at the core of each of the six dominant business groups was a main bank in charge of providing loans to group members. Loans were the primary vehicle for financing due to interest rate regulation that made loans cheaper and easier than bond or stock issues. Given very lenient disclosure and accounting rules, the main bank had an information monopoly on the inner workings of the company, and assumed the role of »corporate governance« agent: when a company fell into distress, an informal financial workout was structured, and the main bank stepped in to manage a turnaround.

The third »fact« we know of Japanese business is »lifetime employment«. Interestingly, even what we »knew« may, from hindsight, not have been entirely correct, because it was difficult to gauge just how many employees enjoyed such »lifetime« contracts. This is because there was no contract or legal stipulation of »lifetime«, rather, this developed as a business norm, reinforced by court decisions that made it prohibitively expensive to lay people off.⁵ One number that was widely mentioned was that roughly 25% of the workforce were in such employment relations, but Araki (2002) estimates that perhaps as many as 80% of workers could have had a claim in court – had they gone to court (which was expensive and difficult). Whatever the proportion, for the manager of a large Japanese firm, lifetime employment

4 See Nakatani 1986 for the development of the »insurance« argument, as well as Hoshi and Kashyap 2001 and Aoki and Patrick 1994.

5 See Schaefer 2007 for details; also Araki 2002; see Abegglen and Stalk 1985, who originally coined the phrase »lifetime employment«, for a representative analysis of postwar business strategy.

translated into high fixed costs of labor which could not easily be adjusted to business cycles, making insurance and stability even more relevant for successful management.

Another aspect we »know« about postwar Japan is its production system, which rested on a particular system of subcontracting (*shitauke*). Large manufacturers supported distinct networks of suppliers which were managed in a way to minimize the typical challenges associated with outsourcing (hold-up problems, asymmetric information, moral hazard). By cooperating closely with suppliers, and even owning stakes in the first-tier suppliers, manufacturers created a group of loyal, often exclusive, part manufacturers.⁶

And finally, a well-studied aspect of postwar Japan was »industrial policy« and administrative guidance (e.g. Johnson 1982, Schaede 2000). Industrial policy aimed to affect resource allocation by supporting selected industries and companies to optimize the growth effort towards exports. Extensive entry regulation limited the number of competing firms. Their ongoing efforts were regulated on an informal basis, through repeated interaction and information sharing with the regulator. As one government official explained it, prior to making a large-scale investment, companies would »hedge« by informing the regulating ministry; once they received official blessing, they could count on the government to come to their rescue should the project falter.⁷ In return, companies would support government efforts towards fast growth, including the expansion of lifetime employment.

Overall, this system was geared towards limiting the risk of exogenous shocks on the individual company by tying firms up in networks. Mutual support and bailouts assured the longevity of firms in a rapidly growing and changing market environment. In addition to working closely with the government, banks, and group member firms, companies also aimed to stabilize through diversification: by operating in multiple separate businesses, they could ensure to remain in business even if one sector of their operations were to be replaced by new technologies. Textile companies diversifying into pharmaceuticals, electronic firms entering new product markets, or construction companies adding areas of expertise are examples of such diversification.⁸

6 See, e.g., Williamson 1985 and McMillan 1990; this aspect of Japanese business organization will not be further explored in this article. See Schaede (2007) or Schaede (forthcoming) for an analysis of how »hollowing out« and globalization, as well as the shift to modulization in outsourcing has affected Japanese subcontracting.

7 Interview, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, 2007.

8 Diversification was further fueled by the high dependence on bank loans: given their high exposure to banks, companies had to ascertain that they could pay interest. This was accomplished through constantly growing revenues. This resulted in two dominant corporate strategies: (1) a focus on increasing sales, and (2) constant growth through diversification into new business segments.

To this, the economic bubble of 1987–1991 added an element of completely unrelated diversification. Based more on hubris than on business rationale, large companies aggressively branched out into new business areas. Steel companies investing in golf courses, electronic firms buying U.S. movie studios, or train companies entering retailing and department store operations were celebrated at the time, but proved to be unwise business decisions when the real estate and financial markets collapsed. In the early 1993, almost all Japanese companies found themselves dragged down by non-profitable non-core businesses, and the entire banking system was mired in bad debt: since most of the »bubble diversification« had been financed based on inflated values of real estate, when the bubble popped, interest rates on these loans could no longer be paid but the underlying value of the collateral had also evaporated.

3. Strategic Inflection: From Diversification to »Choose and Focus«

The severe recession of the 1990s and the banking crisis of 1998 necessitated a fundamental reorientation of Japan's business organization and with it the processes of regulation and oversight. This shift marked a strategic inflection point in that the previous ways and processes of doing things were no longer a means to success; to compete, companies and banks had to completely reorient their business strategies (Burgelman and Grove 1996).

During the postwar period, banks addressed nonperforming loans by structuring informal turnarounds, in which loans were left on the books and covered annually by loss reserves taken from bank profits. The idea was to save the company by structuring a turnaround and recouping the debt in the long run. In the 1990s, informal debt refinancing put such tremendous stress on banks' profits that it caused a banking crisis in 1998 in which Japan came perilously close to a financial meltdown.⁹ This necessitated a switch to direct bad-loan disposal methods, in which the bank suffers a one-time »extraordinary« loss by writing off the loan, and initiates bankruptcy procedures and

9 The bankruptcies of a city bank and a leading investment bank in November 1997 revealed that most large banks were unable to reach the capital adequacy ratio of 8% required for banks operating internationally. The government injected a total of ¥9.3 trillion (roughly \$90 billion) into the countries' leading banks. Fierce political debate translated into stringent rules for recipient banks to improve their business, including an aggressive cleanup of bad loans. A 1998 legal revision allowed holding companies and enabled the 13 leading banks to merge into four large financial groups (Mizuho, MUFG, Sumitomo-Mitsui, and Resona). Two long-term credit banks under government receivership were revived by two U.S. investment funds into Shinsei and Aozora. All this exacerbated an already ongoing recession, increasing pressure on the government to execute legal reforms. Amyx 2004 analyses the political background to this crisis.

»restructuring« (closing down or selling off the least profitable business units). These sell-offs provided a market for mergers and acquisitions, as business units were for sale at low prices, with an opportunity to put these businesses under new management and turn them around.

For large companies, the new strategy of the early 21st century was corporate reorganization under the labeled of »choose and focus« (*sentaku to shūchū*). Referring to unbundling, this was a call for companies to identify their core businesses and concentrate all their resources (human, capital, and managerial) on winning in these core businesses. This strategy involved shedding non-core business units and downsizing through outsourcing all processes not directly contributive to core profits.

Thus, banks and corporations were suddenly in the business of active reorganization, pursuing direct loan disposal methods and a reorientation of corporate strategy. Both were enabled and facilitated by new rules and regulations pertaining to corporate reorganization and spin-offs, mergers and acquisitions, and bankruptcies. Understanding that the existing system stymied restructuring, the government had begun successive revisions of the Commercial Code in 1998. These culminated in a new »Corporation Law« of 2006, which replaced the Commercial Code as the main set of rules on corporate behavior. As mentioned, this law was based on a complete reversal in regulatory philosophy, by shifting from the previous logic of »ex ante regulation« (i.e., everything that is not explicitly allowed is therefore prohibited) towards »post-remedy« rules (everything that is not specifically prohibited is therefore allowed, with courts ruling on problematic issues as they occur).¹⁰ Whereas in the postwar period, corporate management had limited flexibility but could not easily be held responsible, in the 21st century, management is free to design new business strategies and manage the company as it sees fit, but the law has greatly empowered the rights of shareholders, the need for disclosure, and the accountability of management for its actions. The 2006 Corporation Law is the clearest sign of the strategic inflection in Japanese business organization.

Legal Reforms

The first set of changes concerned regulation, transparency and oversight, which began with the »Big Bang« financial reforms of 1998. The Big Bang, importantly, also included the 1998 revision of the Foreign Exchange Law, which removed last vestiges of cross-border financial controls, thus greatly

¹⁰ Fujita 2006 describes the shift as one from »preemptive rules, with informal bureaucratic discretion in ambiguous areas« to »freedom in principle, with ongoing formal oversight«. This shift had formed the basis of Commercial Code revisions since 2000; see Ministry of Justice, »Japanese Corporate Law: Drastic Changes in 2000–2001 and the Future«, www.moj.go.jp/ENGLISH/information/jcld-01.html.

facilitating financial operations by foreigners in Japan. In terms of domestic markets, Big Bang reforms (and their subsequent continuations) covered almost all financial areas, and had in common a big push towards stricter disclosure, in particular, a shift to accounting at current market values as opposed to historical book values, as well as consolidated balance sheets. New transparency was paired with reforms in financial regulation, as the previous reliance on informal process regulation through administrative guidance and behind-closed-doors workouts was replaced with by-the-book inspections and meaningful sanctions of violators. In particular, with the establishment of the Financial Services Agency in 1998, and the fast rise to true authority by that agency, even laggard banks had to face the reality of their non-performing loan quandary. Beginning with the first quarter of fiscal year 2003, the Tokyo Stock Exchange introduced a requirement of quarterly earning statements for all listed companies (this rule was turned into law in 2007).

A second change came with new bankruptcy legislation. In the postwar period, failing firms had little choice but to submit to an informal workout by the main banks, because existing laws were too cumbersome for »Chapter 11« type reorganizations. The 2000 »Civil Rehabilitation Law« facilitated such reorganization, and together with the 2003 revision of the »Corporate Reorganization Law« introduced new processes for efficiently structured turnarounds. The courts of Tokyo and Osaka established special divisions to handle such procedures efficiently. A 2001 guideline for »out-of-court workouts« clarified the structure of bank-led turnarounds. Finally, the 2004 revision of the Liquidation Law established clear-cut rules for a shutdown of debtors and a fair distribution of assets. All this triggered a wave of shutdowns and reorganizations, and helped greatly in cleaning up non-performing loans.

The third area of reform pertained to corporate restructuring and reorganization. At the end of this process, Japanese companies now have a variety of options for reorganization through acquisitions or spin-offs. Stock market rules were reconfigured to allow for the exchange of ownership stakes, friendly or hostile; for example, in 1998 stock buybacks were allowed to enable companies to repurchase the equity overhang created during the bubble years. It became possible to swap stocks to accomplish a merger, and by allowing a variety of different types of stock, companies could give different rights to different types of owners (e.g., for a takeover defense). Labor laws were also revised, in particular with the 2003 revision of the Labor Standards Law, to clarify the conditions under which dismissals are justified, thus affording companies more freedom in reorganization.

A final set of revisions concerned corporate governance. For corporate strategy, the shift towards ex-post dispute settlement means greatly increased managerial flexibility but heightening responsibility. The 2006 Corporation Law is explicit about shift, and introduces new means of oversight, by grant-

ing shareholders significant monitoring powers. Japanese annual shareholders' meetings in the past were known for record-breaking brevity (lest any trouble occur). This has been replaced by newly defined and much increased shareholder rights that facilitate, and structure the processes of, challenging management decisions.

4. Changes in the Competitive Environment

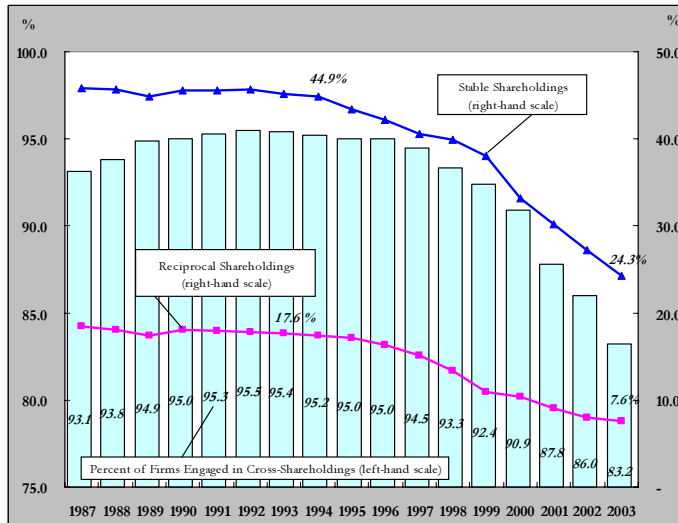
The Unwinding of Cross-Shareholdings

These changes occurred before the backdrop of a larger, underlying shift in corporate finance and corporate governance (Hoshi and Kashyap 2001). Beginning in the mid-1980s, financial deregulation allowed large firms to diversify their sources of funding, and many began to issue bonds and stocks more aggressively. By 2005, this had lowered the debt-equity ratio by more than half for all large firms, and even more dramatically in certain industries. Over time, bond and equity issues have risen such that, in 1998, for the first time since WWII Japanese large firms relied on more external financing in the form of stocks and bonds, than on bank loans. The banks' role has further declined since, whereas market financing (through stock and bond issues) continues to rise.

Related to the decline in the role of the main bank was the loosening of business group (*keiretsu*) ties. With the possible exception of the Mitsubishi Group, all horizontal groups have greatly reduced their cohesion, including in terms of preferential trade. One means of cohesion – both between banks and their clients, and among *keiretsu* members – had long been mutual shareholdings based on a tacit agreement that these would not be traded, in particular in times of crisis. These stable shareholdings had limited the number of shares actually traded, making the Japanese stock market very thin (i.e., illiquid). Thin markets constitute a problem for investors because positions cannot easily be altered in reaction to new information. Many Japanese stocks were easily subjected to price manipulations because few shares could be bought or sold, leading to an amplified effect of any shifts in supply and demand.

This, too, began to change when cross-shareholdings unraveled throughout the 1990s. Figure 1 shows a marked decline in cross-shareholdings, especially after 1998, from 45% of all shares outstanding in the 1980s, to 38% in 1999 and 24% in 2003 (NLI 2004, DRI 2005). Moreover, a subgroup of stable shareholding, the strictly reciprocal »mutual shareholdings« (*mochiai*) have also greatly declined, from 17% of all shares outstanding, to 7% in 2003. The phenomenon had become so small that on April 7, 2005 NLI announced the termination this portion of its survey on its website (Suzuki 2005).

Figure 1. Stable shareholdings and reciprocal shareholdings, 1987–2003



Source: Adapted from NLI 2003.

Companies were eager to reduce their stable shareholdings, because these had caused great losses in the 1990s, just when profitability was becoming a critical measure. The new accounting rules, effective 2001, of mark-to-market of cross-held shares added pressure to dissolve holdings that deteriorated performance data. The weakening of intra-group trade relations made »friendship shares« strategically less relevant. Adding to this were the bank mergers: companies that held stable shares in several banks to assure continued borrowing from these banks, could now reduce their holdings to just one (Kuroki 2003, Schaede 2006).

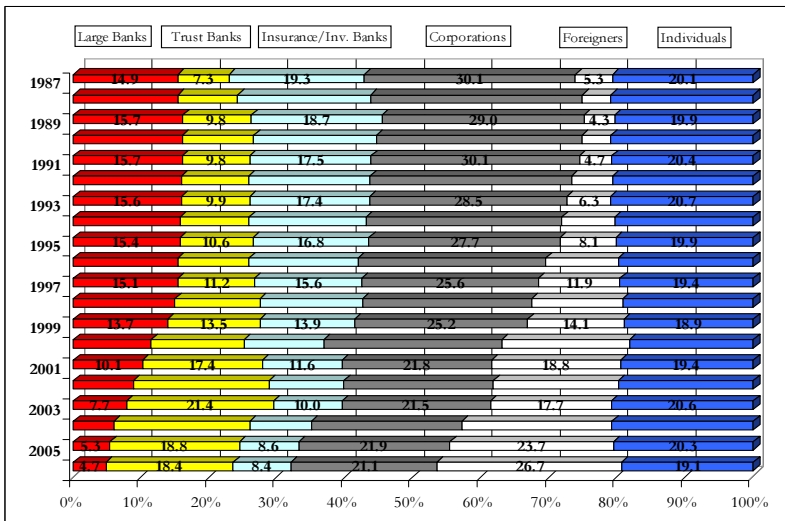
The unraveling of cross-shareholdings introduced new liquidity into the market which made stock prices meaningful. In addition, Japan suddenly became attractive to foreign investors. The write-off of non-performing loans and the aggressive »choose and focus« strategies made assets (firms, real estate, and shares) available for purchase. The government's zero-interest rate policy meant that financing these purchases was cheap. Moreover, in comparison to the US, Japanese assets were inexpensive. With legal processes clarified and the market offering a tremendous business opportunity, institutional investors and investment funds arrived in Japan.

The Rise of New Shareholders: Institutional Investors

The changes in corporate finance and stable cross-shareholdings resulted in a dramatic shift in Japan's shareholder structure. At the height of the post-

war system in the mid-1980s, corporations and banks together owned more than 70% of shares, while foreigners held less than 5%. The unraveling of cross-shareholdings has given rise, in their stead, to two new groups of owners: institutional investors and foreigners. Figure 2 illustrates this shift: as of March 2006, foreigners represented the largest groups of investors at the TSE with 26.7% (in comparison, the share of foreign investors at the New York Stock Exchange was roughly 7% at the time). Industries in which foreign investors held more than 30% in 2005 included pharmaceuticals (37%), insurance (35%), precision machinery (34%), electronics (33%), non-bank financial services (32.5%), and automobiles and real estate (both at 31%) (TSE 2006: 8).

Figure 2. Ownership percentages, by type of investor (in % of total market capitalization, as of March of each year)



Source: TSE 2006.

A second factor contributing to changes in corporate governance is the emergence of Japanese institutional investors in the form of trust banks. As we can see from Figure 2, all financial institutions (large commercial banks, trust banks, insurance companies, and others) reduced their holdings from a total 41.5% in 1986, to 31.5% in 2005. Within that group, the shrinkage in bank and insurance company holdings was counterbalanced by a substantial increase in the role of trust banks, from less than 10% in the 1980s, to 18.4% in 2005.

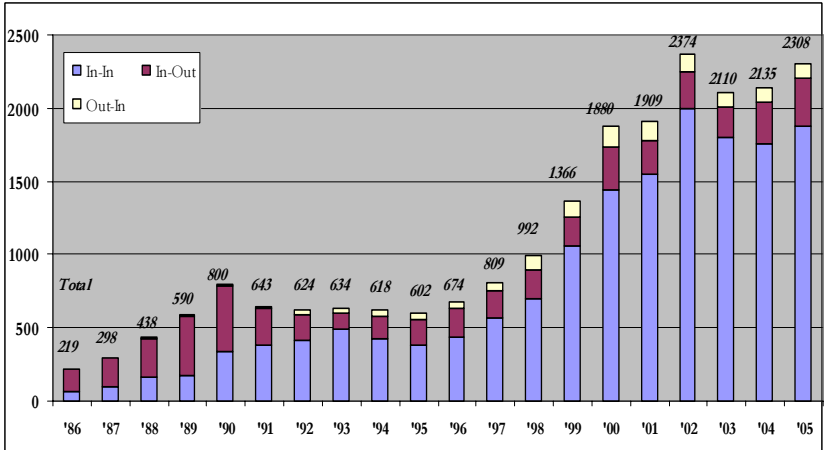
Even though trust banks act as mere custodians for pooled investments, their fast rise to prominence has begun to affect corporate management. Custodians vote on proxy, i.e., as determined by the retail institution that offers the fund to investors, such as an investment bank or a trust bank. However, most principals follow the proxy proposals suggested by the trust bank or an intermediary fund manager. Fund managers compete against each other measured by the returns earned on investment, and therefore value profitability much more than long-term stability. The difference to Japan's previous major shareholders (banks and business group members) could not be more pronounced: the interests are exactly opposite. Recall that banks pushed their clients towards diversification to increase loans yet reduce risk. Trusts, in contrast, diversify their portfolio through their own investments. They demand transparency and simplicity: ideally, they want a company to be in only one business, easily comparable to its competitors. Trusts pick the most profitable firms, and invest across a large number of industries. This shift in interest of dominant providers of finance has further reinforced the strategic shift away from high diversification to »choose and focus« strategies.

Mergers and Acquisitions: The Buyout Wave

These developments have invited unprecedented activity in the market for mergers and acquisitions. Figures 3 and 4 highlight the recent quantitative explosion and qualitative change of M&A in Japan. Figure 3 shows the steep increase in the overall number of deals, in particular after 1998. The chart displays three types of deals, »out-in« (foreign money purchasing Japanese assets), »out-out« (foreign money purchasing foreign assets in Japan), and »in-in« (domestic deals). Although we see an expansion of »out-in« M&A beginning in 2000, the main reason for the increase in activity is clearly the tripling in domestic deals, from 600 per year in the mid-1990s, to 1,800 in 2005.¹¹

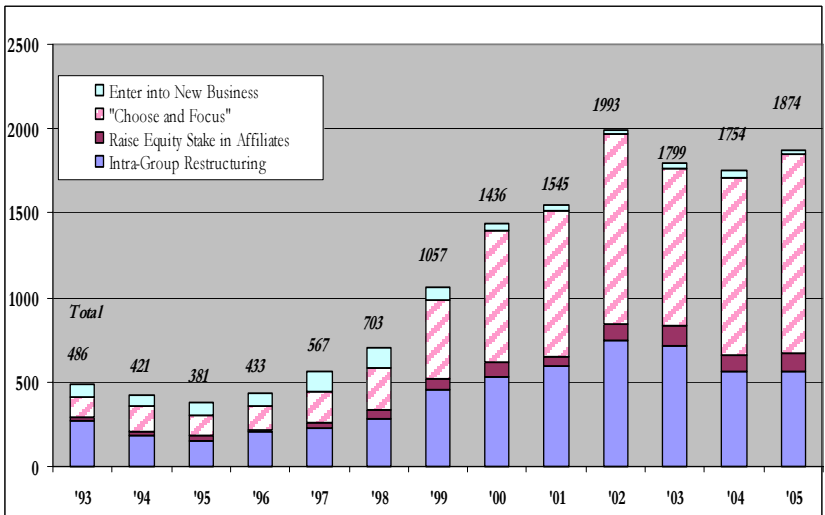
¹¹ In terms of value of these mergers and acquisitions, data are available for public deals only, which amount to 20–40% of total transactions. These data exhibit a similarly dramatic rise: the annual value of domestic M&A rose from less than ¥2 trillion in 1997 to over ¥10 trillion level in 1999, and ¥15 trillion (roughly \$13 billion) in 2005 (Nomura 2006). The upward trend continued in the first half of 2006, when both the number of deals (1,409 in six months) and their value (¥7.3 trillion) hit record highs (*Nikkei*, July 1, 2006).

Figure 3. Mergers and acquisitions, by number of deals, 1986–2005



Source: Nomura 2005, 2006.

Figure 4. Domestic M&A deals, in number, by objective



Source: Nomura 2005, 2006.

Figure 4 explains the objectives underlying these mergers and acquisitions. Almost two thirds of deals in the early 21st century were made with an eye towards »choose and focus« (the striped bar), that is, to strengthen existing businesses by purchasing either assets or entire organizations of competitors in order to assume a more dominant market position. »Intra-group restructuring« refers to the reorganization of business units, including spin-offs or mergers among subsidiaries. Figure 4 therefore tells a story of increased M&A activity, initially to reorganize existing business, then to acquire competitors in the same business. In contrast, entering a new business, which accounted for a quarter of all domestic deals as recently as the early 1990s, has become negligible.

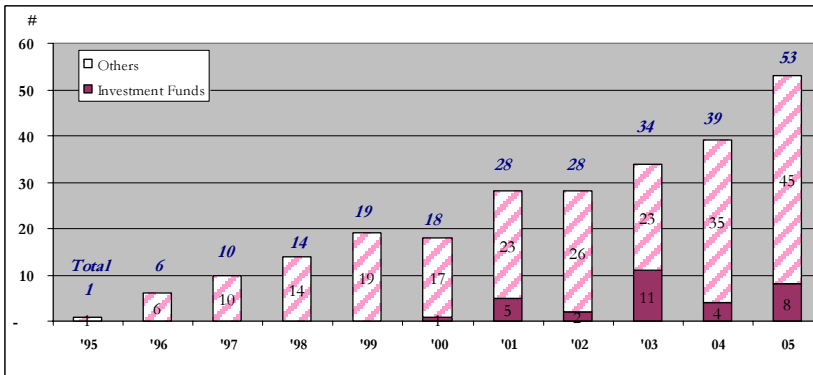
Hostile Takeovers

In 2005, one third of all M&A (or 690 deals) was takeovers. These come in two flavors: friendly and hostile. In a friendly majority acquisition, the target agrees with the deal, a price is mutually agreed upon, and executive management of the target may remain involved in running the business. In contrast, hostile takeovers often involve fierce battles which typically end in executive replacement, shareholder disputes, price run-ups, and even lawsuits. Traditionally, Japan has recorded very few hostile takeovers. One reason may be an element of »saving face«, by no means singular to Japan but possibly more pronounced there, which entices parties to label an acquisition »friendly« even when it is not. More importantly, the extensive amount of cross-shareholdings in Japan until the 1990s thwarted the purchase of a company against its wishes. Adding to this, until 1999 Japan did not have a rule of compulsory acquisition of minor stakes once a raider had managed to buy up the majority of shares, which made it difficult to acquire 100% of stock. And finally, capital gain taxes applied to the sale of shares even in a hostile takeover bid, making many minority owners even less willing to surrender their shares to a hostile raider (Higashino 2004).

Figure 5 shows that the 1999 revision of these bottlenecks has opened the door for hostile takeovers in Japan. The increase in highly touted successful and failed bids suggests that »saving face« is no longer as important as corporate reorganization. Figure 5 shows the increase in uninvited yet successful takeover bids. While the absolute number is still small, the steep slope of the trend line is surprising, and by 2005, there was on average one successful bid per week. This trend continued into 2006, which recorded the first intra-industry hostile takeovers. The August 2006 bid by Oji Paper to acquire Hokuetsu Paper for its advanced production facility was Japan's first true »choose and focus« bid, in that Oji attempted to acquire a direct competitor to establish dominance of the domestic paper market. In the same month, menswear retailer Aoki launched a hostile bid for Futata, a competitor with a presence in Kyūshū that Aoki lacked. Both bids, while ultimately unsuccess-

ful, resulted in a reshuffling of the respective industries, as the targets then tied up with another competitor to strengthen their market positions. The high profile of the two concurrent intra-industry battles caught the public’s attention. The fact that both battles plaid out in mature industries, with very traditional companies involved, characterized that hostile takeovers had reached »old« Japan, and that slimming margins and a fierce fight for competitive positioning were likely to trigger a bigger hostile takeover wave yet to come (*Sankei Shimbun*, August 9, 2006).

Figure 5. Hostile takeover bids, in number of successful deals, 1995–2005



Source: Fujioka 2006, based on Recof data.

The 2006 Corporation Law contains rules on takeovers that aim to ensure equal treatment of all bidders and expand defense options. These rules validated a »poison pill« (a mechanism that makes a hostile bid prohibitively expensive) in the form of new warrant issues that dilute the raider’s stake.¹² At the same time, the new law gave shareholders a clearer role in the process. Whereas some observers predicted Japanese firms to use the new Takeover Guideline to introduce a plethora of defense mechanisms, at least as of 2006 this was not the case. However, between May 2005 and May 2006, less than 91 very large Japanese companies introduced defense mechanisms. Similar to the recent experience in Europe, the main concern expressed by shareholders on these various tools to thwart attempted takeovers was a lack of transparency and a potential override of shareholders’ rights and interests by self-serving incumbent management (Miyazaki 2006).

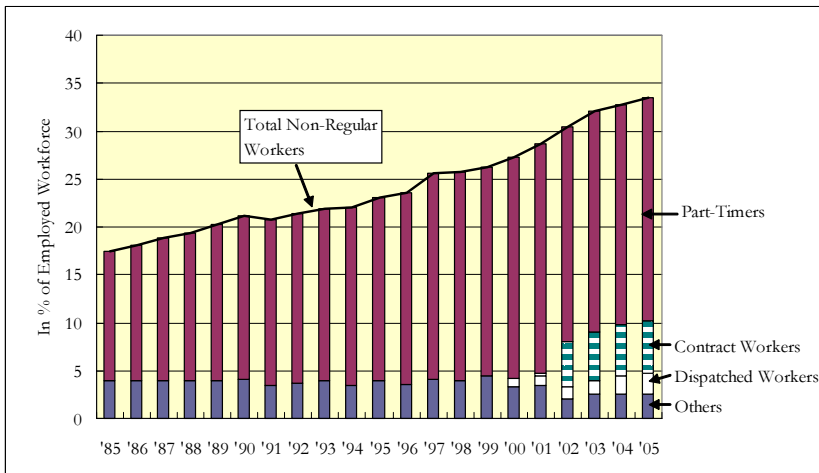
12 Milhaupt (2005) offers a detailed analysis how the 2005 Takeover Guideline represents an adaptation of Delaware takeover rules to the Japanese setting; see MOJ/METI (2005) for the »Guidelines for Corporate Value Protection« (Takeover Guidelines), and CVSG (Corporate Value Study Group, 2006) for the 2006 report on takeover activities and policies.

Perhaps most importantly, the objective with a hostile takeover is typically to purchase an underperforming company, replace its management and business model, and improve performance of the company. The best defense against such a takeover is for management to undertake these reforms by itself, to ensure that its stock price is not underperforming. Therefore, whether or not a hostile bid is launched or eventually successful is not as relevant as the potential threat of a hostile takeover in introducing managerial discipline in terms of cost efficiency and profitability. The arrival of hostile takeovers in Japan has brought this discipline.

Changes in Labor Relations

As large Japanese firms become more strategic about their resources with an eye toward profitability and efficiency, their human resource practices are changing as well, especially in the areas of lifetime employment, and pay and promotion.

Figure 6. Shifts in non-regular work, 1985–2005



Source: Saito 2006, based on Sōmushō Tōkeikyoku, *Rōdōryoku chōsa*.

An increasing proportion of the workforce finds itself in non-regular positions. As shown in Figure 6, roughly one third of the workforce is now on contracts with a term limit (after legal revisions, stipulated at three years). Moreover, these non-regular workers are no longer just »part-timers«, usually stereotyped as (a) women re-entering the workforce in their 40s to conduct non-core work, or (b) previous »lifetimers« rehired after the stipulated retirement age that used to be set at 60 (raised to 65 in the early 21st century). Figure 6 shows that a fast-growing portion of non-regular workers are so-

called »contract workers«, who are outsourced professionals. These are skilled individuals in areas such as IT, software, or engineering. In line with the fast increase of outsourced professional services, employment agencies are growing rapidly, and regulations on employment agencies have been revised to give these agencies more administrative powers.

Thus we observe a trend away from granting »lifetime employment« to all office workers, and towards increased reliance on short-term, outside work. This means that the role of »lifetimers« in the company is also changing, as these core employees are facing increasing demands towards specialization. In the postwar system, companies would recruit employees immediately after graduation, and train them into generalists through »rotation-on-the-job«. Skill formation was company-specific, i.e. not easily transferable to other positions. There was only a very limited market for mid-career job changers, and certainly not for white-collar workers. In the 21st century, companies can no longer afford to lack in-house specialization, and rotation-on-the-job is more focused to result in skill formation around a certain area of expertise. This, in turn, makes employees marketable, and Japan is seeing the onset of a »war for talent«.

To incentivize and retain employees, large companies are switching to performance pay and promotion. Human resource metrics that used to rely mostly on intangibles (loyalty, teamwork, dedication; sometimes measured in sick leave taken or unpaid overtime offered) have switched to clear-cut metrics tied to performance. A 2004 survey by the NLI Research Institute reveals that only one quarter of Japanese firms intended to uphold existing employment practices; one third had already switched to performance pay and one third was in the process of doing so (Fujimura 2003). In firms that have switched, bonus payments are almost exclusively tied to business unit performance (measured in profits); pay is based on a combination of achievement and skill accumulation; and promotion on a combination of ability and competence (see, e.g., Beaulieu and Zimmerman 2005, Schaede forthcoming).

This has resulted in increased wage differentials within companies. The *Annual Survey of Corporate Behavior FY 2004* reported that in companies with performance-based wages, wage differentials increased by an average of 0.2 percentage points over the previous decade, roughly from 1.65 to 1.85.¹³ This means that, on average, within one company some employees earn 1.85 times as much as other employees in the same age and work category.

Offering performance pay and promotion has become necessary due to the development of an external labor market for all job categories. In the 1990s, this was due to globalization: as more foreign firms hired Japanese talent at higher wages with clear and fast promotion opportunities, Japanese firms had

13 www.esri.cao.go.jp/jp/stat/h16bank/main.html.

to change their systems in order to compete for best talent. The shift was further pushed by the banking crisis, which led a series of bank mergers, such as that between the Industrial Bank of Japan, Fuji Bank, and Dai-Ichi Kangyō Bank into Mizuho. For many young IBJ bankers, this merger muddled career opportunities, and led some to join foreign banks, consulting firms, or venture capital firms. The Japanese head-hunting industry, long underdeveloped, showed high growth rates in the early 2000s, including for mid-career jobs. The mid-career job market can be expected to eventually also change wage determination, away from the corporate level (the larger the company, the higher the wage) and towards market wages for job categories.

For large Japanese companies, talent retention is best accomplished through individual performance measures. »Lifetime employees« are turning into a core asset of companies, with all non-core work outsourced to skilled contract workers. While many Japanese firms cling to old practices of hiring, talent is attracted to those places that de-emphasize seniority and push individual careers. The looming labor shortage will only reinforce this movement: as talent gets scarcer, lifetime employment may pick up again (as compared to Figure 6), but contract stipulations will be much different, and employees may change jobs if they are not satisfied.

5. Conclusions

The shift towards »refocusing« began in 2000 with legal changes that greatly facilitated divestitures, liquidations, and other reorganization. As a result, the composition of shareholders in Japan has greatly changed, with enormous implications for business strategies and corporate management. During the postwar period, management of large firms aimed to increase sales, almost at any cost, to please the main banks as well as other members of their business groups and stable shareholders. The typical process for rectifying mismanagement was for the business group to consult quietly, and for the main bank to organize informal debt restructuring. Banks had an information monopoly over corporate information, and details of restructurings were not made public. In this setting, the president of a large firm was mostly interested in stability and certainty: if there were no large swings in corporate performance, there would be no interference with management. Risk-taking was rarely rewarded, but steady growth and diversification were.

All of this has become a thing of the past. Companies are now concerned with the cost of financing: unlike the postwar period, when interest rates on bank loans were regulated at a low level and were the same for companies of similar size, capital market financing is based on the price mechanism. The better the corporate performance, the cheaper it is to raise money from the markets. The new dominant shareholders, institutional investors, are driven by a profitability goal in competition with each other for investors. The new

shareholders will also sell off underperforming companies, which will depress the stock price and therefore invite hostile takeover bids. The new owners have also reinforced pressure on Japanese firms to reorient their corporate strategies, as their interests – transparent business models with clear-cut performance data, in a limited set of businesses so as to allow direct comparison with competitors – differ fundamentally from those of Japanese banks in the postwar period. Overall, Japanese management practices have been oriented towards the market.

This change towards the markets is anchored in a large number of laws and the rapid emergence of supporting industries, such as financial lawyers, litigation lawyers, securities analysts and other information providers, and the courts. Underperforming management now can, and is, being sued by shareholders. Violations of rules are prosecuted strictly, as the Livedoor accounting scandal and the Murakami insider trading case have highlighted. Gone are the days when corporate executives caught at wrongdoing were simply promoted to chairman; in the 21st century, they might be serving a prison term. While recent accounting and other scandals suggest that there is still room for regulatory improvement, the direction of change is clearly towards the market. It is inconceivable that all of these reforms can be unraveled; the new market orientation of Japanese firms as they compete for investors is here to stay. To fully understand the Japan of the 21st century, we have to revise our existing knowledge of Japan and account for the fundamental changes the country's political economy has undergone since 1998.

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Karl August Neuhausen
Ultima Orientis Thule Reconsidered
Japan in the *Amoenitates exoticae* (1712) as
the Major Work of the Excellent Neo-Latin Author
Engelbert Kaempfer

1. Introduction: Kaempfer's *Heutiges Japan* and Other Recently Edited Posthumous Works

Even in Japan today, the German physician and scientist Engelbert Kaempfer, who was born the son of a Lutheran pastor in the Westphalian town of Lemgo in 1651, is among the most famous European scholars and is generally regarded as the »Humboldt« of the 17th century.¹ Kaempfer's extraordinary and long-lasting reputation in Asia as a whole, and especially in the Japanese world of letters, is based mainly on his various and innumerable descriptions of his pioneering voyages through Asia from Persia to Japan (1684–1692), and above all his fundamental monograph on contemporary Japan.

Curiously, however, this work was not initially published in its original German form before Kaempfer died near his native town in 1716, but appeared posthumously 11 years later as an English translation by the Swiss Johann Caspar Scheuchzer. It was printed in London in 1727 with the imprecise title *History of Japan*.² Translations into other languages have followed, but it took until 2001 before Kaempfer's original text bearing the title *Heutiges Japan* was edited, in this case by Wolfgang Michel and Barend J. Terwiel. These two volumes mark the start of publication of Kaempfer's posthumous works by Detlef Haberland, Wolfgang Michel, and Elisabeth Gössmann; the other five volumes of this series were edited and printed within the triennium 2001–2003 and comprise Kaempfer's letters and paintings of Japanese plants and of his stay in Siam, his *Notitiae Malabaricae*, and his Russian diary.³

1 For the biography of Kaempfer, see now Bonn 2002: *passim*.

2 The complete title is presented in Detlef Haberland 1990: 92.

3 All volumes of the critical edition of Kaempfer's recently published posthumous works are cited in the Appendix.

2. Japan in Kaempfer's *Amoenitates exoticae*

2.1 *The Forgotten Latin Author Engelbertus Kaempfer*

2.1.1 Kaempfer's Three Latin Writings as the Only Works Published by Himself

On this occasion I do not intend to discuss the critical edition of Kaempfer's writings that was just mentioned, for everyone has long appreciated this outstanding and unique collection of Kaempfer's posthumous works as a desideratum of scholarship which has formed a solid basis for all future studies on Kaempfer.

On the contrary, I am drawing your attention now to works that were published by Kaempfer himself. Indeed, the amazing *status quo* of the numerous modern studies concerning Kaempfer's life and writings cannot be too strongly emphasized. Almost all of them ignore or at least are not enough aware of the essential fact that none of the three works that Kaempfer has printed were written in German, English, or any other modern language, but were of course always composed in Latin.

The first treatise of Kaempfer's to appear in print was his *Exercitatio Politica de Majestatis Divisione in Realem et Personalem* in 1673 which the young author age 22 proposed in Danzig in order to demonstrate that he was able to take up an academic career.⁴ The second work published by Kaempfer was his doctoral thesis printed in Leiden (*Lugduni Batavorum*) entitled *Disputatio Medica Inauguralis Exhibens Decadam Observationum Exoticarum*, which came out 21 years later (1694).⁵ In this medical dissertation, Kaempfer offered, for the first time, some observations from his 10 years of traveling through Asia. Furthermore, these *Observationes Exoticae* were the starting point of Kaempfer's third and last work, which he published himself in Lemgo four years before his death (1712): the *Amoenitates Exoticae*.

2.1.2 *The Amoenitatum exoticarum fasciculi V* as Kaempfer's Most Important Book

Kaempfer's last work, which he published 18 years after obtaining his doctorate, was not only much more extensive than his earlier Latin treatises, but also the richest in substance as evidenced by its title: *Amoenitatum exoticarum politico-physico-mediciarum fasciculi V* [Five fascicles of exotic pleasures regarding politics, physics and medicine]. Its subtitle more precisely indicates the contents of the five parts of the volume, the Latin words being so plain and simple that an English translation seems to be unnecessary

4 Further reference to it is made by Neuhausen 2004 and 2007.

5 For more details see again the preceding footnote.

or even superfluous, as the congruences between the Latin and English expressions are evident: *Quibus continentur variae relationes, observationes et descriptiones rerum Persicarum et ulterioris Asiae, multa attentione, in peregrinationibus per universum Orientem, collectae, ab auctore Engelberto Kaempfero, D.* (»which contain various relations, observations and descriptions of Persian matters and regions beyond in Asia, collected during expeditions through the entire Orient by the author, the doctor Engelbert Kaempfer«).

This monumental and extremely valuable book, amounting to nearly 1.000 pages (including introduction, preface, illustrations, and *Index rerum ac verborum*), must be considered the most important of all Kaempfer's works. Nevertheless, it was never edited after the *editio princeps* of 1712, so that it now – shortly before its third centenary – urgently requires revision and preparation for publication, but is still awaiting critical editing similar to the posthumous works put out a few years ago.

The first attempt to prepare such a badly-needed new edition of Kaempfer's *Amoenitates exoticae* is the article that I published three years ago and have now put at your disposal. The title of this essay is programmatic: »Engelbert Kaempfer als lateinischer Prosaautor – Zum Sprachstil und literarischen Rang der *Amoenitates exoticae*« [Latin prose-author *Engelbertus Kaempfer* – On the style and literary rank of the *Amoenitates exoticae*]. Moreover, the printed version of a supplementary lecture on Kaempfer's *Amoenitates exoticae* that I gave last year is forth-coming, its title being equally significant: »Engelbert Kaempfer als späthumanistischer Reiseschriftsteller im Spiegel seiner *Amoenitates exoticae*« [Engelbert Kaempfer's accounts of his expeditions in the *Amoenitates exoticae* as a work of the late humanism era].

Accordingly, I express Prof. Kreiner my sincere thanks for giving me the opportunity to summarize here my two recent studies on *Engelbertus Kaempfer Latinissimus*. Hence, in accordance with the theme of this International Symposium in honor of Josef Kreiner, I would like to outline briefly the current developments and future tasks in establishing a modern edition of Kaempfer's *Amoenitates exoticae*, particularly those passages dealing with Japan and various Japanese issues. In this context, I also owe Dr. Lothar Weiß a great debt of gratitude for providing me with a lot of very valuable yet unstudied material stored in the archives of Lemgo and Detmold.

2.1.3 Kaempfer's Position as an Excellent Neo-Latin Author Within the Entire History of Latin Language and Literature

Regarding Kaempfer's œuvre as a whole, we must begin by recognizing that the author, when he died in 1716, was justly considered by his contemporaries as a typical Latin writer. For during his whole lifetime, he not only published all his works in Latin, but also used Cicero's language when he

composed most of his letters and many other texts, which were edited posthumously. Consequently, *Engelbertus Kaempfer* should be viewed as a prominent author of prose in the long tradition of Latin language and literature.

Indeed, it must be generally stated at the outset that the *Latinitas* (Latinity) that we have inherited has existed for more than two millennia – since the third century B.C., to be exact – and consists of three major periods lasting about 800 years each. The first epoch extends from the beginning of Roman literature to its end (in the 6th century), while the second era comprises the entirety of Medieval Latin literature until the rise of Renaissance Humanism. That is why philologists commonly agree nowadays that the third and hitherto last period – the so-called Neo-Latin age – begins with the Latin writings of Petrarch, the »Father of the Humanists«, and continues uninterrupted until the present day.⁶

Therefore, the main focus here is on the third major epoch of the Latin language and literature, as Kaempfer's Latin writings took place during the strongly flourishing age of Neo-Latin. Nobody is surprised today that Latinity was the spiritual bond of all Central Europe from the beginning of the Western Empire throughout the era of Charlemagne until the end of the Middle Ages. Yet among the general public, there is little or no awareness of the substantial fact that since Petrarch, the Latin language and literature have continued to develop to a high level in all areas of both prose and poetry, so that the Neo-Latin as a whole has not by any means been surpassed by the ancient and medieval *Latinitas*, neither in quantity nor quality.⁷ Besides, everybody ought to remember that until the 19th century, not English, but Latin was used as the global *lingua franca* of science and letters; in several disciplines it still serves this purpose today. In any case, until Kaempfer's day in Europe, more works had been printed in Latin than in all other national European languages together.

However, Kaempfer's *Amoenitates exoticae*, published in 1712, marks a turning point in the general use of Latin within the realms of the *res publica litterarum* (republic of letters). From Kaempfer's own preface to his *Amoenitates exoticae*, we can also gather that the priority of languages at that very time – the first half of the 18th century – was gradually changing. This matter is worth inquiring into, as Kaempfer associates here the changes in the preference for languages with his first mention of Japan.

6 See generally Klopsch, Neuhausen, and Laureys (2001): 925–946.

7 Cf. also my previous basically programmatic Latin essay (with an English summary) entitled *Latinitas Europae fundamentum spirituale ab antiquis aetatibus atque Caroli Magni saeculo ad praesentia pertinens tempora* (Neuhausen 1997).

2.2 Kaempfer's Comments on Japan in the *Amoenitates exoticae*

2.2.1 Japan in Kaempfer's Preface

2.2.1.1 *Japonia nostri temporis* [Japan of Our Time]

After explaining the purpose of his *Amoenitates exoticae* Kaempfer, promises to offer his publishers three new works as soon as possible:

[...] offeram bibliopolis: 1. Japoniam nostri temporis, in quarto, ut vocant, edendam Teutonice, cum imaginibus plus minus quadraginta; 2. Herbarii Trans-Getici specimen in folio, Latine cum Iconibus circiter quingentis; [...] Hodoeporicum tripertitum in folio, cum figuris totidem, quot editoris sumptus tulerint; optionem ei daturus, an illud Latine, an Germanico, an vero Belgico idiomate edi debeat.

This passage is very remarkable for several reasons:

- (a) The first work announced here by Kaempfer is his monograph on Japan, *Japonia(m) nostri temporis* [...] *edenda(m) Teutonice* which means »Japan of our time [...] to be edited in German«.
- (b) Thus, Kaempfer, for the first time in the Latin language, refers to his forthcoming work to be written in German and entitled *Heutiges Japan*, which however did not appear while he was still alive, and was not to be edited for another three centuries (in 2001).
- (c) The same *Heutiges Japan* was both the first and last work Kaempfer composed in his vernacular language. Consequently, in regard to linguistic as well as historical aspects, this German-language volume dedicated to contemporary Japan earns an exceptional place within Kaempfer's literary oeuvre.
- (d) In contrast, when Kaempfer was planning to publish the second work that he announces here – the *Herbarii Trans-Getici specimen* – he, typically and without any doubt, intended to write it again *Latine*, i.e. in Latin, the traditional language of science as well as his own favorite idiom. Therefore also the third and last work offered here by Kaempfer – entitled *Hodoeporicum tripertitum* – at least from his point of view had to be written in Latin, although he left the publisher the option of choosing the most appropriate language, either Latin or German or Dutch: »[...] *optionem ei daturus, an illud Latino, an Germanico, an vero Belgico idiomate edi debeat*«. So Kaempfer himself was convinced that Latin, being superior to all other comparable languages, must continue to be preferred by scholars, though his ranking list of idioms includes German and Dutch, too (but not English or any other then modern language).

2.2.1.2 Japan as Ultima Orientis Thule [Thule the Extreme Easternmost Part of the Orient]

The *Hodoeporicum tripartitum* [Tripartite report of our journeys] indicated here by Kaempfer as his third *opus* to come forth, is also of overriding importance for his treatment of Japan in the *Amoenitates exoticae* and other itineraries he promises in the preface to communicate to the public soon after.

At first, imitating the classical opening sentence of Caesar's *Bellum Gallicum* (»*Gallia est omnis divisa in partes tres, quarum unam incolunt Belgae, aliam Aquitani, tertiam qui ipsorum lingua Celtae, nostra Galli appellantur*«), Kaempfer presents a tripartite division of all his journeys he had made from Russia to East Asia, distinguishing the following three main parts of that *Hodoeporicum*:

Continebit hoc ipsum *partes tres*: quarum prima exponet res Russo-Tartaricas; *altera*, Asiae citra Gangem; *tertia*, Asiae ultra Gangem. (»This itself will contain three parts: The first of them will expose Russian-Tartar issues; the second one matters of Asia on this side of the Ganges, the third part those of Asia beyond the Ganges.«)

Consequently, addressing himself to all those who may read *Hodoeporicum tripartitum* in the future, Kaempfer offers a brief chronological survey of his entire itinerary (1683–1693), emphasizing the most important stations and regions using *italics*; this account starts, therefore, with Kaempfer's departure from Stockholm as secretary of the Swedish legation:

Legationi a Serenissimo Suecorum Rege, Anno 1683. Instructae a Secretis, discessi Holmia per Finnam, Livoniam, Russiam ad Aulam Moscoviticam. Expeditis in illa negotiis, per Tartariae Casanensis et Nagaicae tractum, transmission mari Caspi, feror in Mediam: in cuius metropoli Sjamachia dum Comitatus trimestri otio se reficit, ego privatis peregrinationibus excurro ad loca alia. Ad Aulam Persicam evocati per Hyrcaniam Parthiamque ducimur ad Regiam Isfahanensem; intra cuius pmoeria biennium degimus, dum interea privatis excursionibus subinde vaco. Tandem a dimissa Legatione me expediens, cogito in Aegyptum, vocor in Georgiam archiater, et variis conditionum oblationibus laccessor: Sed praevaluit suasu Reverendi senis, Patris du Mans, Capucini ac Regii interpretis, invitatio architalassi [sic!] Batavorum, qui classe sua Ormusiensem Sinum infestabat.

The first and shorter part of his itinerary, covering only three years (1683–1685), does not need any commentary here. But the second and more interesting part of Kaempfer's concise account of his voyages – the expedition through South and East Asia (1686–1692) – requires now careful attention:

Depositis armis in Arabiam, inde in terras magni Mogolis, Malabarica, Ceylanam, et regionem Sinus Gangetici concedo. Deinde secundum littora Sumatrae in Javam deportatus, et ex ejus metropoli in ultiores Provincias atque Insulas progressus, tandem Siamensem Aulam visito.

Inde Cambodia, Sina australi et adjacentibus regionibus per transennam inspectis, *Japoniam* assequor, ultimam Orientis Thulen. Integro ei *biennio* nequaquam otiose, *Asiae* vero *decennio* immoratus, facto reditus compendio, per oceanum revertor in *Belgium*, exacto in mari uno anno, exceptis paucis hebdomadibus, quibus *Africani promontorii* solitudines permigravi. Hos inquam Orbis tractus Itinerario persequor.

According to this summary, Kaempfer finally reaches *Japonia* (Japan), the easternmost part of Asia and the high point of his expeditions, because he sets off on his return journey (via the *African promontory*, i.e. South Africa, to *Belgium*, i.e. the Netherlands) from Japan. His stay in Japan, which lasts for two years (»*integro ei biennio*« covers the biennial period 1690–1692), is evidently the culmination of his entire *iter Asiaticum* of 10 years, for the general expression »*Asiae* vero *decennio* immoratus« spans the decade of Kaempfer's travels in Asia between 1683 and 1693.

The extraordinary position, which Japan (*Japonia*) occupied in Kaempfer's travels and, consequently, also in his planned *Itinerarium tripertitum*, is emphasized and highlighted, too, by its unique opposition *ultima Orientis Thule*. The adjective and superlative *ultima* in conjunction with the place name of *Thule* pertains to the traditional literary terms of the classical world, occurring in such texts of ancient Latin poetry as Vergil's *Georgica* (1, 30: »[...] *tibi serviat ultima Thule*«) and Seneca's drama *Medea* (v. 379: »*ultima Thule*«). All sources of Greek and Roman antiquity concerning both the name and the place or idea of the legendary *Thule*⁸ refers to the historical voyage of the Greek seafarer, geographer, and astronomer Pytheas (second half of the 4th century B.C.)⁹ who believed *Thule* to be situated in the north of Europe. Since Pytheas, ancient authors have therefore identified *Thule* as one of the Orkney or Shetland Islands in the north of *Britannia*¹⁰ or even as Iceland or Scandinavia. In any case, *Thule*, in ancient times, was regarded the northernmost point of Europe.

Hence, assuming that this fact was commonly known, Kaempfer as well as all other Humanists had the literary background necessary for effectively using the notion of *Thule* in a metaphorical sense. Before Kaempfer's time, however, since early Renaissance Humanism, Latin writers did not normally apply the idea of *Thule* to islands or country districts in the north of Europe, as ancient authors had done, but rather to those westernmost areas where the

8 For references, see »*Thule*« in *Der neue Pauly*, vol. 12, 1 (2002), p. 512.

9 Cf. both the article »*Pytheas*« in *Der neue Pauly*, vol. 10 (2001), pp. 660–662), and the monograph on Pytheas by CUNLIFFE (2001).

10 The classical ancient witness for his interpretation is Tacitus (*Agricola* 10, 4): »*Hanc oram novissimi maris tunc primum Romana classis circumvecta insulam esse Britanniam affirmavit, ac simul incognitas ad id tempus insulas, quas Orcadas vocant, invenit domuitque. Dispecta est et Thule, quia hactenus iussum, et hiems appetebat.*«

unknown *novus orbis*, the New World, was thought to be found; therefore, quoting primarily the prophecy of the chorus in Seneca's tragedy *Medea* which has already been cited here,¹¹ historians as well as poets in the 16th and 17th centuries often used *Thule* in conjunction with all voyagers and explorers who, searching for this mysterious place, had in reality discovered America.¹²

In regard to two essential points, then, Kaempfer's view of *Thule* apparently differs from both of its other traditional conceptions. While in earlier times people had supposed *Thule* to be located in either specific regions in the north or west of Europe, although they could not get a lead on its utopic location, Kaempfer moved *Thule* to the extreme opposite end of Europe, *Oriens* (Orient) and *Asia* (Asia), and declared it to be not a fictitious, but an actual island. He thus called Japan, which was then for almost all Europeans quite an unknown country, »the easternmost part of the Orient« (*ultima Orientis Thule*). The context of this passage in Kaempfer's preface to *Amoenitates exoticae* indicates that *Oriens* (Orient) used here means the same as the continent of Asia as a whole.¹³

On the other hand, it does not matter whether Kaempfer was the first one to denote Japan as *Thule* or if any other – hitherto anonymous – author had already made a similar comparison. Kaempfer's surprising presentation of *Japonia*/Japan as combined with and even equated with *Thule* – unexpected, but immediately understood by his contemporary, well educated, Humanist readers – was effective and of utmost importance for his further treatment of Japan, both in the *Amoenitates exoticae* and the posthumous *Heutiges Japan*.

The sentence following the designation of Japan as *ultima Orientis Thule* is equally worth mentioning here: »Integro ei *biennio* nequaquam otiose [...] immoratus« (»For fully two years I stayed there [*ei* refers to *Japonia* as *ultima Orientis Thule*] not at all idly«). Using the litotes *haudquaquam otiose* (»by no means in a leisured manner«) Kaempfer modestly as well as effectively confirms and underlines the fact that during the entire two-year period

11 The song of the chorus, which begins with verse 301, is finished by the following prediction (v. 374–379): »*Venient annis / saecula seris, quibus Oceanus / vincula rerum laxet et ingens / pateat tellus Tethysque novos / detegat orbis nec sit terris / ultima Thule*«.

12 This subject is discussed in Neuhausen 1996. Consequently, the motto of the International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies held in Avila (Spain) in 1997 was: »El neolatín en el umbral de nuevos mundos: desde *Iberia* hasta *ultima Thule*«; cf. *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Abulensis – Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies* [...], Tempe, Arizona, 2000 (= *Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies*; 207).

13 In the subtitle of the *Amoenitates exoticae*, the expression *per universum Orientem* exactly corresponds to *per Asiam universam* in the letter of dedication Kaempfer addressed to Count Frederick Adolph.

he spent in Japan, he always kept on inquiring and doing research in various fields of science. The first results of his indefatigable studies and scientific investigations are communicated by Kaempfer in two chapters of the second fascicle, in three chapters of the third fascicle, and in the entire fifth fascicle of the *Amoenitates exoticae*.

2.2.2 Japan in the Second Fascicle of the *Amoenitates exoticae*

Whereas the other four fascicles of the *Amoenitates exoticae* have already been translated into a few other modern languages (unfortunately, less successfully than desired),¹⁴ such a comprehensive translation of the second fascicle still remains a desideratum of the present studies on Kaempfer. The lack of philological commentaries on the second fascicle is all the more so regrettable as the last two main chapters, the *Relationes XIII/XIV*, concern Japan generally as well as Japanese specialities.

2.2.2.1 *Relatio XIII. Chartopoeia Japonica* [Japanese Paper-Producing]

The thirteenth *Relatio* (relation) covers 13 pages (pp. 466–478) and consists of three minor chapters (§§ I–III), the central topic being the production of paper, especially in Japan (§§ II–III). But it is typical of Kaempfer as a Humanist that he, before describing the Japanese art of making paper, reminds us of the older classical tradition by surveying the ancient methods of paper-production in the Occident as well as in the entire Orient and Asia outside of Japan:¹⁵

Scribendi modos apud veteres Occidentis nostri, ejusque finitimos, Aegyptios, Syros, Hebraeos ceterasque gentes, uti multiplices, ita omnes laboriosos, impeditos ac quotidiana hominum patientia majores fuisse, nemo ignorat. Instrumentum non levidensis pluma erat, sed stylus ferreus, vel artificiose constructum penicillum. Subjectum, non vulgata humano usui charta, sed tabula pellitae, membranae, corticatae, foliaceae, aeneae, plumbeae, ceratae, omnes laboriose fabricatae. Inter has scribendi difficultates, historiae hostes, eruditionis remoras, chartae ex vetustis linteis conficiendae artificium Divino beneficio adinventum est: ajunt aetate Alexandri M.; verum, sic delituisse supra fidem diu in rudimentis oportet, antequam satis excultum ad usus mortalium divulgaretur, quo tandem facto, cetera omnia scribendi subsidia, praeterquam Pergamemum, extra Heliconis pomoeia proscripta sunt. Citerioris Orientis, Turciae, Arabiae, Persiae, Tartariae minoris et Mogolis populi, inventam quoque Chartopoeiam grato animo amplexi sunt, veteribus saltem linteis gossipina non incommode substituentes. Qui hos ad austrum excipiunt nigritae, majorum morem secuti,

¹⁴ For reference, see Neuhausen 2006.

¹⁵ See »Papyrus« in *Der neue Pauly*, vol. 9 (2000), pp. 298–303.

Palmarum diversae speciei folia pro scriptionis subjecto retinent: his stylo ferreo elegantissime inscribunt, descriptaque, transmissis, quibus cohaereant, ligulis, in volumina redigunt. Extimis tandem et doctior Oriens (Sinam cum Japonia intelligo) chartae in literis exarandis usum, elaborandaeque modum jam ab antiquissimis temporibus novit ac familiarem sibi habuit. De Sinensium Chartopoeia nihil hic dicturus sum, ne rem obviam tot in regno versantibus R. R. Patribus Europaeis praeripiam: Japonum potius, gentis reconditae, perspicua brevitate expositurus artem: ut si quis ex corticibus nostratium arborum paria tentare cupiat, ad idem exemplum operationem possit instruere.

Thus, last but not least, we should delve here into what Kaempfer means by categorically believing the »Extreme Orient« (*extimus [...] Oriens*) – i.e. China and Japan, together (*Sinam cum Japonia intelligo*) – to be »more erudite« (*doctior*). It is Kaempfer's firm conviction and characteristic of his standing as both a Humanist and a modern scientist Japan and China – compared in general to the many other nations of Asia, the Orient, and of Europe – is superior to all because of its more profound learning and experience. Indeed, we find ourselves now eager to know in what way and to what extent the Japanese, owing to their excellent technical abilities, have surpassed the Europeans in their particular way of producing paper up to the end of the 18th century.

2.2.2.2 *Relatio XIV. Regnum Japoniae optima ratione, ab egressu civium et exterarum gentium ingressu et communione, clausum*

The fourteenth and last *Relatio* of the second fascicle of the *Amoenitatis exoticae*, which consists of five chapters (pp. 478–502), is usually esteemed as an instructive and concise collection of almost all important Japanese topics. Indeed, it is rightly regarded as a preliminary draft of the forthcoming monograph *Heutiges Japan*, which was not yet completed in 1712 but published after Kaempfer's death. This Latin summary was translated and printed for the first time as an appendix of Scheuchzer's first posthumous translation in English of *Heutiges Japan*, edited in London in 1727. Translations into several other languages (French, Dutch, German, and Japanese) soon followed; the development and relationship of all these different translations, each having its own history, deserve further inquiry.¹⁶

In any case, the numerous translations of Kaempfer's exceptional discussion in Latin of Japanese issues, as well as many other parts of Kaempfer's great *Amoenitatis exoticae* hitherto promulgated by representatives of vernacular languages, are teeming with various kinds of grammatical errors and other grave mistakes, which distort the meaning of the passages concerned. That is why I suggest that in future studies of the Latin writings of Kaempfer,

16 Such investigations are being prepared by Lothar Weiß, Lemgo.

there is hardly anything more necessary and desirable than both exact translations and subtle philological commentaries of the original *Amoenitates exoticae*, the elaborate Latin masterpiece of *Engelbertus Kaempfer*.

2.3 Japan in the Third Fascicle of the *Amoenitates exoticae*

This fascicle surpasses the preceding second fascicle insofar as it contains not two *relationes*, but three *observationes*, one after the other, regarding the Japanese people (a and b below) and Japanese topics (c):

- a) Observatio XI (pp. 582–589): *Curatio Colicae per Acupuncturam, Japonibus usitata* [Acupuncture: A cure for the colic employed by the Japanese].
- b) Observatio XII (pp. 589–605): *Moxa, praestantissima Cauteriorum materia, Sinensibus Japonibusque multum usitata* [Moxa; An excellent cautery much employed by the Chinese and Japanese].
- c) Observatio XIII (pp. 605–631): *Theae Japonensis historia* [The history of Japanese tea].

Since Robert W. Carrubba published an excellent translation (with an introduction and commentary) of the entire third fascicle 11 years ago, it is superfluous to repeat details here (Kaempfer 1996). Especially worth mentioning, however, is the fact that Kaempfer as a typical Humanist even after he had finished his *History of Japanese Tea* did not neglect to remember a classical text when he quoted an epigram of Ausonius, the eminent poet of the late antiquity: »Historiam Poeta *Ausonius* Gallus (sit venia transgressioni!) eleganti exposuit epigrammate: [...].« Thus ends chapter 10 of Kaempfer's *Theae Japonensis historia* with six Latin disticha (= twelve verses).¹⁷

2.4 Japan in the Fifth Fascicle of the *Amoenitates Exoticae*, the So-Called »Flora Japonica«

Whereas it was necessary to reconsider the concept of Japan as *ultima Orientis Thule* here, the entire fifth fascicle of the *Amoenitates exoticae*, traditionally called »Flora Japonica«¹⁸, does not require any recommendation at all, because this volume, though the last of the five fascicles, is not the least, but the most famous of all. It bears a long and detailed title, which indicates that it contains nothing else but the author's original descriptions of Japanese plants that Kaempfer, as the first European scientist in Japan, had

¹⁷ For reference, see Carrubba's commentary in Kaempfer 1996: 169.

¹⁸ The title of the monograph published by Wolfgang Muntzsch (Kaempfer 1983), *Flora Japonica: (1712) / Engelbert Kaempfer*. Reprint des Originals und Kommentar, is significant.

thoroughly examined during his two-year stay in Japan: *Continens PLANTARUM JAPONICARUM*, quas Regnum peragranti solum natale conspicendas objecit, NOMINA & CHARACTERES SINICOS; intermixtis, pro specimine, quarundam plenis descriptionibus, una cum Iconibus.

3. Conclusion

When considering the Latin text of Kaempfer's botanical research on the Japanese flora or of the *Amoenitates exoticae* as a whole, it is evident that successful research in various disciplines is not possible without close cooperation between Neolatinists and experts on Japanese culture like *eminens ille Bonnensis Josephus ipse Kreiner omnium capax Japonicarum idemque peritissimus rerum*. As a model for such cooperation may serve, therefore, especially the International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies held at the University of Bonn in 2003, the motto being »Latin as the International Language of Scholarship from the Renaissance to the Present«. ¹⁹ The next congress to be organized by the International Organization for Neo-Latin Studies will take place at Uppsala (Sweden), ²⁰ where the young Kaempfer had studied (since August 1681) before he started his great *iter Asiaticum* to lead him finally (in 1690) for the first time to Japan.

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¹⁹ Cf. *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Bonnensis – Proceedings of the Twelfth International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies, Bonn 3–9 August 2003*, Tempe, Arizona, 2006 (= *Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies*; 315).

²⁰ University of Uppsala, August 2–8, 2009.

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Appendices

A. Fundamental editions of Engelbert Kaempfer's works

1. Three Latin writings of Engelbertus Kaempfer as the only works published by himself:

- KAEMPFER, Engelbert (1673): *Exercitatio Politica de Majestatis Divisione in Realem et Personalem. Quam Praeside Excellentissimo iuxta ac Clarissimo Viro, DN. M. GEORGIO Neufeld [...], In Celeberr. Gedanensium Athenaei Auditorio Maximo Valedictionis loco Publice ventilandam proponit ENGELBERTUS Kaempffer Lemgovia Westphalus*. A.C.M.DC. LXXIII, d. 8. Junii h. mat. Dantisci. Imprimebat David Fridericus Rhetius.
- KAEMPFER, Engelbert (1694): *Disputatio Medica Inauguralis Exhibens Decadem Observationum Exoticarum Favente Divina Gratia, Ex Auctoritate Magnifici D. Rectoris D. CAROLI DRELINCURTII, [...], Nec non Amplissimi Senatus Academici Consensu, et Almae Facultatis MEDICAE Decreto, PRO GRADU DOCTORATUS, Summisque in MEDICINA Honoribus et Privilegiis, rite ac legitime consequendis, Publico examini subjicit ENGELBERT KEMPFER, L. L. Westph., Ad diem 22. Aprilis, hora locoque solitis*. Lugduni Batavorum, Apud ABRAHAMUM ELZEVIER, Academiae Typographum, MDCXCIV.
- KAEMPFER, Engelbert (1712): *Amoenitatum Exoticarum Politico-Physico-Medicarum Fasciculi V, Quibus continentur Varias Relationes, Observationes et Descriptiones Rerum Persicarum et Ulterioris Asiae, multa attentione, in peregrinationibus per universum Orientem, collectae, ab Auctore ENGELBERTO*

KAEMPFERO, D. [...]. Lemgoviae, Typis et Impensis Henrici Wilhelmi Meyeri, Aulæ Lippicae Typographi.

2. Critical edition of Kaempfer's recently published posthumous works:

HABERLAND, Detlef, Wolfgang MICHEL and Elisabeth GÖSSMANN (eds.) (2001–2003): *Engelbert Kaempfer – Werke. Kritische Ausgabe in Einzelbänden*. München: Iudicium.

Vol. 1/1 und 1/2: *Heuriges Japan*. Ed. by Wolfgang MICHEL und Barend Jan TERWIEL, 2001.

Vol. 2: *Briefe 1683–1715*. Ed. by Detlef HABERLAND, 2001.

Vol. 3: *Zeichnungen japanischer Pflanzen*. Ed. by Brigitte HOPPE, 2003.

Vol. 4: *Engelbert Kaempfer in Siam*. Ed. by Barend Jan TERWIEL, 2003.

Vol. 5: *Notitiae Malabaricae*. Ed. by Albertine Gaur, 2003.

Vol. 6: *Rußlandtagebuch 1683*. Ed. by Michael SCHIPPAN, 2003.

B. Recent monographs and articles on Kaempfer (2002–2006)

BONN, Gerhard (2003): *Engelbert Kaempfer (1651–1716). Der Reisende und sein Einfluß auf die europäische Bewußtseinsbildung über Asien*. Frankfurt/M.: Lang.

HABERLAND, Detlef (ed.) (2004): *Engelbert Kaempfer (1651–1716): Ein Gelehrtenleben zwischen Tradition und Innovation*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz (= Wolfenbütteler Forschungen; 104).

KLOCKE-DAFFA, Sabine, Jürgen SCHEFFLER, and Gisela WILBERTZ (eds.) (2003): *Engelbert Kaempfer (1651–1716) und die kulturelle Begegnung zwischen Europa und Asien*. Lemgo: Institut für Lippische Landeskunde (= Lippische Studien; 18).

NEUHAUSEN, Karl August (2004): *Engelbertus Kaempfer als lateinischer Prosaautor – Zum Sprachstil und literarischen Rang der Amoenitates Exoticae (1712)*. In: Detlef HABERLAND (ed.) (2004): *Engelbert Kaempfer (1651–1716): Ein Gelehrtenleben zwischen Tradition und Innovation*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz (= Wolfenbütteler Forschungen; 104), pp. 23–76.

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Wolfgang Michel

Medicine and Allied Sciences in the Cultural Exchange Between Japan and Europe in the 17th Century

Blind Spots

Until now, the introduction of Western science and technology into Japan in the Edo era has been closely linked to the emergence of »Dutch Learning« (蘭学 *rangaku*) in the early 18th century.¹ This development is generally attributed to certain political measures taken by the shogun Tokugawa Yoshimune (1684–1751). Arai Hakuseki (1657–1727), one of the leading intellectuals during the reign of Ienobu (1662–1712), proposed concepts to promote the wealth of the country. These were endorsed and enforced by Ienobu's successor, Yoshimune, who lifted import restrictions on Western books and promoted the domestic production of herbs and drugs while importing and investigating foreign medicinal materials delivered by the Dutch East India Company and Chinese merchants.²

In contrast, there has been little interest in the scientific interchange between Japan and the West during the 17th century. One source for this blind spot is Sugita Gempaku (1733–1817), the most prominent 18th century medical pioneer and author of *Rangaku koto hajime* [The beginning of Dutch learning]. These memoirs show that Sugita was well aware of the early transmissions of Western surgery to Japan. However, he considered these to be rudimentary when compared with the dramatic achievements of his era (Sugita 1969, 1982).

Moreover, by focusing on the activities in the Edo and Kansai areas, he drew much attention away from the groundbreaking contributions by the interpreters in Nagasaki. Sugita's writings became highly influential in later discussions on the development of Dutch Learning, and even now his views are shared at least implicitly by quite a number of scholars.

Furthermore, Japanese source material relating to the transmission of Western science in the 17th century is scarce and often corrupted by later copyists. Without collecting and comparing a great number of manuscripts and the use of Dutch trade records, it is almost impossible to sort things out. Later periods look much more promising.

1 See, for example, Itazawa 1933; Numata *et al.* 1972–1976; Goodman 1986; their position is repeated by many other authors.

2 For Yoshimune's imports, see Endō 2003: 27–74; for an English outline of Yoshimune's policies, see Kasaya 2001.

Last but not least, after the expulsion of the last Southern Barbarians (南蛮人 *nambanjin*) in 1639, Japan seemed to have entered a phase of reduced interaction with the outside world. The term »seclusion of the country« (鎖国 *sakoku*), coined by Shizuki Tadao (1760–1806) in 1801 in his translation of Engelbert Kaempfer’s famous treatise on 17th century Japan, encouraged the general idea that the country was focused on repulsion and restriction rather than on expanding its exchange with foreigners.³ Although the majority of historians was always well aware that Japan was not hermetically sealed, this concept of seclusion had dominated historical writing from the Meiji era until the latter half of the 20th century.⁴

Then, stimulated by political and economic changes during the 1980s, Japanese and foreign historians began to reevaluate Tokugawa Japan’s position within the framework of international relations, its boundaries, the influx of goods and information, and its contribution to early modern global trade. Furthermore, what is called the »Needham Question«, that is, why the scientific revolution did not occur in China, also bothers researchers dealing with the history of Japan’s modernization. One of the main aims of the priority area project *Edo no monozukuri* (2002–2005) was to determine the part that the Japanese played in the interactions with foreign influences that led to the development of science and technology in Japan during the Edo period. Without a doubt, the time is now ripe to include medicine, pharmacy, and botany in these discussions.

At least in the 17th century, the policy pursued in Edo was aimed at the control of foreign trade and the flow of information rather than the closure of the country. Those at the top of the Tokugawa regime were well aware of Japan’s dependence on foreign supplies. Before banishing the Portuguese and Spanish, high-ranking officials such as imperial councilor Sakai Tadakatsu Sanuki-no-kami (1587–1662) ensured in negotiations with the head of the Dutch trading post, François Caron, that the East India Company was able and willing to supply raw silk, silk textiles, and herbal drugs and medicaments (*droogen ende medecijnen*) in sufficient quantities.⁵ Furthermore, imperial commissioner Inoue Masashige Chikugo-no-kami (1585–1661), many governors of Nagasaki (*Nagasaki bugyō*), and even imperial councilors such as Inaba Masanori Minō-no-kami (1623–1696) made great efforts to use foreign knowledge and goods to stabilize the country. Useful Western knowledge was never rebutted. Moreover, shortly after the establishment of the Dutch trading post in Nagasaki in 1641, there was an increase in interest

3 For more on this matter, see Oshima 2006.

4 For an outline of the related research history, see Kimura 2002: 2–14.

5 This is described in detail in the trading post diary (*dagregister*) kept by the Dutch Nationaal Archief (NA), Archief van de Nederlandse Factorij in Japan (NFJ): no. 55, 20.7.1639, 22.7.1639, and 27.7.1639.

on the part of the Japanese in European astronomy, land survey, medicine, herbs, and other practical knowledge (Michel 1999).

Faint Traces of »Southern-Barbarian-Style Surgery«

From the beginning of medical history (医史学 *ishigaku*) as a scientific discipline, numerous authors have referred to »southern-barbarian-style surgery« (南蛮流外科 *namban-ryū geka*) as the first response to Western medicine in 16th century Japan. There are undoubtedly good reasons to make such an assumption. Communication between Japanese and Westerners then was much easier than in the following two centuries, and the social and intellectual conditions were quite favorable for the reception of new knowledge and thought. Many scholars had parted with Buddhism. Furthermore, the efforts of regional rulers to bolster their domains through overseas trade led to the adoption of a number of foreign innovations, many of which stemmed from China. These included improvements in smelting and forging, papermaking, silk weaving, book printing, as well as in ship building and navigation. Most of this knowledge was not disseminated by Buddhist monks or scholars, as it was in the past, but by merchants and artisans; hence it was predominantly of a practical nature.⁶ Medical know-how obtained from the Portuguese and Spaniards should have taken firm root in Japan, but there is no source material to prove that it did – with the exception of some remarks in Jesuit letters on a promising but short-lived mission hospital in Funai (1557–1587).⁷ Given the tiny number of Western surgeons in Japan, the mounting persecution of Christians after the 1680s, and the resistance to such bloody activities as surgery within the Society of Jesus (*ecclesia abhorret a sanguine*), there was no stable basis for an effective and lasting interchange. Thus, in early 17th century Japan we find little of any Portuguese medical knowledge that could be passed on or handed down to succeeding generations (Michel 1997–2001). The *Mangai shūyō* [Anthology of everything for the outside] by Yamamoto Gensen, which dates from 1619, is considered the oldest book on southern-barbarian-style medicine. However, the book's mention of five plasters, washing wounds with spirits, and a few instruments like scissors and scalpel goes to show that, even after seven decades of interchange, a writer such as Yamamoto Gensen knew nearly nothing about Western surgery.

The Rise of »Read-Head-Style Surgery«

The Dutch, dubbed »redheads« (*komōjin*) by the locals reached Japan at the beginning of the 17th century. In 1609, they established a trading post on

6 Sugimoto and Swain call this the »Chinese Wave II«; see Sugimoto and Swain 1989: 148–156.

7 For more on these activities, see Schilling 1931 and 1937.

the western island of Hirado, but in 1641 were forced to move to the small man-made island of Dejima (Deshima) in the Bay of Nagasaki. Because they displayed tactical acumen and did not proselytize, they were the only Europeans allowed continued access to Japan. It is not by mere chance that the introduction of their medicine began during the 1640s, shortly after the East India Company (VOC) established a permanent position for a surgeon at its trading post at Nagasaki. This action laid the groundwork for continuous medical interchange between Japanese and Europeans.

At this time, Caspar Schamberger (1623-1706), a surgeon trained in the battlefields of the Thirty Years War, accompanied a Dutch legation to Edo. While special envoy Andries Frisius conducted his complicated negotiations in the spring of 1650, imperial commissioner Inoue and other officials who were suffering from diseases of old age sought out the foreign surgeon, lending credibility to the professional skills of the Dutch. After three months, Schamberger was asked to remain in Edo for another six months following the departure of the Dutch legation. The impression he made on leading government figures led to the rise of »redhead-style surgery« (紅毛流外科 *kōmō-ryū geka*) as a new medical paradigm, although this did not go beyond low-level surgery (*chirurgica minora*). There are no references to cataract operations, extraction of bladder stones, bone surgery, or amputations – operations that were routine for any ambitious surgeon in the West. Cauterization and phlebotomy were abhorred by the Japanese. In addition, there is not a word about anatomy, which was considered very important not only at European universities but also in the training of apprentices by the guilds. Indeed, the early manuscripts contain only a few names of bones and a couple of minor remarks on arteries and veins on a »thin skin around the brain«, and the »skin between the chest and abdomen«. Due to the language barrier, the theoretical bases of Western medicine remained inaccessible. But knowledge of treatments of fractures, wounds, and various »swellings« (腫物 *shu-motsu, haremono*) spread throughout the country, and high-ranking officials and feudal lords began to send their physicians to be instructed by the Dutch trading-post surgeons.⁸ The social acceptance of this new art of healing is demonstrated by the licenses Western barber-surgeons and issued between 1658 and 1685 at the request of their Japanese apprentices.⁹

Growing Needs for New Medicines

It is almost impossible to transplant entities from one complex context to another in an isolated manner. Even if they ignored the etiological background of the Western treatment methods, Japanese physicians inevitably had to use herbs, medicines and instruments that were not readily available. Thus,

⁸ For more on this matter, see Sōda 1989; Michel 1996 a, 1996b, and 1999.

⁹ For more on these certificates, see Michel and Sugitatsu 2003.

Dutch trade papers after 1651 show numerous orders for drugs, herbs, pharmaceutical oils, books, lancets, and other medical equipment. But their problems were not solved by these Dutch deliveries.

At his request, imperial commissioner Inoue Masashige¹⁰ received two volumes of Rembert Dodoens's famous herbal book *Cruijdeboek* as early as 1652 and 1655, respectively.¹¹ But no one at the trading post was able to translate such a specialized text into Portuguese, still the *lingua franca* in Dutch-Japanese negotiations.¹² In the old days of Ibero-Japanese intercourse, the missionaries spoke Japanese and many Japanese were versatile in Portuguese, some even in Latin. Now, however, the Dutch East India Company was not allowed to train its own European interpreters, and the abilities of Japanese interpreters (阿蘭陀通事 (通詞) *oranda tsūji*) in respect to Western sciences were insufficient. Lacking the necessary medico-pharmaceutical knowledge, the interpreters used *katakana* characters to transliterate the new terms. But who among the readers of their notes was able to understand such language monstrosities as *unguentodearuteiya* (Unguentum de Altheae) or *kurokusuoventarisu* (Crocus Orientalis)? Thus, it is not coincidental that the rise of »redhead-style surgery« was accompanied by the advent of private glossaries.¹³ There is no doubt that instructions by Western specialists and Western herbal books were needed to sort out the new nomenclature. Nonetheless, considering the language problems, this must have been a daunting task. The crude woodcut illustrations in Western books soon also turned out to be a source of annoyance. When a volume of Rembert Dodoens's herbal was presented to the imperial councilor Inaba in 1659, he rejected it, asking for a print with larger illustrations.¹⁴

10 For more on Inoue, see Hasegawa 1979; Nagazumi 1975; Michel 1999: 113–116.

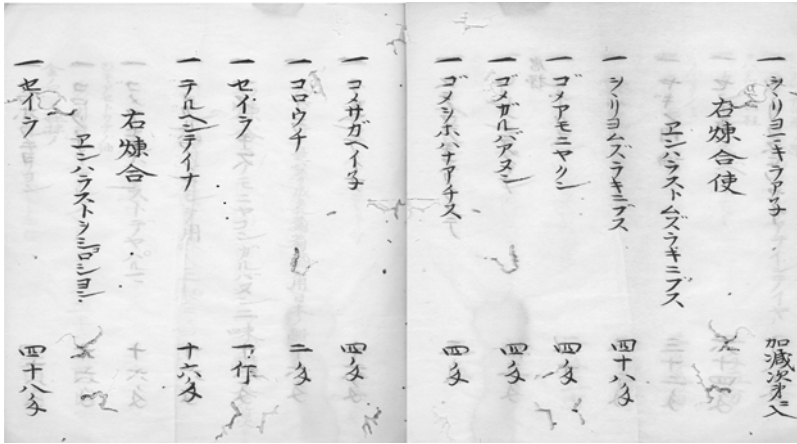
11 NA, NFJ 776, Faktuur, Casteel Batavia, 11.7.1652; NFJ 779, Faktuur, Casteel Batavia, 7.7.1655.

12 NA, NFJ 66, dagregister Dejima 17.1.1653: »zickingod^o liet vragen off de niet ijmand onder onsen ware, die dodoneus cruijtboeck hem in't Portugees conde vertalen, neen hebbende op g'antwoort, en dat sulcken geheelen werck met geen cleijne kennisse inde tale, als gemeenelick onder ons is, te verrichten sij«.

13 One of the first glossaries was compiled by Schamberger's adherent Kawaguchi Ryōan in 1660; see Kawashima 1992.

14 NA, NFJ 72, dagregister Dejima, 24.4.1659: »wat aengaet 't voorschreven g'eijste boeck 't selve was wel maer de kruijden daerin afgebeelt waren te kleijn, en niet wel geschildert, souden sien off hem in 't aenstaende een grooter boeck, daerinne oock grooter figuren stonden, konden beschicken, och arme menschen! hoe weijnigh weetje vande voortreffelijckheijt van sulcke of diergelijcke wercken te oordeelen, want meenen dat sulcke boecken van allerlei soort (gelijck in een schoenmakers winckel de schoen) te becomen zijn«.

Figure 1. Plaster (Emplastrum Mucilaginitibus) taught by Hans Jurian Hancke at Dejima in 1657



Source: *Oranda geka ihō*. 17th century manuscript by Mukai Genshō, copied by Kawaguchi Ryōan. Collection of the author.

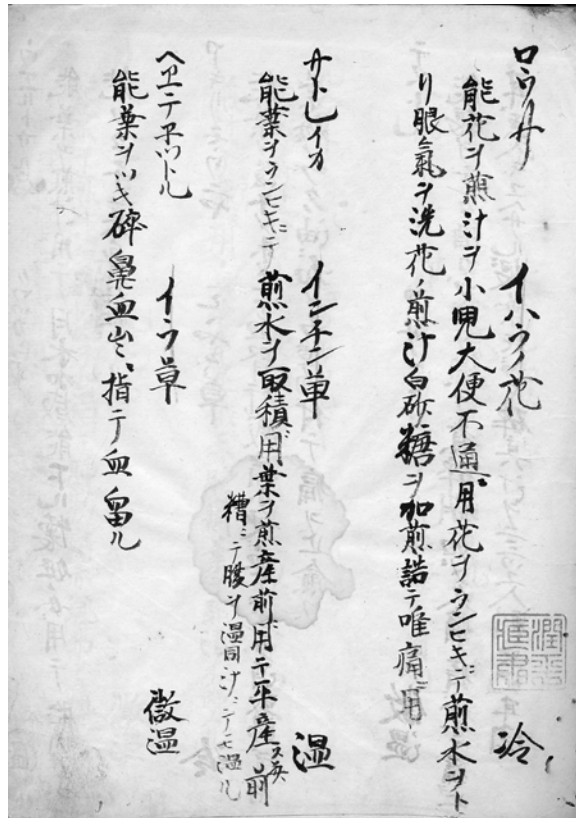
An Official Request

Only once a year did a fleet of about half a dozen Dutch ships sail from Batavia to Nagasaki. As the East India Company was still struggling to organize its own medical supply system in southeast Asia, deliveries to Japan were irregular and highly prized (Kraft 1985: 36–44). This must have caused some irritation among Japanese officials. As we can see from the following events, government circles began thinking about the local production of pharmaceutical oils while surveying the indigenous flora and introducing new useful plants with the help of the Dutch. In November 1667, the Company received a request from the Nagasaki governor, Kawano Gon’emon Michisada, who was leaving for Edo, and his co-governor Matsudaira Jinzaburō Takami, who was preparing to take over the office in Nagasaki.¹⁵ During their audience with Daniel Six, the departing head of the trading post, and his successor, Constantin Ranst, they conveyed a message from Edo, carefully recorded in the trading post’s diary:

¹⁵ Kawano Gon’emon Michisada (河野権右衛門通定) and Matsudaira Jinzaburō Takami (松平甚三郎隆見); both governors were newly appointed in April 1666. In 1671, Matsudaira Jinzaburō asked to be dismissed and Ushigome Chūzaemon Shigenori (牛込忠左衛門重恭) was appointed in his place. Kawano Gon’emon was replaced in 1672 by Okano Magokurō Sadaaki (岡野孫九郎貞明). Usually one governor resided in Edo and the other in Nagasaki. Each year in autumn they exchanged residences.

[...] an order was given to send to Japan a mature person, well-versed and experienced in the extraction of oils and waters from various fresh medicinal herbs, together with the necessary instruments and a variety of young plants [...] This request for a distiller and herbalist, by order of the emperor and his senior councilors, has already been discussed at length in Edo and has been once again brought explicitly to our attention by the governors. Therefore, we are considering it very seriously and report it to the Governor General at Batavia. (Translated from NA, NFJ 81, da-gregister, 6.11.1667)

Figure 2. Report on Haeck’s investigation of Japanese plants



Source: *Rampō sōki nōdoku-shū*. Manuscript, Edo era, Michel Collection.

There can be no doubt about the nature of this request, which was reiterated several times in the following years. Obviously, it aimed at technology transfer and the establishment of a full-fledged production cycle of pharmaceutical plants and oils while reassessing local resources with the help of

Dutch specialists. Goodwill in such matters considerably facilitated trade negotiations. Therefore, as a first response, the Dutch shipped medicinal herbs to Nagasaki in the summer of 1668, with a promise of more in the future.¹⁶

Godefried Haeck, First Western Pharmacist in Japan

In July 1669, a young pharmacist, Godefried (Gottfried) Haeck, arrived at Dejima. While he was not the mature specialist that the Japanese authorities had in mind,¹⁷ on several occasions between August 1669 and June 1671, he was ordered to search for useful plants in the vicinity of Nagasaki. His interpreters (Kafuku Kichizaemon 加福吉左衛門, Nakajima Seizaemon 中嶋清左衛門, Tominaga Ichirōbei 富永市郎兵衛, and Narabayashi Shin'emon¹⁸) noted the Western and Japanese names as well as the medicinal properties of the herbs he was able to identify.

The results of his first two excursions are preserved in the manuscript »Medicinal Herbs and Their Japanese Descriptions« (*Yakusō no na narabi ni wabun no hikae*).¹⁹ Dates and contents are consistent with the diary kept at the Dutch trading post. Later manuscripts, such as »Medicinal Effects of Herbs and Trees in the Dutch Tradition« (*Rampō sōki nōdoku shū*, Fig. 2), include further herbs from other field trips. These descriptions of local Japanese plants seen through European eyes eventually found their way into the influential *Oranda geka shinan* [Compass of Dutch surgery], printed in 1696.²⁰

Much to the irritation of the Japanese authorities, the Dutch never delivered the spice plants they wanted. Although the trading-post heads did not explain explicitly the reasons for this refusal, the Japanese interpreters were well aware of the obstacles. Once, after conveying another request, they made a proposal to save face on both sides:

[...] it would not matter if the ordered young trees of clove, nutmeg, and cinnamon did not survive the trip. At least it would show that the Dutch respect the emperor's orders. (NA, NFJ 82, dagregister, 29.8.1670; letter by de Haas, 19.10.1670)

16 NA, NFJ 299 (register van ingekomen brieven), letter from the Governor General at Batavia, dated 29.6.1668.

17 His abilities were strongly doubted, even among the Dutch. NA, NFJ 300 (register van ingekomen brieven), letter from the Governor General at Batavia, dated 20.5.1669.

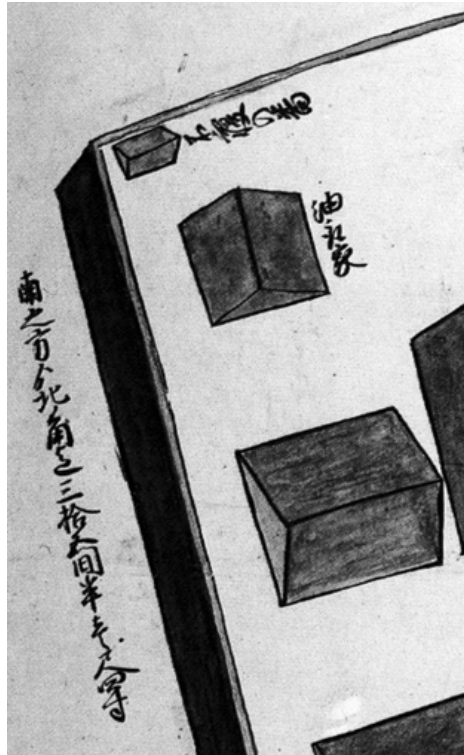
18 Narabayashi Shin'emon alias Narabayashi Chinzan (榑林新右衛門・鎮山, 1648–1711) was the first to try to render parts of Ambroise Paré's *Chirurgie* into Japanese.

19 *Yakusō no na narabi ni wabun no hikae* (薬草ノ名並和文扣). Manuscript, Edo era, Kyoto University Library, Fujikawa Collection.

20 *Oranda geka shinan*. Kyoto: Uemura Hirazaemon, 1696. Book 4: *Yakusō kuketsu*.

Obviously they knew very well that the East India Company protected its dominance in the global spice trade. Only a few years earlier, in 1667, the Dutch had finally captured the clove monopoly by destroying the trees on various islands of the Moluccas and concentrating the crop on Ambon.

Figure 3. The »oil extraction house« (*abura tori ie*²¹) on Dejima



Source: From a map by Motogi Shōdayu, 17c., Motoki Collection, Nagasaki Municipal Museum.

Franz Braun's Distillation at Dejima

In the summer of 1671, Frans (Franz) Braun, an experienced German pharmacist, arrived with distillation instruments, various seeds, and living

21 The term *abura tori-ie* (油取家) is found on a map of Dejima drawn by Motoki Shōdayu (本木庄太夫), one of the interpreters who assembled the report on Braun's activities in 1672. The map is part of the Motoki Collection in the Nagasaki Municipal Museum. It was printed in Nagasaki-shi Dejima shiseki seibi junbi shingikai (ed.) 1990: 94f.

plants.²² He, too, had to look for useful herbs in the vicinity of Nagasaki and to give advice on the cultivation and qualities of medicinal plants. At least parts of these efforts are preserved in an illustrated scroll (»Pictorial Mirror of Dutch Plants«).²³ There were even plans to translate the most famous herbal book of its time, *Hortus Eystettensis* [Garden of Eichstaedt], which contained details of over a thousand plants.²⁴

Braun had taken along a European distillation unit and various vessels. At the shogun's expense, a hut was built in a corner of the trading post, and in April 1672 he demonstrated the production of pharmaceutical oils in the presence of Japanese officials. A few days later, samples were taken to the court in Edo by the trading-post head. During the following weeks, Braun produced oil from fennel, aniseed, clove, rosemary, camphor, and juniper berry. These oils were also presented to the imperial councilors and to the shogun himself.

Six Japanese interpreters translated the instructions given by Braun, whom they call an *abuteikiru* (apothecary). They also sketched the oven, the vessels, the cooling pipes, and barrel etc. and even took measurements (Fig. 4). After a month of instructions, Japanese physicians were able to produce clove oil and turpentine oil without any help:

Place seven to eight *shō* [1 *shō* (升) = 1.8 litres] of water in a copper vessel, then add six *kin* [1 *kin* (斤) = 600 grams] of turpentine fat and one *gō* [1 *gō* (合) = 0.180 liters] of salt. Cover the vessel with a lid, add wheat flour to the water, put this on cotton, and wrap it twice around the juncture of the vessel and lid. When boiling over a charcoal fire, oil and water become steam, which rises up to the lid, enters into the pipe and comes down into the flask. Its mouth is wrapped with cotton to avoid evaporation. When the flask is full, it is replaced with another one and left for awhile. The oil comes up and the water goes down. A small bottle is attached to it, and one end of a cotton wick is inserted into the bottle and the other into the flask containing the oil. Then the oil moves into the small bottle.²⁵

The transfer of technical knowledge went smoothly. For about a decade, heads of the trading post left notes on the distillation performed at Dejima, most of which was of clove oil. When, in 1668, Arashiyama Hoan received

22 NFJ 865, journal held by the bookkeeper of the Dutch East India Company at the Dejima trading post, 1670–1671.

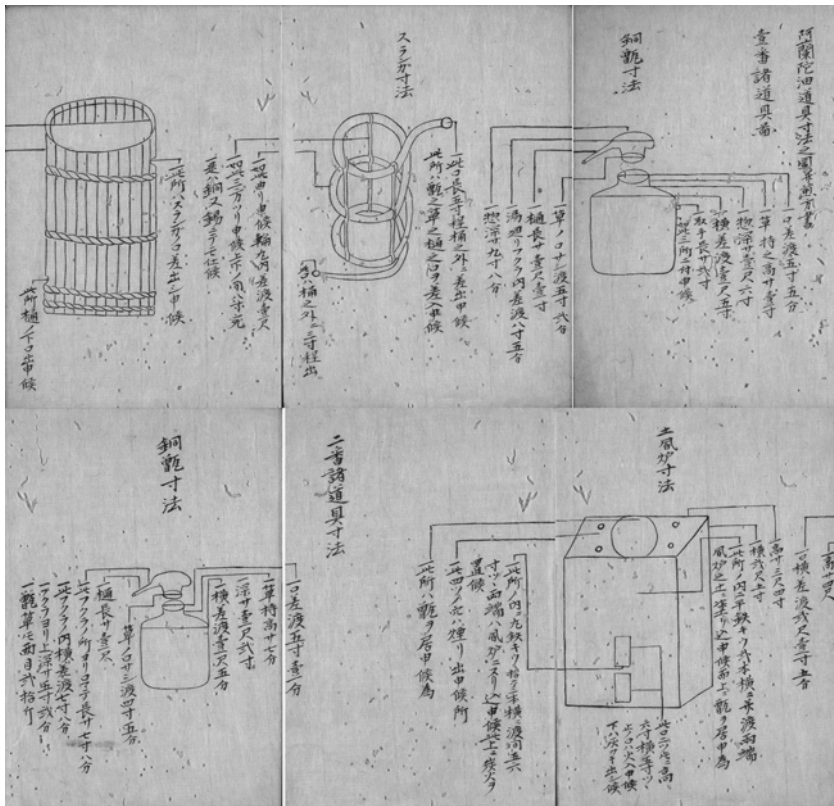
23 *Oranda sōka kyōzu*. Pictorial scroll, Edo Era, Siebold Museum, Nagasaki.

24 NFJ 85, dagregister, 11.9.1672. Basilius Besler: *Hortus Eystettensis*. 1613. Following an order of the imperial councilor Inaba Masanori, the Dutch brought a copy to Japan in 1669, probably the second edition of 1640.

25 Translated from the manuscript *Seiyu kōnō zuki* [Illustrated notes on the production and properties of oils] in: Katsuragawa Hochiku: *Zenseishitsu iwa*, vol. 3, fol. 2, Kyoto University Library, Fujikawa Collection.

one of the rare licences issued by the trading-post surgeon, he had learned about distillation only from illustrations (MICHEL and SUGITATSU 2003: 462). However, physicians who were sent to Nagasaki now had the chance to acquire practical skills in the »oil extracting house« (Fig. 3).²⁶

Figure 4. Distillation apparatus used on Dejima in 1672



Source: *Oranda yudōgu sumpō no zu narabini zempō sho*. Kyūshū University Medical Library.

Fading Interest at the Court in Edo

During the 1670s some oils produced at Dejima were sent to Edo as part of the annual gifts to the shogun. The famous diplomatic records of Tokugawa Shogunate (*Tsūkō-ichiran*) state the names of things considered to be of

²⁶ Cf. NA, NfJ 87, dagregister, 26.11.1673, 17.12.1673.

some importance. Clove oil (丁子油 *chōjiyu*) appeared sometime in 1677 and in 1679, and from 1680 to 1689 it is registered annually (HAYASHI 1967). However, in 1682 the head of the Dutch trading post was told by the Japanese authorities that henceforth clove oil for the emperor and his councilors should be sent in bottles from Batavia, packed in cases made especially for this purpose.²⁷

The fading interest of government officials in the activities at Dejima may have been related to a change in attitude brought about by Tokugawa Tsunayoshi (1646–1709). Unfortunately, there is no Japanese source material directly related to this question. Problems with cultivating the imported seeds and plants also played a role. When the Dutch gardener inspected the emperor's garden (*'s keizers tuin*) in the spring of 1672, the seeds had not germinated and all but three or four plants brought to Japan on the ship *Tulpenburgh* had withered.²⁸ Other seeds were delivered later, but again almost none survived. Furthermore, as spice plants and spice seeds were never brought to Japan, the dependence on Dutch deliveries of cinnamon oil, fennel oil, clove oil, etc. continued.

Growing Dutch Interest in Japanese Plants

It had always been the Japanese who took the initiative in this affair, but the Dutch East India Company soon began to pursue its own interests. Since 1667 Andreas Cleyer (1634–1697/98),²⁹ a German physician who ran the two pharmacies and the herb garden in Batavia, had been responsible for the Company's internal supply of drugs and medicines. He turned to the East Asian *Materia Medica* to find suitable substitutes for the expensive and sometimes damaged goods delivered from the Netherlands (Kraft 1985: 42, 200–201). Cleyer took care of the Japanese orders for seeds and herbs, for the distillation equipment, and for the dispatch of pharmacists to Nagasaki. Thus, the investigations of Japanese plants by his employees Haeck and Braun

27 »Voortaan [zoude] geen nagelolij meer door Comp^s chirurgijn tot Nangasacky mogen gedistileert werden, gelijk nu eenigen tijt herwaards geschiet en aan den Keyser en rijxraden verschoncken was, op voorgeven dat voorsz. olij, aldaar toegemaakt zijnde, de agting van zijn waardye omtrent de schenckagie verminderde, zulk deselve voortaan weder jaarlijx in flessjes en een daartoe net gemaakt cassje van Batavia souden moeten gesonden werden.« Generale Missive deel IV: 1675–1685, Rijks Geschiedkundige Publicatiën, Grote Serie 134: 19.3.1683, p. 547.

28 NA, NFJ 85, dagregister, May 1672 (entry by Cornelis van Heyningen on events between February and May, during the absence of the head factor, Joannes Camphuys).

29 For more on Cleyer, see Kraft 1985.

provided useful information for his own research. But the governor of Nagasaki rejected all Dutch requests for the export of Japanese plants.

Figure 5. Japanese camphor tree (*kusu-no-ki*) and a distillation apparatus to produce camphor depicted in Andreas Cleyer's *Observatio De Arbore Camphorifera Japonensium Kusnoky dicta*.³⁰



Nevertheless, botanical studies on both sides continued. During the 1680s Cleyer applied to be head of the trading post in Nagasaki for two terms. During his stays in Japan in 1682–1683 and 1684–1685, he and his ambitious gardener Georg Meister (1653–1713) collected numerous specimens of the local flora as well as Japanese plant drawings (MICHEL 1991). In 1689 physician and traveler Engelbert Kaempfer (1651–1713) arrived in Batavia after many years of extensive botanical research in Persia. Cleyer and others in

30 Andreas Cleyer: *Observatio de Arbore Camphorifera Japonensium Kusnoky dicta. Miscellanea curiosa medico-physica Academiae naturae curiosorum, Decuria II, Annus X (1692), pp. 79* (collection of the author).

Batavia drew his attention to the scientific harvest he could gain by conducting comprehensive research into Japanese plants (MICHEL 2001).

When Kaempfer left Batavia for Japan in the summer of 1689, he was well prepared for this task. As they had told him in Batavia, the Japanese did not like foreign research on their country – with one exception. Since the 1670s, plant collection was one of the few activities in which foreigners could participate with the consent of local officials.

I had for my own private use a very large Javan box, which I had brought with me from Batavia. In this box I privately kept a large mariner's compass, in order to measure the directions of the roads, mountains, and coasts, but openly, and exposed to every body's view, was an inkhorn, and I usually fill'd it with plants, flowers, and branches of trees which I figur'd and described, (nay under this pretext, whatever occur'd to me remarkable:) Doing this, as I did it free and unhindered, to every bodies knowledge, I should be wrongly accus'd to have done any thing which might have proved disadvantageous to the company's trade in this country, or to have thereby thrown any ill suspicion upon our conduct from so jealous and circumspect a nation. Nay, far from it, I must own, that from the very first day of our setting out, till our return to Nagasaki, all the Japanese companions of our voyage, and particularly the Bugio, or commander in chief, were extremely forward to communicate to me, what uncommon plants they met with, together with their true names, characters and uses which they diligently enquired into among the natives. The Japanese a very reasonable and sensible People, and themselves great lovers of plants, look upon Botany, as a study both useful and innocent, which pursuant to the very dictates of reason and the law of nature, ought to be encourag'd by every body. Thus much I know by my own experience, that of all the nations I saw and convers'd with in my long and tedious travels, those the least favour'd botanical learning, who ought to have encourag'd it most. Upon my return to Nagasaki, Tonnemon,^[31] secretary and chief counsellor to the Governors, being once at Desima, sent for me, and made me by the chief Interpreter Sinkobe,^[32] the following compliment: That he had heard with great pleasure from Asagina Sindaanosin,^[33] our late Bugio, how agreeably I had spent my time, and what diversion I had taken upon our Journey in that excellent and most commendable study of Botany, whereof he, Tonnemon, himself, was a great lover and encourager. (Kaempfer 1727: 399–400)

31 Miyagi Tonomo Masazumi (宮城主殿和燈), the governor of Nagasaki from 1687 until 1696. Kaempfer's usage of the term »Bugio« is misleading.

32 Narabayashi Shingobē alias Chinzan (榎林新五兵衛、鎮山). This was one of the interpreters who assembled the reports on Haeck's and Braun's activities.

33 Asahina Sadanoshin (朝比奈定之進), an employee of governor Miyagi.

Some Implications

The import of a distillation apparatus in 1671 and the introduction of distillation techniques in the following years is a remarkable example of the early transfer of Western technological knowledge. It did not happen by chance or as the result of individual ambitions by someone with the right connections. It was an initiative of the Tokugawa government that aimed at an independent domestic production cycle. Nagasaki governors and other officials frequently referred to the shōgun as the source of their request and stressed its importance. All sources related to the events during the late 1660s and early 1670s show that a variety of seed plants were imported by Japan in order to procure the raw material for the distillation of pharmaceutical oils.

At the same time, Westerners were asked to investigate the flora in the vicinity of Nagasaki. This is a remarkable request, revealing that the authority of traditional Chinese botany in Japan (本草学 *honzōgaku*) had already begun to crumble. Clearly some Japanese were aware of the abundance of plants inside and outside Japan and the limits of the once almighty Chinese herbal book *Bencao Gangmu* (『本草綱目』 *Honzōkōmoku*). This occurred about four decades before Kaibara Ekiken (1630–1714) published his *Yamato Honzō* (Japanese Plants), a herbal that led to him being named the »father of Japanese botany« (Kaibara 1709).

The introduction of Western-style surgical treatment methods provides an interesting example of the numerous consequences that occur during intercultural transfer, even when it is confined to knowledge of a more practical nature. These activities and events took place many decades before Yoshimune's policy of promoting the domestic production of herbs while importing and investigating foreign medicinal materials. Our findings suggest strongly that Western science and technology in 17th century Japan as well as the history and concept of Dutch Learning (*rangaku*) deserve a thorough review.

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Christian Oberländer

Japan's *Deutschlandpolitik* in the Postwar Period

The Case of Travel Restrictions between East Germany and Japan

Relations between Germany and Japan are said by many to be nearly frictionless. However, a fresh look at the important years of the immediate post-war period, when the relations had to be restored after a seven-year hiatus, reveals that there were several areas of conflicting interests which had to be resolved before bilateral relations took on their current, »stable« shape. In the area of foreign policy, the East-West conflict was a natural starting point for closer relations between the two countries after their joint defeat, because both Germany and Japan found themselves in the front-line position against the communist bloc. Besides common interests such as exchanging information on Soviet policies,¹ it was of utmost political importance for the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) to secure Japan's support in overcoming the division of Germany. The degree to which the Japanese government responded to the political agenda of »West Germany« – especially the non-recognition of the communist German Democratic Republic or »East Germany« – can be regarded as an important indicator of the quality of German-Japanese relations in the political field. In the following, I will discuss a small facet of Japan's policy on Germany, focusing on the example of Japanese responsiveness to the Federal Republic's call for travel restrictions to Japan for citizens of East Germany.²

1. Japan's Acceptance of the Hallstein Doctrine

Immediately after its founding, the Federal Republic of Germany was confronted with the challenge of having to defend, again and again, its claim of being the sole legitimate voice of all of Germany. It therefore aimed to prevent, to the best of its ability, any attempt of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) to gain political recognition abroad. It was an important prerequisite for successfully conducted diplomacy and for gaining international recognition to send official representatives to foreign countries for the so-called »Soviet-occupied Zone« (SBZ) – as West German representatives frequently

1 See for example Oberländer 2006.

2 For this paper, the documents, files, and records of the Japanese Diet and the German Federal Foreign Office were obtained and analyzed.

called the GDR. Thus, the embassies of the Federal Republic of Germany tried to persuade the governments of their host countries to block the entry of official East German visitors. This was also the case in Japan where government officials were sympathetic to the West German claim of exclusive representation of the entirety of Germany. Nonetheless, a broad spectrum of political and economic interest groups in Japan regularly called for closer personal contacts with the GDR.

On March 25, 1954, the Soviet Union announced that it had granted »sovereignty« to East Germany. Only two weeks later, on April 7, the Foreign Ministry in Bonn started its first diplomatic offensive against the GDR government (Gray 2003: 25). On that day, the State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Walter Hallstein, ordered the German diplomatic representatives in foreign countries to inform their host governments that

the federal government [of Germany] will not under any circumstance recognize the so-called »GDR«. It attaches great importance to be supported in this by the foreign government through a clear statement.

Only a few days later, the Japanese government declared »clearly and categorically that it will not recognize the so-called GDR«. In return, Bonn ordered its embassy in Tokyo to transmit the »special thanks of the Federal Government of Germany to the [Japanese] government« for making this declaration.³ Japan was thus inaugurated into the system of the Hallstein doctrine, in which friendly states pledged to abstain from any step that might be interpreted as recognition of the GDR government, such as receiving officials or allowing the establishment of diplomatic representations. The Federal Republic could interpret violation of this promise as an »unfriendly act« and – under extreme circumstances – respond by breaking off diplomatic relations. Since passports issued by non-recognized countries were considered invalid according to international custom, the Federal Republic could render international travel of East German citizens very difficult in this way.

After the Federal Republic had established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in the autumn of 1955, despite the maintenance of a diplomatic representation in Moscow by the GDR, West Germany had to fight even harder for the adherence of the Hallstein doctrine by Japan, especially since Japan was also conducting negotiations with the Soviets regarding the normalization of relations. The GDR immediately saw an opening to establish at least a minimal presence in Japan. Since official contacts to the Japanese government were blocked by the Hallstein doctrine, GDR organizations tried to contact selected groups in Japanese society that we might consider today non-governmental organizations. The East Germans cleverly chose the »World Congress against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs« which – as part of the anti-nuclear movement of the time – was organized by a Japanese peace

3 Northe to Auswärtiges Amt (15.4.1954), in: AV Neues Amt 6842.

group and offered the East Germans a convenient opportunity to present themselves as the peace-loving, anti-militaristic side of Germany.

When the above-mentioned »World Congress« was held in 1955, only two East German citizens were sent to Japan, however, one of them was the vice president of the communist union organization, the so-called Freie Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund (FDGB). The following year, the GDR attempted to expand its delegation to the »Second World Congress« to a group of four participants led by Karl Lohmann, vice president of the East German Academy of Science. But now, the isolation policy of the Federal Republic of Germany took effect: German ambassador Hans Kroll, who had been sent to Japan only the year before, requested the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs to deny the East Germans permits to enter Japan.⁴ While the Minister of Justice had been willing at first to grant the East Germans entry to Japan, his position was overturned at the state secretaries' interministerial meeting. As a result, the East German representatives could not participate in the »Second World Congress« and were thus ostracized like the delegates from North Korea, North Vietnam, and Outer Mongolia, because Japan did not recognize these four communist areas as states.⁵

According to figures that Tokyo made available to the Federal Republic of Germany, travel between the GDR and Japan in these years was limited to few cultural and trade contacts. In 1956, an East German trade delegation visited Japan, but was not allowed to establish a permanent representation or to conclude any larger contracts.⁶ In 1957, only eight people from the GDR entered Japan: three businessmen, two physicians and their wives, and one writer. The volume of travel from Japan to the GDR was by no means any larger. Nonetheless, the German embassy gloomily believed that it registered »a gradual increase of Soviet zone activity« in Japan.⁷ This did not turn out entirely wrong, because the GDR soon developed the strategy of winning invitations to Japan by reciprocity – by inviting members of the Socialist Party of Japan and the Federation of Workers Unions, Sōhyō, to East Berlin and treating them like state guests. The resolutions that were published at the occasion of these visits often contained a demand for the recognition of the East German regime by the Japanese government as well as attacks against the Federal Republic. The German embassy in Tokyo conversely interpreted these public statements as propaganda hostile to the Federal Republic, thus

4 Vermerk (17.8.1956), in: B 12 1503.

5 Botschafter Kroll to Auswärtiges Amt (31.7.1956), in: B 12 1529. See also the statement of Matsumoto Shichirō in the Diet's Special Committee on the Japan-Soviet Joint Declaration (20.11.1956).

6 Van Briessen to Auswärtiges Amt (20.4.1959), in: AV Neues Amt 6842.

7 Vermerk: »Sowjetzonenaktivität in Japan« (25.2.1958), in: AV Neues Amt 6842

lending further support to the demand that GDR officials not be admitted to Japan.⁸

2. The Warnke Visit as a Major Test of Japan's Cold War *Deutschlandpolitik*

The cleverness of the GDR maneuver in challenging the non-entry policy towards GDR officials by using union representatives became apparent when Ambassador Wilhelm Haas reported to Bonn on May 1, 1960: »As notified by the Foreign Ministry, the president of the board of directors of the FDGB of the zone, Herbert Warnke, has been invited to Japan by the Japanese left-wing union federation Sōhyō.« This invitation was extended at the seemingly harmless occasion of the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the founding of Japanese unions. However, Herbert Warnke was not only the president of the board of directors of the FDGB, but also a member of the East German parliament as well as of the politburo of the central committee of the East German Communist Party (SED). Ambassador Haas pointed out the »danger [...] that [Warnke] will use the visit only for communist subversion and to disturb German-Japanese relations« and announced immediate intervention by the embassy.

Ambassador Haas probably perceived Warnke's visit as a singularly acute »danger« because it came at a critical time. On January 9, 1960, the revised security treaty between the United States and Japan had been signed in Washington and was now scheduled for ratification. In particular, the Japanese political left staged fierce protests against the new treaty claiming that the agreement might draw Japan into conflicts between the United States and third parties. The countries of the communist camp supported these protests (Hara 1995: 212). East Germany used the occasion of the visit of German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer to Japan in March 1960 to step up its propaganda activities against Japan and to demonstrate its support of the protest movement.

On June 7, Dr. van Briessen of the embassy visited Kanayama and Kimoto, the resort and section heads in charge at Japan's Foreign Ministry, the Gaimushō, in order to draw their attention to the purely political nature of Warnke's Japan visit and to remind them of the communiqué published at the time of Adenauer's visit in which it was not only acknowledged that the government of the Federal Republic of Germany was the government of all of Germany, but also that Japanese support had been promised on matters concerning German reunification. The Japanese officials simply replied that there were no legal means to refuse Warnke's entry into Japan. They feared that if they had rejected his application, there would have been a storm of protest which would be inopportune from a domestic point of view, since this

8 Auswärtiges Amt to Deutsche Botschaft Tokyo (20.11.1959), in: AV Neues Amt 6841.

was a time of massive tensions regarding the renewal of the U.S.-Japan security treaty.

After the unsatisfactory result of this first interaction regarding the Warnke case, in the following days, the embassy also intervened at the level of department head, then vice minister and finally even – in the form of Ambassador Haas himself – directly addressed Foreign Minister Fujiyama.⁹ During the top-level discussion with the head of Japanese diplomacy, the ambassador got the impression that »the Japanese government has committed itself to Sōhyō«. Kimoto declared a few days later that the granting of Warnke's visa was final and added the thinly veiled threat that too much pressure on the Japanese government would have a negative effect on the Japanese policy of non-recognition of the GDR.¹⁰ Indeed on June 20, 1960, in Rangoon, Warnke picked up a visa that was valid for entry into Japan for a period of three months. However, he could not travel immediately to Japan because the West German government had meanwhile – with the help of the British authorities – successfully thwarted his passage through Hong Kong.¹¹

In the meantime, the German embassy continued its efforts to prevent Warnke's still imminent entry by trying to persuade Gaimushō to rescind his entry permit, but this failed. As a last resort, the embassy requested Bonn to ask all those countries for help that had airports which Warnke could possibly pass through on his way to Tokyo.¹² However, on July 26, the Gaimushō suddenly notified the embassy that not Warnke, but probably Rolf Deubner, the head of the FDGB Department for International Cooperation,¹³ would travel to Japan to take part in the Sōhyō and the anti-nuclear conferences.¹⁴ Indeed, Deubner arrived in Tokyo only a few days later.¹⁵ In a radio interview that he gave immediately upon landing, he proposed »a brotherly cooperation of East German and Japanese workers in the struggle against militarism to [...] prevent a new edition of the old fascistic axis between Bonn and Tokyo.« After Deubner renewed his attacks against the Federal Republic before the national congress of Sōhyō, Bonn strongly insisted that the Japanese government take measures. The German ambassador even recommended that Bonn should risk the deterioration of German-Japanese relations since the consequences of allowing a precedent – if Deubner's inflammatory

9 Van Briessen to Auswärtiges Amt (23.6.1960), in: AV Neues Amt 6841. See also Memorandum, Botschafter Haas to Außenminister Fujiyama (9.6.1960), in: AV Neues Amt 6841.

10 Van Briessen to Auswärtiges Amt (15.6.1960), in: AV Neues Amt 6841.

11 Van Briessen to Auswärtiges Amt (22.7.1960), in: AV Neues Amt 6841.

12 Van Briessen to Auswärtiges Amt (22.7.1960), in: AV Neues Amt 6841.

13 Von Randow (Deutsche Botschaft in Rangun) to Auswärtiges Amt (29.6.1960), in: AV Neues Amt 6841.

14 Vermerk: »Einreise Warnke« (26.7.1960), in: AV Neues Amt 6841.

15 Van Briessen to Auswärtiges Amt (3.8.1960), in: AV Neues Amt 6841.

speeches were accepted without protest – would be much more damaging. While the Japanese government issued only a warning to Sōhyō because of Deubner's speech, the real test to German-Japanese relations followed *after* Deubner had left Japan.

During a consultation at Gaimushō regarding Deubner's statements, the German side demonstrated its disappointment regarding the inactivity of the Japanese government, and this sparked a heated debate.¹⁶ The Japanese officials claimed that the numerous remonstrations of the German embassy had left a bad impression at the Japanese Foreign Ministry and even announced that in the future, visitors from East Germany would come more often and that one or the other important official from the GDR might come to Japan sometime.¹⁷ As a result of this discussion, the embassy began to fear that Tokyo would review its policy on the entry of East German citizens altogether because the Japanese were apparently thinking that the disadvantages of straining relations with the Federal Republic were smaller than the advantages to be had from the stronger – economic, cultural, and political – ties with East Germany.¹⁸ However, tension eased somewhat when, after the expiration of the entry permit for Warnke, the Japanese government declared that no more FDGB representatives would be allowed to enter the country.

3. From Subversion to Economic Pressure and Then to Recognition

After the Warnke case was resolved, the German embassy believed that it noticed a perceptible willingness on the part of the Japanese which began in December 1960 when the former Japanese ambassador to Germany, Takeuchi, was appointed to the office of Administrative Vice Foreign Minister.¹⁹ Because of the energetic representations of the Federal Government in the Warnke case, the Japanese Foreign Ministry apparently agreed temporarily to consultations with the German embassy in regard to applications for entry permits by inhabitants of East Germany. While the embassy had to accept that two East German delegates participated in the »World Congress against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs« in 1961, neither of the visitors were FDGB members. Besides, according to an assessment of the German embassy, the »World Congress« had already lost most of its former momentum, not least because of the repeated nuclear test explosions staged by the Soviet Union.²⁰ All entry permits of FDGB representatives wanting to travel to Japan in response to invitations by Sōhyō were now consistently denied.

16 Aufzeichnung: »Gespräch mit Herrn Kanayama« (13.8.1960), in: AV Neues Amt 6841.

17 »Einreise FDGB Delegation« (29.8.1960), in: AV Neues Amt 6841.

18 Van Briessen to Auswärtiges Amt (31.8.1960), in: AV Neues Amt 6841.

19 Botschafter Haas to Auswärtiges Amt (20.2.1961), in: B 12 1486.

20 Botschafter Haas to Auswärtiges Amt (9.8.1962), in: B 12 1534.

However, Japanese vigilance soon became lax again, and the GDR continued its efforts in establishing official contacts with Japan. For example, in 1964, the East Germans did not shrink from sending Hans Bentzien, Minister of Culture, and Erich Markowitsch, Minister of Industry, to Japan, both of whom were camouflaged as »guests of honor« of the GDR's National Olympic Committee at the occasion of the Tokyo Olympics. The German embassy in Tokyo noticed these activities only after Markowitsch had given the *Mainichi Shimbun* an interview²¹ and Bentzien had appeared at several receptions given by prefectural and local governments in western Japan. The embassy immediately raised protests with the Japanese Foreign Ministry, and in several incidents East German flags – the so-called »division banners« (*Spalter-Flaggen*) – were lowered and Japanese ministries and lower-ranking agencies were prohibited from receiving the East German officials.²² Because of this »Olympics experience«, the embassy suggested that the Japanese government return to the earlier, short-term consultations that were introduced after the Warnke case. Alternatively, Japan was urged – just as other NATO countries – to issue entry permits only on the basis of so-called »temporary travel documents« processed by the Allied Travel Office in Berlin. However, Tokyo refused to do this as it was too time-consuming and decided to process harmless entry applications for culture, sports and trade purposes independently. Only the suspicion that East Germans could be visiting Japan for political purposes would lead to inquiry at the Allied Travel Office.

Meanwhile, left-wing representatives kept up their pressure on the Japanese government to lift travel restrictions. For example, in 1966, Masao Yagi, a career diplomat who was then head of the Immigration Bureau of Japan, had to answer questions by Seiichi Inaba, a member of the Socialist Party of Japan, on what grounds the Japanese government denied entry to delegates to the »World Congress against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs« from certain communist countries. Yagi explained that because East Germany was a place very far away, letting its delegates attend the congress would not be much of a problem. However, because the Federal Republic of Germany had repeatedly stated its opposition to the visits of East German officials, and because there was no reason to ignore the opinion of a friendly government, Tokyo decided not to grant entry to the East Germans.²³

From the mid-1960s onwards, the East German regime began to combine clumsy strategies of subversion – sending representatives for political or propaganda purposes under varying pretexts to Japan – with more effective pressure tactics using Japanese companies' growing interest in trade with

21 Botschafter Dittmann to Auswärtiges Amt (9.10.1964 und 17.10.1964), in: B 37 2.

22 Botschafter Dittmann to Auswärtiges Amt (22.10.1964), in: B 37 2.

23 Statement of Masao Yagi in the Diet's Judicial Affairs Committee (28.7.1966).

Eastern Europe as leverage in the quest for official contacts with Japan. When, for example, in 1966 a renewed application for an entry permit for Herbert Warnke which Sōhyō had submitted in response to pressure from the GDR was refused, East Germany terminated negotiations on the construction of a synthetic fiber plant that were being conducted with the trading company Mitsubishi Shōji and instead gave the order to a French competitor.²⁴ That same year, the GDR sent a larger trade delegation to Japan, employing a tactic similar to that with the Olympics. In early October, the German embassy in Tokyo learned of the arrival of the ten-member delegation from the newspapers.²⁵ Upon inquiry, the Gaimushō was caught by surprise, and it was subsequently discovered that the GDR representatives had applied for entry permits individually so that the arrival of an entire delegation would not be noticed by Japanese authorities.²⁶

When trade relations between Japan and the GDR increased during the following years, even the German embassy could no longer prevent the increasing willingness of the Japanese government to grant entry permits to East Germans. In the spring of 1970, the Gaimushō informed the embassy in an »apparently intentionally casual« way that three FDGB officials were staying in Japan, at least two of whom occupied top positions in the communist union. Only two years later, in November 1972, members of the government of the GDR won formal access to Japanese officials for the first time when State Secretary Beil was received by Vice Prime Minister Miki Takeo as part of trade talks. On May 15, 1973, Japan and the GDR finally established diplomatic relations and, one year later, ambassadors were exchanged (Neuß 1989: 278–280).

4. Conclusion

The attitude of Japan towards the West German campaign for non-recognition of the GDR at the time of the Hallstein doctrine was an important indicator of the quality of political relations between Japan and the Federal Republic of Germany. While Japan accepted the Hallstein doctrine in principle without hesitation and maintained this position until the early 1970s, the degree to which Tokyo was willing and able to abide by the doctrine depended in part on perceived domestic political stability. At the time of the large-scale protests against the security treaty in 1960 when Tokyo even tried to call in the Self-Defense Forces to pacify the situation in the capital, the Japanese government felt that it was not in a position to refuse the entry of a high-ranking communist official from East Germany. Even protests at the highest levels by West German diplomats could change this. From the second

24 Boss to Auswärtiges Amt (25.3.1966), in: B 37 260.

25 Botschafter Krapf to Auswärtiges Amt (5.10.1966), in: B 37 260.

26 Botschafter Krapf to Auswärtiges Amt (6.10.1966), in: B 37 260.

half of the 1960s onwards, the GDR succeeded – not least because of Japanese economic interests, but also because of the new *Ostpolitik* of the Federal Republic – in permanently loosening restrictions of personal travel in favor of a more pragmatic approach. When the Federal Republic itself began approaching the GDR in small steps, Japan could not have been expected to be more Catholic than the Pope!

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Claudius C. Müller

Museums of Ethnology and Japanese Studies

In the summer of 1889 Max Buchner, director of the Royal Bavarian Museum of Ethnology in Munich, spent three months in Japan within the framework of a larger trip in order to acquire collection items for the museum rooms. The outcome with, all in all, over 2,500 single objects can be deemed successful, even though, from today's vantage point, Buchner may seem anything but predestined for this commission. As were many ethnologists at the time who worked in museums, he was originally something else, a physician, and spent several years as »assistant« to the African explorer Gustav Nachtigal in the service of the German colonial administration in Cameroon (Buchner 1914). A large collection of ethnological objects that he assembled had unfortunately been lost during its transportation per ship to Europe. The specific prerequisites for a collecting journey to Japan may have been lacking, yet thanks to him we have a stock that, in quantity and quality, is today one of the outstanding documentations of non-European cultures.¹

Buchner had an eye for the seemingly irrelevant and the easily overlooked quotidian article. In the Munich Museum's book of arrivals under the numbers B.2274 and 2275 the following is noted: »Two pairs of chopsticks for the common folk such as provided by the movable eatery stands at the roadside. The first pair had not yet been broken apart«. A casual remark that is still valuable as an early record of Japan's production efficiency.

The legacy of early German collecting heroes such as Philipp Franz von Siebold and his sons Alexander and Heinrich, Buchner, Baelz and others was also further expanded in the 20th century by the ethnological museums, although the professional care of specially trained curators with a well-grounded knowledge of the language and the country was rare enough.² In this same period, the study of Japan was established at the universities as a hugely professional and successful academic subject. Contacts between the university and the museum were rather superficial, and collaboration happened. Ethnological questions concerning Japan – in so far as they were not seen as part of literature or the history of art or religion – were at the universities reserved for individual interests or for the few Japanologists who re-

1 This »oriental journey« also led Buchner to Australia, New Guinea, the Philippines, Southeast Asia, and China, where he likewise purchased items for the museum; see Buchner 1919.

2 On this question, see Müller2005.

garded ethnology as the focus of their research, above all, the cultural-historical influenced Viennese Japanology of Alexander Slawik and his disciples.

This drifting apart of the two institutions (museum and university) is undeniable, which can chiefly be charged to the museums and partly their own responsibility. With a given, very modest staffing, they delighted in appointing sinologically trained curators for East Asian collections, which were often enough supposed to include not only China, Korea, and Japan but also Siberia, Tibet, even all of South and Southeast Asia. *Honi soit qui mal y pense* – something like: Japanese culture is an offspring of the Chinese. Remedying this distortion is in the interest of the museums, whose inventory of Japanese culture is not in corresponding use, if not even lying completely fallow. But it seems to me there are also direct advantages offered to Japanology at the universities, concrete suggestions of which will be presented in the following.

It is helpful here to refer back to Buchner who, without any Sinological or Japanological training, fulfilled the objectives of the ethnological museum very successfully, that of interesting the public in foreign cultures and providing knowledge – here of Japan – with the aid of objects and ensembles. In his memoirs, Buchner describes very graphically his lucky find, such as the noted chopsticks, actually a triviality, yet of striking significance and crucially informative of the Japanese tradition of preparing and eating food in contrast to European gastronomy. He also, however, reports on his deliberate search for desired objects. Antiquity shops in big cities at the time offered extremely good deals on treasures from temples and shrines that, because of the poverty caused by secularization, were forced to sell them. Whereby Buchner acted on the advice of experienced connoisseurs of Japan, such as Dr. Erwin Baelz or the »excellent Mr. Winkler«, who not only led him to a »peculiarly rich warehouse« in Kobe, but also generously advanced the purchasing price, for which an application to the Bavarian Finance Ministry still needed to be written!³

Along with everyday articles, Buchner very consciously collected such things that seemed not to satisfy any general aesthetic requirement. Thus he found »once hardly arrived in Tokyo [...] at a junkshop two gloriously ugly red Nio« warriors that Dr. Baelz was inclined to buy for Stuttgart, but then hesitated because he doubted they would be liked there. As Buchner wrote sarcastically, trying to thwart the admiration of all things Japanese *en vogue* in Europe at that time by stressing the fact that there is ugliness (>shadow<) as well in Japanese culture: »This was very welcome to me to be able to deline-

3 After his return to Germany in 1901, Buchner engaged Hara Shinkichi, a well-known expert in Japanese culture from the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg, to record and assess the Siebold collection in Munich.

ate Japanese worship with such powerful strokes«. Whereby he in no way neglected the quality of Japanese art and succeeded in buying for a song a series of large (up to three meters high) Buddha and guardian figures from the Tokugawa era: »In no museum in Europe [...] have I seen any more beautiful« (Buchner 1919: 12). »They are here now«, he remarked proudly, and today we can say that they still represent to visitors an imposing and impressive ensemble that have, since their purchase, taken on the character of an icon of the Munich house. It also characterizes Buchner's occupation with Japanese culture that he acquired decorative, expressive and striking objects for exhibitions that awaken the spontaneous interest of viewers and entice them to want to learn more about this still unknown culture.

Ethnological museums have another status today than they did at the end of the 19th century. The gloss of the early years has faded and the quite positive and original curiosity about the foreign, the unknown and the exotic has been diverted by an excess supply of various types of news and information from around the world, which one individual can hardly manage to digest. Japanese culture – from hi-tech to *sushi* – has become common knowledge. A rich and varied range of high-grade art exhibitions in the East Asian art museums and large exhibition halls of Berlin, Bonn, Munich, and other cities celebrate successes that can hardly be rated high enough over here for their understanding of Japanese aesthetics and tradition. The tours of ritual drumming ensembles, of Kabuki and Buto companies, Zen meditation, ikebana, and calligraphy courses, for instance, cover numerous facets of Japanese culture. Japanese presentations in ethnological museums, in comparison, seem to be sidelined, if not even completely overlooked. For a smaller, but interested and grateful public, these other exhibits are very welcome: exhibitions on Japanese handicrafts, pottery production, papermaking, sword forging, bamboo objects, the lifeworld of today's Zen monks or relations between the culture of Japan and the Ainu. That the issue hereby is of complementary fields that are advantageous and profitable for both sides is obvious and underlines the necessity to foster Japanese culture also in ethnological museums. However how can we succeed in making the contribution of cultural anthropology more professional, more visitor-oriented and more successful without diminishing the traditional forte of its collections and research?

In a collaboration between museums and universities there are obvious and much too little-used resources. The traditional range of functions of cultural history-type museums are keynoted as collecting, preserving, researching and exhibiting. It is at these four points that the possibilities of collaboration between ethnological museums with Japanese collections and the university study of Japanese culture are manifest.

Collecting

At first sight and in any case as seen from outside, the compiling of collections and the acquisition of interesting objects could be called the most fascinating and, together with their exhibition, the most important task of a curator. In the meantime, however, since the time of the great Japanese collectors of the 19th century, some things have changed. For understandable reasons, comprehensive thematic documentations of Japan – such as Philipp Franz von Siebold was able to assemble for Leiden and Munich (general culture), Hans Spörry for Zurich (bamboo objects), or Josef Kreiner as late as the 1960s for Vienna (traditional agriculture) and even Max Buchner for Munich (large sacred objects) – are hardly possible anymore. Some ethnologically relevant themes have run their course; financial backing by museums or sponsors have each time become sparser. Thus any new acquisitions in the thematic collections of most ethnological museums are thanks to the initiative of private collectors, who have, in part, for decades purchased objects from folk religions (*ema*) and toys (Berlin) or modern Japanese prints (Walter Schmidt Collection, Munich) and generously donated them to museums. These donations, to which the museums in the next years will almost exclusively have to fall back on, are in line with the tradition of the noted old collectors who, with their objects, have documented a specific cultural status at a defined point in time. It is striking that at the time of their acquisition a large number of the objects were rather outside of the general interest and seem marginal in the widest sense of the term. Such as everyday objects that are at any time easy to replace. They first gain their current and extraordinary value in the eyes of later generations when they are recognized as the historical documents and examples of a specific period or fashion. It is very inspirational today to compare ourselves to these earlier collectors, even if the judgment of future generations regarding the success of our present efforts will remain unknown to us.

Today ethnological museums are no longer capable of sending someone out into the world to invest an appropriate sum of money in comprehensive collections of specific fields. However, this could possibly be more the case of a good idea than a full purse. The opportunities for young students to study Japanese in the country itself are very much easier to come by and more usual than they used to be, and these students could very well be motivated by being commissioned to do research so as to discover their own collection themes. Lecturers should suggest themes, curators offer inspiring tours of their depots with the perspective that this could end in the exploration of different study focuses and the chance of financial support. For the field – and Tokyo, Osaka, or Nikko are nothing but – institutes and museums in Japan should put together a kind of up-to-date manual for present-day collectors, similar to what was the usual practice in the 19th century. One example

is imaginable under the title »selling fish in the market«, namely documenting this activity with photographs, interviews, and several essential tools like knives, scales, packing material, and advertising. The result could be a small presentation in a museum and a long-term historical documentation for future generations (when only farm-bred salmon will exist), compiled by someone who has researched the material.

A good eye and the right idea at the right time are, so to speak, important for students, curators, and private collectors. The experience of the past years shows that there is no lack of just this, as several examples prove: thus in the 1960s the Mongolia specialists Walther Heissig and his wife, during a lecture trip through Japan, collected over 100 towels (*tenugui*) from different hotels and donated them to the Berlin Ethnological Museum. These towels all had different embellishments, in many cases indicating the hotel and its insignia (*mon*), but also Ainu motifs, that, e.g., could be incorporated into an Ainu exhibition. This applies likewise to the collection of Saskia Ishikawa-Franke, who as professor for German studies has been active for decades in Japan and has continually collected lacquer objects or toys, but also prompted children to illustrate German and Japanese fairytales. In the 1990s, Josef Kreiner and his colleagues at the German Institute for Japanese Studies in Tokyo have collected from restaurants hundreds of the paper chopstick wrappers and donated them to the Berlin Ethnological Museum. Since the Berlin collection also possesses chopstick wrappers from the end of the 19th century that are printed in the technique of the traditional colored woodcut, an historical comparison of the countless varieties of décor is possible. The fashion for Tamagotchi toys vanished even faster than it had spread. Happy the museum that ten years before had been able to acquire examples of them for a song. A large heap of matchboxes with varying motifs, approx. 500 in number, were compiled by two private collectors who had received them from restaurants or cafés; they were a fitting and astounding complement to an exhibition on Japanese firemen's jackets. Such souvenirs, incidentally, have these past years been ever less often on display and in ever more modest numbers.

Paper, paper products, plastic bags, Christmas and New Year's cards – which were sent to institutions and private people in large quantities – after 10 years already show the change in taste; or tourists' private photo albums of the 1960s and 1970s, the series would be easy to extend.⁴ One or two generations later and you can laugh at such things, or wonder about how

4 The author of this article had, at the end of the 1990s – under the influence of jetlag and late at night – »robbed« several telephone booths near his hotel of the contents of their walls that bristled with personal ads pasted in several overlapping layers with callgirls' names; these announcements then found their way into the lore of Berlin's Ethnological Museum. Buchner himself had once added – without any sign of regret – on the documentation cited at the beginning on the origin of the chopsticks: »found in the Japanese hotel in Kamakura lying in a drawer«.

distant this era already is and how fast taste and fashion change. Thus these things are evidence of the culture. Collecting – also without any expert prerequisites – seems to be simple, but is in most cases not haphazard, subject, even with private collectors, to certain systematization and penchants. However, the interpretation, the research and the consideration of the objects' place in the presentations calls for specialists, that is, museal as well as Japonologist expertise.

Preservation

Information on the way museum stocks are kept in depots seldom reaches the outside – for understandable reasons. This contributes to the widespread suspicion that ethnological museums show far too little of their treasures to the public.⁵ And indeed, preserving the collections in the broadest meaning of the term is one of the important duties of the depot administrators, restorers and curators and – for reasons of security – are subject to strict inner-museal regulations. And yet it is part of an introduction to museum practice – which lasts around two months – that students also work in depots, so as to learn how to maintain inventories of, say, Japanese material culture. Moreover, it has been increasingly shown these past years that there is also no less need for restorers specialized in Japanese collections – and not just of East Asian art. It is a profession that not only requires training in restoration at a polytechnic school, but also well-founded knowledge in Japonology. It is quite evident that museum and university offer the best complementary prerequisites for such an education.

A relationship between Japanese studies at the university and the proper storage and conservation of museum collections may seem far-fetched. Yet in this important field of collaboration, there is at the simplest level the possibility of generally unpaid traineeships in which students are introduced to Japanese material culture and the inventory of objects. What also needs promoting is the link between Japanese studies and an education in the profession of restoring. This opens up a professional field that has a promising future for museal activities in a wider sense.

5 In general in the large cultural-historical museums worldwide, to which ones on ethnology belong, only three to six percent of the entire inventory is exhibited. Not everything is capable of being displayed, for reasons of quality or conservation. And many objects are kept for research or as comparative examples. As a kind of experiment, several years ago in Hamburg's museum of Ethnology, all available Japanese objects were presented in a special exhibit: the value of the insight provided and the impression on the visitors – once past the aha effect – was rather limited in my opinion. Colleagues with their own Japanese collections may, on the other hand, be very delighted to have been able to view the articles without restraint and in better order than in the depot.

Research

If collecting cultural products is chiefly a museal activity, research on the subject, per definition, finds its home in the museum. Which doesn't mean that the staff at ethnological museums may not also publish academic articles, when normal work at the museum allows. A visible sign are the catalogues that accompany exhibitions and the many scholarly journals edited by museums in German-speaking countries. Nevertheless it seems virtually inevitable that one of the most ambitious projects in recent years – the registering of ethnological Japanese inventories in German and European collections – has been owed to the initiative of the Japanology Seminar of Bonn University: its director Josef Kreiner, along with Hans-Dieter Ölschleger as hands-on organizer, have built up a comprehensive, well-documented and illustrated databank. It is an indispensable foundation for all further comparative studies of Japanese collections in Europe and for individual research on objects and groups of objects. Japanese colleagues have carried out a comparable follow-up project for North American collections. Universities and museums are called on to undertake further steps, on the one hand, to continue to care for the data collection and, on the other, to set up other concrete project collaborations between different institutions and thus create a kind of research academy for Japanese material culture.

A desired and realizable goal would be establishing a research priority for material culture in which different disciplines at a university could join up with one of the large German ethnological museums. The discussion about so-called »orchid subjects« (which only the rich can afford to study) and the well-underway establishment of the BA and MA degrees make a collaboration between Japanology, Sinology, studies of Islam, Mongolia, India and Tibet, traditional European, and non-European ethnology, as well as intercultural communication, an obvious solution. Museums and universities would profit from a common fund of knowledge and interdisciplinary themes, including teaching staff, supervision of the students and an augmentation of the curriculum, as well as expert care of the collection items, thanks to the additional personnel. In this way a sensible center of supra-regional effectivity could be created for such a research priority.

Ethnologically oriented centers of this kind have been successful since the 1970s in the National Museum of Ethnology, Suita, Osaka and in the newly founded Musée du quai Branly in Paris. Such considerations presuppose that the noted university disciplines understand that a knowledge of material culture is an important part of education and that, on the part of the museums, these studies are made possible and institutionalized.

Exhibiting

Museums, including the ethnological ones, make themselves known to the public chiefly through exhibitions. Much fuss and hype are made about large museum events such as »MoMa«, »Guggenheim«, »Picasso«, »Beuys«, »Dinos«, »Tut«. In comparison, the activities of ethnological museums and their Japanese departments – because of their modest public resonance: the manageable amount of visitors, »dull« presentations – make the impression of being the stepchildren of the cultural scene, despite their collections' high international standards. Many even speak of an out-and-out crisis in the area of ethnological museums, even if it is misleading to take as yardstick the big exhibition halls that have no permanent inventories to administer and have other financial possibilities. Theories abound to explain this unfortunate situation. On the surface it is certainly the cult of visitor numbers, the definition of culture as a marketplace commodity that has to sell itself profitably. But also the necessity of financial support from businesses that regard exhibitions as a product of their company policy, which subjects museums to the danger of having their guidelines and interests influenced. What weighs heavily on ethnological exhibitions is that the visitors often have little previous knowledge and must first be introduced to the quite complex thematic, relationships and background. An effort that cannot be avoided.

Presumably the general situation of ethnological museums and the public response to them will change very little these next years. Yet the mission of this institution will remain as it always was: to show and explain the unity of human culture in all its worldwide various manifestations. The issue is *how*. Naturally we have to deal with the visitors' interest in changing current topics. We have to offer themes and accompanying programs that make the exhibitions livelier and more attractive. That is, films, discussion forums, workshops, music and theater events and, above all, guided tours by one's own experts (complemented by audioguides) that clarify the background and respond to questions. Most of Germany's ethnological museums have successfully taken these steps. The significance of Japan in this context cannot be underestimated, for it is evident that there are a large number of people interested in Japanese culture. It is this audience that, thanks to increased collaboration with university colleagues, can now be addressed more professionally and more diversely.

Examples from recent years, according to my own experience, concern the themes of exhibitions such as »The Ainu – Portrait of a Culture in Japan's North« (2003), which focused on the image of the Ainu in Japanese paintings and prints, as well as in early western photographs. Or »Arts and Crafts of Gifu« (2004) that presented the techniques of fabrication and the products of local handiwork and the applied arts. And finally »Bamboo in Old Japan« (2006/2007), an exhibition that introduced over 500 items made of bamboo

or objects decorated with bamboo motifs. In all cases we were able to offer a rich and diverse accompanying program, which made possible a both more lighthearted and profound understanding of the topics. Since the events and the workshops – above all those that included children – attracted the visitors' special interest, and since there are many groups in Germany that are occupied with Japanese music, dance, theater, literature, flower decoration, meditation, calligraphy, tea ceremonies and the so-called martial arts, it has been simple enough to find committed and professional instructors.

Conclusion

The presentation of ethnological Japanese themes in museums must be based on consolidated insight into Japanese culture and practical museum experience. That Japanese studies and the activities of ethnological museums significantly overlap is quite obvious. It is also irrefutable that the affinity of both institutions in the furthering of insight into Japanese culture can open additional and fruitful perspectives.

From the German by Jeanne Haunschild

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Timon Screech

An Iconography of Nihon-bashi

In 1603, the new Tokugawa shogunate was declared. It was 30 years since the last one had collapsed, and nearly a century since the Ashikaga had lost effective control. This memorable event had to be commemorated.

Of course, the Toyotomi were still flourishing in Kansai. They were famous for their grandiose architectural creations, and the Tokugawa decided to make something that would equal Toyotomi monuments in style and to panache. They also intended their monument to make a claim to the centrality of their own city, Edo, and to dispel the notion that it was little more than a small garrison town in desolate and distant Azuma.

In 1603, Edo was still swampy and spatially and ill-defined. Drainage work had been carried out in places, and some waterfronts strengthened; housing had been zoned and, of course, the castle rebuilt. But still, a major architectural statement would be immediately visible and would offer a strong statement of intent, within the generally unimpressive built environment. The monument would indicate how the Tokugawa saw themselves, and how they intended to develop.

Bridge Building

The Tokugawa decided that their monument would be a bridge. This was perhaps odd. They named it Nihon-bashi. Edo had the Great River (Sumida) to the east, marking the end of the city, but the new bridge was not built there, linking Edo to the world beyond, but rather, it spanned a central waterway east of the castle. The waterway had no name, so people began to call it Nihon-bashi-gawa.

It was Edo's very first fixed bridge, and at just under 50m long, was impressive and beautiful. But more than length or attractiveness was the width, which allowed a great volume of traffic to cross at once, and may be in admiration for this feature that the name of Nihon-bashi was given. The facts are not sure, but it is possible that the bridge was first »two-track bridge« (二本橋) and later became Nihon Bridge, or, significantly, Bridge of Japan (日本橋).¹ The latter name clearly configures Edo as the focal point of the realm. The *kanji* indicating »Bridge of Japan« became fixed only after the

1 This is the same as occurred at Nihon-tsutsumi, the embankment beyond Asakusa that led to the Yoshiwara. It was originally »two track embankment« but metamorphosed into Embankment of Japan.

structure was remodelled in 1659, after the great fire of 1657 (Nishiyama 1994: 28). The shogunate declared Nihon-bashi the centre of the city, and the point to which and from which all distances were measured, as it still is today.

The idea of celebrating the creation of the shogunate in this way needs some explanation. Of course, there are examples of official, planned centres in many cities. All across Europe, cities have central squares, with, say, palace, church, embassies and government ministries ranged about; these squares often have symbolic names, expressive of virtue or order, or celebrating moments in the nation's life – Place de la Concorde in Paris, or Trafalgar Square in London. There was some knowledge of early 17c. European cities in Japan thanks to import of Willem Blaeu's famous world map of 1606-7, which became the source for the famous early-Edo *28 Cities Screen*.² People in Japan would have known that some European cities had magnificent bridges, and, according to Blaeu's rendition, most notable were Frankfurt and London; London Bridge, indeed, was regarded as one of the wonders of the mediaeval world, and was prominently included in the *28 Cities Screen* (Frankfurt was not). We know that highly accurate pictures of London Bridge, far more so than Blaeu, were in Edo by 1615, although probably not in 1603 (Screech 2005: 64).

It may have seemed useful to the new shogunate to innovate, and create an iconic focus for their city that was unlike anything that had before been seen, offering a new idea of type of monument for their new city, inspired from far away.

Bridges and Culture: Poetry

There may be international influences behind Nihon-bashi. But it also fitted well with East Asian, and particularly Japanese notions. The mountains of Japan, with snow that melted making spring torrents, meant there were rather few bridges. Yet some existed, and some had played important roles in history and in the cultural life of the nation. Perhaps two of the best known were Sano-no-watari and Uji-bashi.

Sano figured in poems and was a »poetic pillow« (*utamakura*), or established poetic theme. Most celebrated was Fujiwara Teika's verse on Sano, included in the *Shin-Kokin waka-shū*, which he edited in 1306:

Koma tomete sode uchiharau kage mo nashi
*Sano no watari no yuki no yūgure*³

There is no shelter to
 Stop my horse
 And brush off my sleeve

² For a convenient reproduction, see *Nihon byōbu-e shūsei* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1979), vol 15, fig 1.

³ *Shin kokinshū* number 671.

Sano no Watari
A snowing nightfall

Sano was a pontoon bridge (*funabashi*), and an engineering feat, since it was not easy to secure the boats and prevent their being washed away. But in visual terms the bridge was low-lying and not much to look at. For users too, it wobbled and felt dangerous. Like many poetic pillows, Sano was often depicted, but most do not show the bridge at all, preferring to show Teika's poet in the snow.

Second was Uji Bridge, also poetic pillow, and even more famous. It controlled access to Kyō and had been repeatedly fought over. Famously, during the Genpei Wars, the Genji had removed its planks to prevent the Heike crossing – an event known from *Heike monogatari* and *Genpei seisui ki*. Like many poetic pillows, Uji was associated not only with *event*, but also with *feeling*, in this case, with sadness for, in Heian times, nobles had possessed summer houses at Uji, and writings of the period invoke melancholy ladies left behind at Uji, while their male lovers were in the capital. One of the best-known verses on Uji is again by Teika:

Samushiro ya matsu yo no aki no kaze fukete
*Tsuki wo katashiku uji no hashi hime*⁴

Coldness
Autumn wind blows on through
The night on which she waits
She spreads out half the moon
The Bridge Princess of Uji

This invokes an earlier anonymous verse from the *Kokinshū* of 905, using the »variation of a theme« (*honka-dori*) technique:

Samushiro ni koromo katashiki
*Koyoi mo ya ware wo matsuran uji no hashigimi*⁵

In the coldness
She spreads out half the bedding.
Tonight, too, shall I wait?
The Bridge Princess of Uji

Between these two waka, Murasaki written the *Tale of Genji*, and set the tragic story of Ukifune at Uji. Uji was often depicted, and pictures tend to show a waterwheel, perhaps suggesting the turning of karma, with willows resembling a distraught woman's tousled hair, and sometimes also half a moon, indicating that the lady will sleep alone; often also included are the

4 Ibid., number 420.

5 *Kokinshū*, number 689.

charcoal boats that really did ply there, and the horses bred in the Uji region. Being sad, the place was associated with autumn and often depicted in that season, which also allowed for a bright moon.

Sano and Uji show the power of bridges to be loci of history and culture.

Bridges and Culture: Buddhism

Bridges also had another meaning, not specific to certain sites, but generic. The building of bridges was an act of merit in Buddhist thought. In ancient China, monks had built bridges as acts of devotion (Kieschnick 2003). This was emulated in Japan, and indeed Uji Bridge had first been built by a monk, Yamashiro no bō Dōto, in 646, whose act of merit was inscribed on a large stone stele at the bridge-end (Umehara 1997: 220).

Perhaps the most bridged city in Japan was Nagasaki, although this was a relatively recent phenomenon, after the great Ming monk Ingen, arrived in 1654, and built a bridge there; many others followed. Ingen had fled the collapse of the Ming dynasty, and, as a foreigner, had to ingratiate himself with the Nagasaki people and with the shogunate (Nagasaki was governed directly from Edo) (Baroni 2000). Building bridges was a useful act and a sign of caring for the local people, but Ingen was also assuming knowledge of the symbolism of bridges.

The symbolic value of bridges came from the Buddhist expression of »reaching the opposite bank« (*tohigan*), a metaphor for Enlightenment. To convey people to the opposite side, as a bridge does, safely and without misdirection, was an act emblematic of piety. In leading to the »opposite bank« bridges led through death to rebirth.

Nihon-bashi, as constructed by the Tokugawa, did exactly this. The Tōkaidō came up to it from the Kansai side, and once over the bridge, the road continued under a new name, Nikkō Dōchū. The name pivoted at the apex of the bridge, from one that referred to the old centre of Japanese culture, in Kyoto, to one that referred, after interment of Ieyasu in Nikkō in 1617, to Japan's most sacred site of death.

The Nikkō dōchū led out to Asakusa and Ueno, which houses most of the city's temples, and were therefore associated with the mortuary cults of the great families. The highway had 23 stations, and the first, beyond the city limit, was Senjū, site of Edo's main execution ground, Kotsu-ga-Hara, a place of miscreant death. The last station was Hachiishi, and beyond it was the Holy Bridge (*goshin-kyō*), that conveyed one into Nikkō's sacred sites.

Like the Nikkō Dōchū, Tōkaidō, leading to (or properly, from) the bridge the other way, had bridges at both ends. It ended in Kyoto at Great Fifth Avenue Bridge, Gojō ōhashi, crossing the city limit of the River Kamo. Thus, the Bridge of Japan, in central Edo, was a nodal point that held in place two

ribbon-like highways that joined history and culture with death and Enlightenment, all constructed in bridges.

More can be said. The Tōkaidō, as everyone knows, it had 53 stations. This was a special number, for it represented the number of places visited by the divine boy Sudharna (J: Zensai dōji) on his quest for Enlightenment, as recounted in the ‘Entry into the Realm of Reality’ (J: *Nyūhō kaihin*), the last and longest book of the *Garland Sutra* (*Avatamsaka sutra*; J: *Kegon-kyō*) one of the most widely studied books in East Asian Buddhism.⁶ The text has it that Sudharna prayed to the bodhisattva of wisdom, Manjushri (J: Monju botatsu), who sent him out to study under various teachers. Sudhana worked with 50 teachers without achieving Enlightenment. In ecstatic state, he went on to a 51st master, who was Maitreya (J: Miroku bosatsu), the Buddha of the Future. Maitreya sent him back to Manjushri, to complete his Enlightenment, and so the bodhisattva of wisdom became his 52nd master, introducing him to Samantabhadra (J: Fugen bosatsu), bodhisattva of Universal Good, who, at this 53th stage, revealed to Sudhana a cosmic city of many mansions and infinite beauty. 53 masters for the travelling holy boy, and 53 stations from Edo to Kyoto. Edo was a new city. It was where a person began the search after understanding. If we match the Tōkaidō to the sutra, then the Edo traveller wanders as far as Mizuguchi, station 50, meets Maitreya at Ishibe, Manjushri at Kusatsu, and Samanthabhadra at Otsu, which was indeed an important religious centre outside Kyoto; he then enters Kyō, as the cosmic city, after skirting its range of mountains. Edo concedes the excellence of the history and culture represented by Kyoto.

The Sites

Nihon-bashi was constructed with an arched shape, rising in the centre, so its middle was the highest point in the area. This gave stunning views. Because Edo had grown in a rather haphazard way, lacking the grid pattern of formally-planned East Asian cities, there were few long urban vistas. Edo was a typical castle town with streets that were straight, but short, meeting others at odd angles in a kind of mini-grid patchwork. This was intentional as it prevented would-be attackers from finding their way. The view from Nihon-bashi was a vista, and therefore highly exceptional. It was carefully conceived so as to offer visions of Tokugawa power and order. Standing on the bridge, one would look due Westward, directly towards the main entrance of the castle (the *Ote-mon*), although, since this was down a waterway not an avenue, the castle could not be approached (Fig. 1).

⁶ For a useful commentary of this scripture, see Li 1989.

Figure 1. Katsushika Hokusai, »Nihon-bashi«. From *Thirty-six Views of Mt Fuji*, c. 1836



Later, Ichikoku-bashi was built across the Nihon-bashi-gawa at the point where it entered the castle moat (*o-hori*), but under the original plan, the view was uninterrupted until it fell on the ultimate centre of power (Nishiyama *et al.* 1994: 32). Or rather, in 1603, Edo Castle was a *contested* centre. Only after eradication of the Toyotomi, in 1615, was Edo Castle clearly the core of authority.

Along both sides of the river leading to the castle were its supply storehouses. These containing produce brought from throughout the archipelago, indeed, from throughout the world for shogunal use, suggesting provision and plenty. After a century of war, when supply lines had been cut and goods not available, with attendant privation and starvation, this was a wonderful sight. From the bridge, people saw an excess of goods, and realized it was thanks to the security of the castle that Edo was so bounteous. Though generally referred to Edo Castle, note that the proper name was Chiyoda Castle: the Tokugawa stability would last 1000 generations (*chiyo*), and would offer the people the ability to farm in peace (*da*).

People on the bridge could also turn the other way, and look away from this vista of power, Eastwards. All along the right-hand side on the river was Edo's splendid fish market, the Uogashi (Fig. 2). Fish was not the staple food of everyone, and in many parts of Japan seafood was eaten rarely. Fish was not much seen in Kyoto. But Edo was full of it. The waterfront off Shinagawa was shallow, but flat-bottomed boats came into the shore bringing co-

pious cargoes; even today, sushi – the prime fish dish, is best if it is *Edo-mae* (caught in front to Edo). The city's moats allowed swift transport from the sea to market, to retailers and to people's homes. Looking East, one saw another bridge, Edo-bashi, and, as people pointed out, the plentiful market (which reputedly grossed more than 1000 *ryō* per day) led from Edo to Nihon.⁷ Since this market was for mercantile commoners (unlike the official suppliers in the other direction), it was proper that it formed the rear vista from the bridge, not viewable together with the sites of power and authority.

Figure 2. Katsushika Hokusai, »Edo-bashi from Nihon-bashi«. From *Edo meisō ichiran*, 1800



Turning back to the formal, westward vista, we may observe one other element. Mt Fuji rises to the left. The towers of the castle were the highest buildings in the city, but one thing rose above them. Mt Fuji had long been the symbol of Japan, the mountain that was ›unequaled‹ (*fu ji*) and also ›undying‹ (*fu shi*). But it was not visible from Kyoto: it validated the Eastern regions, which otherwise were short on cultural or poetic sites. The view from the Nihon-bashi was composed to offer a counterpoint of political and natural awe proper to the Edo region, but then radiating out, throughout Japan, just as goods had congregated inwards.

7 This is probably intended hyperbolically, but appears in the *senryū*, »*Hitohako no hoka ni yū kawagishi uritarazu*«, quoted in Hamada 1973: 49.

Many people lingered on Nihon-bashi to enjoy the magnificent and impressive view. Even those who crossed without stopping, would rise in their saddles (if on horseback), or have their palanquin raised (if being carried), or stand on tip-toe and crane their necks (if walking). Matsukura Ranran, in his widely read Prose Poem on Fuji (*Fuji on Fu*) of 1706, put this vista first among Edo's four key 'Fuji viewing (*fujimi*) spots,

Fuji is Japan's Penglai [...] At Nihon and Ryōgoku Bridges those of horseback crane their necks, at Asakusa and Surugadai those in palanquins raise their windows.⁸

The person on the bridge saw the storehouses (plenty), then the castle (peace), and then Fuji (immortality), in which they could even participate, since 'seing Fuji' was homophonous with 'undying body' (*fujimi*). Beyond Fuji was Kyoto (culture and antiquity), and even further along a westward trajectory was the Pure Land (*jōdo*) of bliss.

More Sites

There were more sites that gave meaning to Nihon-bashi. Though not visible from the bridge, several important constituents of Tokugawa rule were gathered here, all, noteworthily, on the right as one looked towards the castle, and therefore on the Nikkō (Tokugawa) side on the bridge, after none had fully entered the city, or conversely, before one had begun to leave it. Three buildings may be mentioned.

First was the mint, or Kinza. This vast and well-protected area was the shogunate's central bank (the Bank of Japan still occupies the spot). It predated the bridge, having been built in 1601, although its presence became most noticeable in 1612, after the other Kinza, at Ieyasu's retirement castle of Sunpu, was moved here (Nishiyama *et al.* 1994: 284). The block to its left (i.e. the side nearer to Nihon-bashi) was Main Money-Changing Street (Honryōgae-chō). At the Kinza, value was formulated and matched for use throughout a now-unified land. However, as with most buildings of political importance, no pictures of the Kinza were ever made. One of the main bridges across the moat and into the castle (not visible from Nihon-bashi), the significantly named Great Bridge (Ohashi), crossed here.⁹

The second site could not be seen either, but it could be heard. Beside Honryōgae-cho was Hongoku-chō. Not long after Nihon-bashi was built, the second shogun, Tokugawa Hidetada, donated to the city its most prominent time bell, which was set up here (Tsunoyama 1984: 78–79). The city had previously lacked a unified time structure, and as few people owned their own

8 Matsukura Ranran, »Fuji no fu«: in Morikawa Kyoroku (ed.) (1706): *Fūzoku monzen*; see Fujii 1936: 50.

9 It was later renamed Tokiwa-bashi, which survives as a Tokyo placename.

chronometers, regulation was difficult. A standard was needed, so the shogun gave one, removing the bell that had previously hung in Edo Castle. By donating this to the city, he transferred that the order that in early times had regulated the castle but not rippled much beyond it, to the whole city.

The placename Hongoku-chō, literally Main Koku District, refers to a dry-weight measure (»bushel«), but there is a homophone, *koku* meaning »time«, the bell was positioned beside Nihon-bashi at a site that the ear could hear as »Main Time District«. This was always the central bell of Edo, even after a system of eight bells was set up: the other bells picked up the sound, in relay, from Hongoku-chō.¹⁰

The Honkoku-chō bell lost to fire several times (1657, 1666, 1679, and 1711); the last replacement still exists today, though hanging in a slightly different place and in an unsightly concrete tower.¹¹ The size of the early bell houses are unknown, but the last one, completed in 1712 after the final fire, which endured until modern times, had a frontage of over 20m, and was 35m deep. As often, a hereditary official was placed in charge, using a hereditary name, and this was Tsuji Genshichi. The bell was the shogun's gift to the city, and whenever a new one was required, or major repairs became necessary, it was the shogunate that paid. Daily up-keep was paid for by a tax of 1 *mon*, per month, levied on the 410 most proximate residences.

Interestingly, after the death of Hidetada, his son and successor, Iemitsu, made a trip to Kansai (important because it was the last by a shogun), in 1634, as part of the rituals of his succession (*miyokawari*). He celebrated this event in Osaka – a larger city than Kyoto – by donating a time bell. It was as if when he left Edo, he took true time with him, and when he returned home, he left it behind him as a gift. The Osaka bell was known as the 'hanging bell' (*tsurigane*), and although now lost, survives in an eponymous place name in Osaka's Higashi-ku (Tsunoyama 1984: 79).

A few houses away from the bell was our third site, the Nagasaki-ya. It was also under the hereditary charge of an official, Nagasaki-ya Gen'emmon. This building was the hostel used by Europeans visiting Edo on the court trip (*hofreis/sanpu*) of the Dutch East India Company. They missed a few years, but generally came annually from 1609 to 1790, after which the ritual was cut it to once every five years, meaning they came in 1794, 1798. In 1799 as the Dutch East India Company went bankrupt, though occasional court trips continued until 1850. The Europeans generally stayed about three weeks, and their arrival and stay were major events in the political calendar and the life of the city.

10 The other bells were at Ueno, Asakusa, Honjō, Shiba, Ichigaya, Akasaka, and Yotsuya.

11 The bell can be seen in Jūshi Park, Kodenma-chō, some ten minute's walk from Nihon-bashi.

The Europeans made many complaints about the quality of the Nagasaki-ya. In 1640, for example, the Company Chief called it »dilapidated and depressing«; over a century later, in 1776, the Company physician called it »tolerably neat, though not such as I expected for an embassy from so distant a part of the world« (Thunberg 2005: 149). But the Europeans never fully appreciated the importance of the location, at Nihon-bashi. The shogunate wanted to show the citizenry how it was able to summon visitors from the furthest ends of the world, and to position them as part of their iconic arrangement. The Europeans did notice how many people flocked to see them, and the same physician quoted above recorded that »the street outside was seldom free of boys who constantly called out and made an uproar as soon as they caught the least glimpse of us, and even went to far as to climb up the walls of the opposite houses in order to see us«; the location was good for gawping, but also for serious encounter, and the doctor added, »at first we were visited by the learned and great of the country; afterwards even merchants and other people were among our guests« (Thunberg 2005: 152). The site was also perfect for secret visits by daimyo or shogunal emissaries, and many a European wrote of receiving night time *incognito* visits from figures of state.

Figure 3. Katsushika Hokusai, »Nagasaki-ya«. from *Ehon azuma asobi* (2nd ed.), 1802



Again, as a government building, the Nagasaki-ya was only very rarely depicted. The most often reproduced is Hokusai, from his *Leisure Time in the East* (*Azuma asobi*) first published in 1799, which was the year after one of the then-rare court trips. Something suspicious occurred that year since the Factory chief, Gijsbert Hemmij died on the way back from Edo, probably from poison, although this was hushed up and not known to the public. Anyway, the Nagasaki-ya was topical (Fig. 3). Hokusai does not give much indication of the architecture, but he does show many people outside, staring. Of all the illustrations in the book (which is a guide to Edo's famous places) only this one is unlabelled by Hokusai, as if to prevent the charge of insolence to the regime, which did not like to be depicted by commoners.

The court trip group left Nagasaki, where their trading station was, in December and arrived in Edo in February, where the Chief would have an audience with the shogun. But the dreadful fire of 1657 happened just two days after the audience, and there was also a severe fire the actual day before the audience in 1658, destroying the Nagasaki-ya, and also in 1659. This was highly embarrassing for the shogunate, and since fires were most common in winter (when people used open braziers), from 1660, the ritual was moved some weeks later, so that the Europeans arrived in Edo in March. Despite this, in 1660 there was a major fire, which again destroyed the Nagasaki-ya, and so the arrival date was allowed to shift back somewhat, meaning the group arrived in April. This was cherry-blossom time, and so now the arrival of the Europeans at Nihon-bashi became part of the seasonal celebrations of the return of warm weather. There is a well-known verse by Bashō on this:

*Kapitan mo tsukabawasekeri kimi ga haru*¹²

The Chief also
Makes his bow.
Springtime for our ruler

In spring it was easy to be out on the streets, so this was a public event. The Europeans brought valuable and rare presents, loaded on horses, and these were seen, hence another verse by Bashō:

*Oranda mo hana ni kinkeri uma no kura*¹³

The Dutchmen too
Have come to see the blossoms.
Horses' saddles

Pictures of the three-week trip from Nagasaki to Edo, or going back, could not easily be made, as it was a political event, although there are some. The only picture that shows Europeans at Edo Castle is by Shiba Kōkan, a notable

¹² Quoted in Katsuhara 1994: 93.

¹³ *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

enthusiast for European matters, and it may well depict, like Hokusai's print, the court trip 1798 (Fig. 4).

Figure 4. Shiba Kōkan, *Dutchmen at Edo Castle*, c. 1790. Powers Collection, USA



The Nagasaki-ya and the bell of Kokuchō were side by side, and people thought of them as a pair. The shogunate governed, via them, both time and space. There are many references to this, and one is contained in a verse used in another guidebook to Edo:

*Kore ni nomi tsūji ha irazu wakaruran
Kapitan no kiku kokuchō no kane*¹⁴

There is the one thing
He can understand
Without interpreter:
The Factory Chief hears
The bell of [Hon]goku-chō

This verse is in the *senryū* genre, but there are many *hokku*, too, such as the anonymous,

*Kokuchō no kane
Oranda made kikoe*

The bell at [Hon]goku-chō
Even in Holland
It can be heard

(The verse works better in Japanese were »Holland« and »Hollander« is the same word.)

Oddly, there are no references to hearing the bell in the writings of European visitors, though they must indeed have heard it. There are only two references to the bell tower, one is from the first later-date court trip of 1660, when the group fled the Nagasaki-ya and returned the morning to find the building gone, »the whole area around it, as far as the eye can see, reduced to ruins and ashes«, and, »on the spot where the large hour clock hangs – our or five houses from our lodging – just there alone 12 people have been burned to death« (Viallé and Blussé (eds.) 2005, vol. 12: 409).¹⁵ The second reference is some twenty years later by Engelbert Kaempfer who stated their hostel was, »situated on the left at the head of the street, near a wooden clock tower where the time was rung«.

Conclusion

Nihon-bashi, though the centre of Edo, and now the centre of Tokyo, has never been studied from a visual-cultural point of view. Yet it is a rich site, and the more so as the Tokugawa shogunal was highly reticent about its iconography did not relish being represented or exposed, and so planned hardly any vistas nor arrayed its institutions in optically impressive ways. A recent scholar has written that at Nihon-bashi »no attempt was made to express political authority in spatial design« (Bodart-Bailey 2000: 115). But this is clearly wrong.

¹⁴ Inscribed on an image by Utagawa Hiroshige in Tenmei 1960–1961; for a convenient reproduction, see Screech 2000: 20

¹⁵ The Chief was Johannes Boucheljon.

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Justin Stagl

Japan As the Other – A Personal Account

I.

Striking personalities attract anecdotes. Here is the story of how Josef Kreiner becoming a Japanologist. A nice boy in a Viennese high school had dreamt for many years of mysterious, faraway India. After graduation he went to the university to inquire about Indology.¹ By chance or by an act of providence, he met Professor Alexander Slawik. Timidly he explained his purpose to the professor. Slawik was enthusiastic: »Of course you will have to start with Chinese!« The boy was flabbergasted. He had entertained some notion that you start Indian studies with Sanskrit.² But how was he to contradict a professor? Moreover, Slawik was hard of hearing and if, he chose so, rather deaf. So Josef Kreiner started with Chinese and became a Japanologist.

Two years later, a not quite as nice boy came to Vienna from Carinthia. For many years I had dreamt to become an orientalist, preferably a Japanologist. I thus called upon Professor Slawik. He was a trifle less enthusiastic with me than he had been with Joe Kreiner: »I have one specially gifted student, called Kreiner, now in Japan, who will become my assistant and later on my successor. There is another quite gifted student, Jettmar,³ who will then become Kreiner's assistant. You could only become their research assistant.« Since we three were all in the same age group, this perspective did not tempt me. I did not turn into a Japanologist.

It gives me pleasure to say here a few more words about Slawik. He was a gentleman. Being this, he had been fair with me. I still remember the scene when a girl had dropped a handkerchief and Slawik picked it up as an elderly gentleman would do for a young lady. The girl was incredulous and touched.

1 The true story is somewhat more complicated. Kreiner's first academic mentor was René Nebesky-Wojkowicz, who, however, soon departed for Sikkim and died immediately after his return. I do not know why Kreiner did not turn to the ethnologist Karl Jettmar, who worked in approximately the same field, or to the Sanskrit-centered Viennese indologists.

2 Kreiner had actually had three years of Sanskrit (as a voluntary subject) at his Viennese high school. Those were the days when at least some of the teachers at the high schools were true scholars, instead of the interchangeable type of pedagogue that is encouraged there today.

3 Called Jettmar-*kun* and not identical with, though related to, ethnologist Karl Jettmar mentioned in note 1.

A professor was an unapproachable figure in those days and something like this had never happened to her. Another feature of Slawik was an otherworldliness curiously interfering with his deafness. Completely dedicated to Japanology, he had few personal needs besides. Neither ambitious nor pushy, he had supported himself and his studies in the meager postwar years for some time as a street sweeper. He told me this fact at my first interview, and it had an additional discouraging effect on me. Slawik had, moreover, no sense of time. He could spend an hour explaining one Chinese character. When Kreiner had his first interview with him, the time flew by until it was till midnight and Joe, who missed the last tram, had to walk back home. Through the combination of all these features, Slawik drew his promising student irrevocably into his own encompassing interest in Japanese rural society and folk culture. There has been some talk about a »Viennese school« in Japanese studies, a school emphasizing the periphery over against the center. If there is indeed such a thing, Slawik is at the very core of it.

I do not want to give here the impression that Slawik rejected me. He was second examiner at my doctoral exam in ethnology. I had thoroughly prepared my topic, Ainu culture and society, knowing well that the »sacred visitor« was one of Slawik's favourite themes. Yet he disappointed me again: »I have known you now for years and am sure that you understand your subject. Examining you for an hour would be preposterous.« Since we were both pipe smokers, he invited me to light a pipe. Then we discussed clay pipes, pipe cleaners, tobacco wrappers, different brands of tobacco, and a variety of other subjects. Then he awarded me the best possible grade. I fear that such a thing is no longer possible in the school-like modern university.

II.

There is a saying that »a scholar can be no gentleman«.⁴ A gentleman does not make fools of people, or point out their shortcomings or inconsistencies to them, if it is not necessary. He respects their prejudices. He thus behaves as an insider, not as an outsider. A true scholar can not do this. Whenever anything really matters to him, he has to defend the truth against the feeling of his fellow men. His reference group is primarily not his own society, but the supra-societal »scientific community«. Thus he can become estranged from his own environment. Scholarly behavior is frequently rated as pedantic, tactless or even offensive.

Scholars who deal with other cultures and societies, such as orientalists or ethnologists, strive to enter their objects of study and to become insiders to a certain extent. Whatever hecklers like Edward Said (1978) may say against them, they generally love their objects of study. Slawik, who visited Japan for the first time at the age of 60, had loved Japan from afar all his life. Ori-

4 I do not know who coined this saying. I first heard it from W.E. Mühlmann.

entalists to a certain degree accept other cultures on their own terms, reconstructing them from the inside, and expounding on them to the scientific community. Saidian criticism pretends that there is no truth and that the scientific community is an illusion. It pretends that orientalists study and interpret other cultures only in their interest and thus are little better than spies, whatever they say (or even believe themselves) to the contrary.⁵ How this verdict applies to scholars like Slawik and Kreiner, working against all odds in impoverished postwar Austria, has still to be shown.⁶ What Said called »Orientalism« no doubt lends itself to be used by secret services and other interested parties, and some orientalists no doubt have offered their services to these organizations themselves. Yet as far as I know, for the community of orientalists (and ethnologists), this is a side issue and not the main point. Rather than to be denounced as glorified espionage, oriental studies can be seen as a form of »secondary socialization«, in which another culture assumes the role of the »significant others« of primary socialization and is accepted as model of behavior and standard of evaluation.⁷ The wish to become part of »the other« implies what Willard van Orman Quine has called the »principle of charity«, the basic assumption that what the other does or says makes sense.⁸ To me, »charity« sounds an understatement and even a bit condescending. In the cases of at least some orientalists, »love« would be a more appropriate expression. *Vis-à-vis* their object of study, they behave as gentlemen in the sense described above. Hermeneutic love of the other has, however, a flaw: it detracts to a certain extent from self-love. Orientalists and ethnologists tend to compare the contexts of their primary and secondary socializations, and thus to relativize and to devalue the former. At home, lovers of otherness sometime appear as strangers, as eccentrics and outsiders even more so than scholars generally do.⁹ Thus one can be a gentleman and a street sweeper at the same time. It is one of the advantages of modern civilization, that the more intellectually refined lovers of otherness can find living space in the so-called extraterritorial sphere of academia (Stagl 1981: 65–96).

5 See for this Stagl 2002 und 2005.

6 Slawik told us that as the son of a k. u. k. (Austrian-Hungarian) army officer, he had no fatherland besides the multinational empire and did not identify strongly with any particular nation; see e.g. Goebel 1999: 33–58, especially 46–48. This case is of course easily covered by Said's general suspicion against Western orientalism: was this attitude not an instance of Habsburg imperialism? A general suspicion, however, saves one the trouble of differentiating. Said apparently reads no German and does not enter into German orientalism other than including it into his sweeping generalizations.

7 The term »significant others« is taken from Mead 1934. For primary and secondary socialization see Berger and Luckmann 1966: 119–150.

8 Quine 1976; see also Cappai 2000.

9 See e.g. Spittler 1987 as well as Elsner and Rubiés 1999.

III.

Where does this love of otherness come from? What attracts school boys and girl to foreign cultures and societies? One precondition is of course some intrinsic value of »the other«: its beauty, its power, its social cohesion, and so on. Another is its remoteness and mysteriousness. Together these two factors make the other into a place for daydreaming, a kind of utopia. Yet it is not a complete utopia: one can get there, enter it, become part of it, only if one takes the necessary risks and pains. This difficulty of approach makes the other into a kind of touchstone; it provokes the need to surmount obstacles and to prove thereby one's worth; its conquest can be compared to an initiation. The other with all these qualities resembles the *sacred*, and indeed the qualities ascribed by Rudolf Otto to what he calls the »numinous«: *tremendum, majestas, energiea, mirum, stupendum*, and *fascinans*, also apply to the »the other«. ¹⁰ Its ambivalent attraction is felt in various degrees by all human beings and thus interferes with their usual preference for the familiar, well known, and nearby. In certain cases, this attraction comes to the fore as a force molding the character. Such lovers of otherness have, on one hand, some surplus curiosity (they are intellectuals) and, on the other hand, some alienation from their own environment, be it psychological or socio-structural. Between the familiar and the other operate thus various push and pull factors. ¹¹

Groups with whom we identify, in whose framework we act and think, whose standards we use for our evaluations, are called »reference groups« in sociological parlance. Normally they are the groups to which we belong. Our preference for groups in which we are members derives from the self-preference of every healthy human being; one speaks thus of »group egoism« or »ethnocentrism«. ¹² Yet in certain cases also non-membership groups may serve as reference groups, such as sport clubs or musical bands do for their fans, religious communities for would-be converts, the upper classes for the snobs, or the proletariat for the inverted snobs. Reference group behavior is a sign for human freedom of choice (Emge 1967). Therefore it is a stumbling stone for socio-cultural determinists, e.g. for those who believe with Karl Marx that being determines consciousness (see Ignatow 1984). Saidian criticism is something I regard as Marxism in disguise. It will not admit that orientalist are *not* trying to dominate and exploit the other in the interest of the familiar. This crypto-marxist anti-orientalism has no sense for the numinous. Presumably it regards it as an illusion or as opium for the populace.

¹⁰ See Otto 1963; Otto calls the »numinous« also the *Ganz Andere* (»absolutely other«), pp. 28–37.

¹¹ »The other« is a fashionable topic nowadays, whole libraries have been written on it; see e.g. Münkler 1997 and Stagl 1981.

¹² A comprehensive study gives Müller 1987.

What was it that attracted young Joe (or Pepi, as he would have been called in those faraway days) to India? I do not know. What I do know, however, is my own early attraction to the Far East. When I search my soul as it was then, I find that I admired China as a civilization where scholars held sway and merchants were not highly regarded. I admired its supposed lack of materialism, its ethics of officialdom, and high regard for poetry. I was entranced by the teaching of Lao-tzu and the prose of Chuang-tzu. But China also had its setbacks: It was too vast, too formless, too dainty, and in the shape of contemporary communist China (including its admirers), it was simply disgusting to me. Japan, on the other hand, possessed marked forms, distinct lines, and an elegant minimalism which harmonized well with the modernism of the 1950s. Besides, it had, unlike China (or Austria), preserved its emperor. In addition to its aesthetic attraction came an ethical one for somebody who came – like Slawik – from a military family: the attraction of *bushidō*.

IV.

Entering the other, one does not escape one's own life world: everybody carries it around with him, like the snail does its house. »*Coelum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt*«, says Horace (Epist. I 11, 27), and Wilhelm Busch rhymes:

Der Ort ist gut, die Lage neu,
Der alte Lump ist auch dabei.¹³

Flexible, extensible, but inescapable as it is, the life world is nonetheless interspersed and surrounded with otherness. However close one comes to other human beings, one never really knows them. One does not even know oneself thoroughly: everybody has strange, uncanny parts of his self that he rather avoids. My own past is but incompletely known to me, and even more incompletely known is my future. What would have become of what I call »me« under different circumstances? Who would Joe Kreiner be now if he had not met Slawik and become his master pupil? Actually, the life world is thin and shaky ground over a vast abyss of otherness. Otherness also surrounds it in ever increasing circles, which at their outermost boundaries verge on the absolutely incomprehensible and incompatible.¹⁴

Said and his ilk are thus right to a certain extent. Yet they overstate. What the scientific community attempts to do is to link all possible forms of otherness to the »known« life world through language. The realm of the incom-

¹³ Wilhelm Busch: Maler Klecksel, zweites Kapitel.

¹⁴ For the concept of »life world« see e.g. Schütz and Luckmann 1979–1984; see also notes 8 and 11 as well as Raible 1998.

prehensible and incompatible is thereby pushed back. Japanologists and others labor at the outer boundaries of intercultural understanding. They thereby build bridges over the abyss of mutual incomprehension. In most cases this goes hand in hand with respect or even love for their objects of study. Their research interconnect distant, ethnocentric, and sometimes mutually rejecting cultures, which is in itself a noble task.

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Harumi Befu

Consumer *Nihonjinron*

Introduction

Since the 1990s numerous meta-*Nihonjinron* treatises criticizing the discourse on the identity of Japan and the Japanese have been published. These critics have not sufficiently appreciated the fact that much of this literature is not serious scholarship, but instead it is meant to satisfy popular desire to know Japan's identity, where the usual canon of scholarship is of secondary relevance at best, and that critiquing it as if it is serious scholarship is itself misplaced scholarship. In the following I wish to elaborate on this thesis by characterizing this type of consumer-oriented »popular *Nihonjinron*«, or »consumer *Nihonjinron*«, and thereby distinguishing it from scholarly *Nihonjinron*. In this paper I will not elaborate on the contents of *Nihonjinron*, that is, the specific ways in which Japan is supposed to be unique as numerous *Nihonjinron* writers have discussed various contents of *Nihonjinron*, and I have summarized these arguments elsewhere (Befu 2001: ch. 2).

Admittedly *Nihonjinron* literature runs the gamut from the most scholarly, erudite treatises to highly popular, purely non-academic writings. What is remarkable, however, is the fact that a preponderance of the literature belongs to the latter type – the type designed for mass consumption with little regard for canon of scholarship. One might argue that the two are merely extremes of a continuum, the difference being only a matter of degree. This is only seemingly so. Most of the *Nihonjinron* literature is located near the »non-scholarly« end of the continuum, rather than being in the middle of the continuum. This non-scholarly *Nihonjinron* is qualitatively different from that which is at or near the scholarly end of the continuum. In the following I enumerate the ways in which the two differ in their »ideal-typical« forms – à la Max Weber. As I elucidate these ideal types and when the two ends of the continuum are compared, one can clearly see the distinction between them. In taking up these two types of *Nihonjinron*, for lack of space I shall cite only a few cases for illustrative purposes, but it should be noted that cases are legion – over a thousand volumes can be easily cited just from post-1945.

Academic *Nihonjinron*, Consumer *Nihonjinron*

First, a scholarly treatise is always a product of accumulation of preceding scholarship. Many scholars have worked on the question of who the Japanese are, what Japanese culture consists of, etc., that is, on *Nihonjinron*. Subse-

quent scholarship would acknowledge and critique past contributions, which would be cited in footnotes and listed in the bibliography. Such an exercise is likely to result in modifying past understandings of the phenomenon, and a novel interpretation created.

Take, for example, *Bummei to shite no ie shakai* [Ie society as civilization] by Murakami Yasusuke, Kumon Shumpei, and Satō Seizaburō (1979), a 600 page tome in which the authors try to account for Japan's modernization on the basis of the two fundamental building blocks of the Japanese civilization, namely *uji* and *ie.*, especially the latter. The authors take 180 pages before arriving at this thesis while they examine various theoretical frameworks appropriate for Japan's modernization. They explore historical sources going back to the beginnings of Japan's history. After defining the concept of *ie* society in the first 280 pages, they outline the evolution of this *ie* society starting with the Nara period, and demonstrate the three levels of the *ie* society – the family, the business, and the state--in the remaining 320 pages. The book makes reference to a variety of historical processes and theoretical concepts in the courses of 600 pages. This work is in hard cover, weighing 1.1 kilogram. This is a serious work on the nature of Japanese civilization with citations of many scholarly works. It is too heavy and too bulky for a commuter to read on a train, holding the book in one hand and hanging onto a strap with the other in a crowded train. The price – 3,800 yen – is exorbitant for a normal office worker by 1979 standard and even by today's standard. Besides, the argument of the authors is too complex for most ordinary readers to follow, and without considerable background in Japanese history and in social science, it is not easy to comprehend the argument.

The same may be said of Hamaguchi Eshun's *Nihon kenkyū genron – »kankeitai« to shite no Nihonjin to Nihon shakai* [Fundamentals of Japanese Studies: The Japanese and their society as »relatum«] (1998), another hard-cover book, though not as voluminous as *Bummei to shite no ie shakai*, being only 425 pages long. It is equally loaded with theories, concepts, paradigms, and models in arriving at the concept of *kankeitai*, which he translates as »relatum« as the fundamental building block of the society. Its scholarliness is emphasized in the horizontal writing format, rather than the normal, vertical writing. Pages are turned from right to left, as in English books which virtually precludes the chance of being a best-seller, due to the relative cumbersomeness of reading from left to right rather than vertically. Extensive references are supplemented by an equally extensive index.

As a third and the last example, let me cite *Tan'itsu minzoku shinwa no kigen* [Origins of the myth of a homogeneous nation] by Oguma Eiichi (1995). Oguma expounds in 440 pages how the myth of »homogeneous nation« originated in Japan. Oguma historically reviews the origin and development of the notion of »homogeneous Japan« from the beginning of the Meiji period, citing major proponents of the idea and bringing in political

processes which led to the creation and perpetuation of the notion of homogeneity of the Japanese. Again, the book is full of citations of numerous protagonists in this issue and the index lists some 200 names.

Turning to popular *Nihonjinron*, in stark contrast, it dispenses with complex arguments requiring many hundreds of pages. A popular *Nihonjinron* work, instead, is usually an easy reading. Scholarly *Nihonjinron* engages in a »debate« by taking an argument or a thesis propounded by another scholar, often critiquing it and proposing a different position, a revision, or a new interpretation. Popular *Nihonjinron* instead is a »monologue« rather than a »dialogue«, in which the author takes issue with other scholars. That is, references to predecessors in *Nihonjinron* are absent: the author engages in a monologue, rather than a conversation or dialogue between the author and previous contributors to the issue. Thus it does not reflect past contributions to an issue, nor does it indicate accumulation of scholarship. Each work stands alone. This obviously makes reading much easier since the reader need not be concerned about preceding scholarship on the issue.

In academic discourse, whether in *Nihonjinron* or otherwise, an important part of scholarship is the debate that takes place among those engaged in the discussion. An argument is refined as scholars exchange views and critique each other's viewpoints. Progress in *Nihonjinron* – in understanding Japanese people and culture – is achieved through such debate. But much of *Nihonjinron* literature, which I label »popular«, does not follow this canon of scholarship. Instead, each contribution is an independent treatise onto itself. Each work is written as if it is the only work on the subject. For example, Aida Yūji's *Nihonjin no ishiki kōzō* [The structure of consciousness of the Japanese] (1972) gives no reference to other authors' works on the same topic. The work has no bibliographic reference. How this work is related to another work is totally unknown. As a result, no »progress« or improvement on the understanding on the national consciousness of the Japanese is achieved.

In other words, in academic scholarship, an author of a book and its readers are colleagues, that is, they are both scholars, though they may not always be of equal standing. An author is sometimes a reader, and at other times a reader is the author of another treatise of the same topic. They read each other's works; readers and authors constantly switching their roles. They engage in dialogue, critiquing each other and citing one another. That is what is implied in the citations and references of works by others. Since only a small number of scholars are interested in this type of exchange, only a handful of copies is printed, and the book usually has no chance of selling out and to be reprinted.

Popular *Nihonjinron* writers, on the other hand, are part of a production team along with the publisher. Readers are consumers of products, where the relationship between the producer and the consumer is irreversibly asymmetrical. Producers provide goods for consumers; consumers pay for them and

use them. Hence my labeling of »popular *Nihonjinron*« as »consumer *Nihonjinron*«. In this »consumer *Nihonjinron*«, writers and readers are not of equal status. Basically writers only write and readers only read. Generally speaking consumers do not reverse their role and become producers. To be sure, *Nihonjinron* writers can and do read *Nihonjinron* by others. But they constitute an infinitesimal segment of the entire readership of consumer *Nihonjinron*. Besides, the fact that they read *Nihonjinron* by others is almost never reflected in their own *Nihonjinron* writings.

Another major difference between scholarly and consumer *Nihonjinron* is that scholarly *Nihonjinron* emphasizes logical clarity of the argument. Premises are clearly stated, empirical data are laid out, and conclusions are logically drawn from premises. The examples given above of scholarly *Nihonjinron* all follow this canon of scholarship.

Consumer *Nihonjinron* literature, on the other hand, consists of anecdotal incidents for evidence, such as those an author might have experienced while traveling abroad as a proof of indelible difference between Japan and the rest of the world. To the author of consumer *Nihonjinron*, this is a good enough proof of Japan's uniqueness. Consumer *Nihonjinron* writers also resort to global stereotyping and generalizations, such as »Americans are individualistic/egocentric whereas Japanese are group-oriented« without presenting objective proofs. Careful analysis of empirical evidence, such as quantitative data, is not part of the methodology of popular *Nihonjinron*.

Consumer *Nihonjinron* thus lacks rigorous methodology for proving Japan's uniqueness. The way they »prove« the uniqueness is disarmingly simple. In most cases, Japan is compared with a Western culture or with some vaguely generalized »the West«, and whatever way in which Japan is different from the West is declared to be unique. »Only in Japan« or »not known outside Japan« is the commonly used expression in such an exercise. Yet no attempt is ever made to survey all cultures of the world to ascertain that the given characteristic is never found anywhere other than in Japan, past or present. Lacking in the West is usually sufficient grounds for Japan's uniqueness because for the vast majority of Japanese the non-Western world (esp. southeast Asia, Central Asia, Africa, and Latin America) is of only tangential interest compared with the West. Comparison of Japan with the non-West world for the sake of proving Japan's uniqueness is not of much interest, though for rigorous scientific methodology, such exercise is, of course, imperative. Yamashita Hideo's *Nihon no kotoba to kokoro* [The language and the heart of Japan] (1986), for example, is devoted to demonstrating the uniqueness of Japanese language and how it expresses the »heart« of the Japanese, but makes no systematic comparison with any other language of the world.

In academic *Nihonjinron*, theory and data must show correspondence; data must support the theory. Empirical data must be produced which adequately

satisfy theoretical propositions. The academic *Nihonjinron* literature reviewed above, all satisfy this canon of scholarship.

In consumer *Nihonjinron*, stringent correlation between data and theory for support of conclusion with an abundance of data is not required. The reader is more interested in the »story-ness« which the author develops than in empirical accuracy. For example, Isaiah Ben Dasan quotes an Israeli diplomat at the beginning of his best-seller, *Nihonjin to Yudayajin* (1970) as saying that »water and security are free in Japan«. This startling statement is re-cited over and over in various writings reviewing this book precisely because it is startling. The statement is obviously false, but the reader is taken aback by the statement that the reader had never imagined. Taken by surprise, and hypnotically persuaded because of the authority that any author commands, the reader then tends to accept almost any of the subsequent propositions made by the author, no matter how wrong or preposterous. How untrustworthy BanDasan's assertions in this book is demonstrated by Asami Sadao (1983), professor at Tōhoku Gakuin University who received an advance degree at Harvard University majoring in theology with specialization in the Old Testament. He critiques, chapters by verses, all the errors in the book with the erudition of a Biblical scholar. But readers are not persuaded by him. Asami's book never made the best seller list, while BenDasan's book continues to be on the non-fiction long-seller list.

Or take Sabata Toyoyuki (1964), who claimed that European subsistence economy is based on pastoralism. Based on this rather dubious premise, he then argues the importance of individual ownership of a herd and its grazing land for the rise of individualism. In Japan, on the other hand, wet rice cultivation is said to require cooperation among villagers and also creates *amae* – the quintessential Japanese propensity for psychological interdependence among members of a group – as well as closely knit kinship units, according to him. How subsistence economy can directly cause social and psychological characteristics is never theoretically explained. But here again, not knowing any better, the reader is taken aback by an unfamiliar and extraordinary view of the West that rather than questioning the premises, the reader is mesmerized by the unusualness of the thrust of the argument and ends up accepting whatever conclusion that follows.

To take another example, Suzuki Hideo (1978), in *Shinrin no shikō, sabaku no shikō* [Forest thinking, desert thinking], claims that the Japanese pattern of thinking is conditioned by the »forest living« of the Japanese, whereas Westerners' thinking pattern is conditioned by their »desert life«. The Japanese have not lived in forest for millennium, and Europe has never been a desert. One might conceive of the origins of Christianity in the Middle Eastern desert, but to connect desert ecology with the thinking pattern of Europeans is a little difficult. Nonetheless, on these premises is Suzuki's argument constructed.

The position of popular *Nihonjinron* is well characterized by aforementioned Isaiah BenDasan, alias Yamamoto Shichihei. BenDasan is the author of the run-away best seller *Nihonjinron* book *Yudayajin to Nihonjin* (1970). Its hard cover edition sold 800,000 copies and the softcover edition, two million copies. It has been reprinted more than fifty times. Unquestionably, this book has been the most widely read *Nihonjinron* book up to now. Yet, paucity of scholarly merit of this best seller was roundly exposed by Prof. Asami Sadao, as noted above. What he said in an interview (BenDasan 1984: 7) reveals what popular *Nihonjinron* is, and why it sells well:

That [*Yudayajin to Nihonjin*] is an essay, you know. An essay is something the reader enjoys reading. It [reading it] is supposed to be pleasurable activity. It is enough if the reader thought it was interesting upon finishing it. Naturally there would be serious problems if you treat it as an academic treatise [...] So I am well aware that it has problems as an academic work.

An important function of consumer *Nihonjinron* is to supply the reading consumer with material which appropriately satisfies their curiosity for the whys and wherefores. Consumer *Nihonjinron* writers are poised to provide ready answers to questions of self-identity in simple, easily, understandable language, uncluttered with erudite theories and terminology, cumbersome footnotes, bibliography, and index. These answers are inexpensively had in paperback books, as I will argue later.

An important point to realize at this point is that contents of popular *Nihonjinron* varies enormously according to the social and political exigencies of the time, not on the basis of what social theory is being marshaled forth, as in scholarly *Nihonjinron* (Befu 2002: Ch. 2, Ch. 7). In other words, consumer *Nihonjinron* is a tool for the general public to make sense of the changing political, social, economic, and cultural conditions. For example, the immediate prewar and war-time *Nihonjinron* discourse centered around the imperial system, which was supposed to have lasted 2600 years since its founding by the mythological emperor Jimmu. And the living emperor was bestowed with divine quality to buttress the myth. Thus *Nihonjinron* became an ideological engine for the war effort.

As soon as the war was over in 1945, the emperor as the ideological center piece was totally discarded and has never been reinstated in the postwar *Nihonjinron*. Instead, the *Nihonjinron* of the time was imbued with blaming of traditional values and institutions, which were all at the core of the pre-1945 *Nihonjinron*, as causes of Japan's defeat of the war. This postwar self-castigation gradually gave way, coinciding with the time of Japan's rapid economic growth, to a more positive outlook, in which redeeming values and institutions were resuscitated from the pre-1945 tradition, and were included in the *Nihonjinron* of the late 60s on. Group orientation of the Japanese as a prime feature of *Nihonjinron*, for example, began to be talked about around

this time – in the late 60s and the early 70s. Invocation of this concept was a useful means to make sense of Japan's economic success, as this success was attributed, among others, to the group behavior of the Japanese.

Nihonjinron has to do with the self identity of the Japanese, i.e., the image of themselves. In this sense, *Nihonjinron* may be said to be a discursive portrait of the Japanese in collective sense, their collective self. This portrait is drawn by *Nihonjinron* writers. Each *Nihonjinron* work may be said to be a »portrait«, each one somewhat differing from others. In most of the postwar years, that is, starting with the late 1960s when Japan was ridding itself of self-castigation and shame of the lost war of the immediate postwar period and entering the glorious period of double digit economic growth, this self-portrait had to be imbued with pride. *Nihonjinron* as a self portrait thus should portray Japan in a most favorable light. The mass, it should be noted, is more interested in portraiture that is flattering, not necessarily one that accurately depicts the real self. A person who commissions a portrait to an artist expects the art work to make one feel good. S/he definitely does not want a depiction of self which throws an unfavorable light. A mole on the face may have to be removed or shown smaller than it is in reality. The face may have to be portrayed more beautifully than s/he really is.

Such depiction – or shall we say »deception«? – is more likely to be accepted than a brute reality. If the consumer is able to paint his or her own portrait, the consumer can create one that suits him or her, making appropriate »revisions«. But most consumers are not artists and must rely on professional artists to create an image of them. Even a photographic portrait is not expected to depict »reality«. If it is simply a matter of depicting the reality, almost anyone can be a portrait photographer; one need not go to a studio for the purpose. The fact that desirable features of a person must be enhanced through the tricks of lights and shadows and through touching up the negative shows the importance of depicting »untruth«. Human desire for a favorable portrait extends to collective portraiture of a culture or a nation. Most consumers, that is, most readers, are unable to write a treatise on the cultural or national identity that suits them. Thus, instead, they rely on writers of such discursive identity. *Nihonjinron* literature is a mass-produced national or collective portrait to satisfy the needs of consumers.

To take another analogy, consumer *Nihonjinron* books are like one's cloths. Very few people have the expertise to sew one's own clothes. Thus one goes to a store and picks the one that suits best. Consumer *Nihonjinron* is like the clothes one wears. At any major bookstore, literally hundreds of books on *Nihonjinron* line shelves. People buy consumer *Nihonjinron* books as they buy clothes at a store. They can pick and choose, among a shelf full of *Nihonjinron* books, the one that s/he likes, just as consumers pick the clothes they like from among dozens hanging on the rack.

It is no wonder that most *Nihonjinron* books, i.e., popular works in *Nihonjinron* have not been taken up seriously in the scholarly circle. Normally, results of scholarly research are published, besides in book form, in professional journals specializing in particular disciplines like anthropology, psychology, or political science, or in a university's research bulletin commonly called *kiyō* in Japan. These sources are never read by ordinary readers of *Nihonjinron*. Most people never even know the existence of such sources since these bulletins are almost never sold at bookstores but are distributed free of charge to fellow scholars and research libraries. *Nihonjinron* treatises are almost never, if ever, published in such specialized professional journals or university organs since they lack proper scholarly merit. Moreover, popular *Nihonjinron* books are almost never taken up for review in scholarly journals as they are not deemed worthy, or not having scholarly merit to be reviewed in technical or professional journals.

What is the relationship between the consumer type *Nihonjinron* and scholarly *Nihonjinron*? At least one area of relationship can be identified. A college professor often writes a »consumer-oriented« *Nihonjinron* book as well as a scholarly *Nihonjinron* book. To be sure, some scholars never write for the general public. They are satisfied with writing in technical and specialized journals, in short, with engaging in debate and discussion with fellow scholars. But other scholars write both serious scholarly works and also popular books, where the latter inevitably reflect the serious scholarship of the author. They write articles in magazines for the general public, such as *Chūō kōron*, *Shokun*, *Seiron*, *Bungei shunjū*, and *Sekai*, or in inexpensive pocket books known in Japan as *bunko* and *shinsho*, which are widely read by the educated general public. For example, *Nihonjin no shinri* [Psychology of the Japanese] by Hitotsubashi University's Minami Hiroshi (1954) or *Nihonteki keiei* [The Japanese style management] by Tokyo University's Odaka Kunio (1984) are both available in the *shinsho* edition at a price affordable for normal office workers. They are small and light enough to be carried to work and read in train. Both these authors have also written serious *Nihonjinron* treatises.

These *Nihonjinron* works are »watered down« versions of what these authors might write in technical books and journals. Nonetheless, they contain gist of scholarly works to be communicated to the general public. Or, sometimes scholars write *Nihonjinron* in popular sources, and then write a more scholarly version. Thus trafficking between purely scholarly discourse and the consumer level discussion does take place. In the West there is a strong tendency for scholars to avoid writing for the general public. Those who do so are labeled »popularizers« with a definite pejorative connotation. As a scholar, such a label is a kiss of academic death, as s/he would no longer be taken seriously as a scholar. For this reason most scholars in the West shun

popularizing activities. This makes it difficult for them to understand why Japanese scholars do write in popular books.

In Japan, popularizing, or to put it in a more positive term, educating the public by writing books that appeal to them is an accepted or even laudable *modus operandi* for scholars. A large number of scholars practice this educational function in Japan. One scholar confided to me that about one half of his income is derived from royalties from books he had written and other educational activities for the general public.

Above, I have characterized popular *Nihonjinron* by contrasting it with serious *Nihonjinron*. The former is meant for public consumption; it is a veritable *consumer product* rather than *scholarship*. Let me spell out the distinction between the two by spelling out the nature of this consumer product *qua* consumer product.

First, the most important consideration for a mass consumer product is sales figures. Economy of scale is the name of the game. It should be produced inexpensively and it should sell many copies at a price affordable to anyone. For a popular *Nihonjinron* book one might imagine an office worker carrying a copy in his pocket or her carrying case and reading it in a crowded commuter train.

- First, a hard cover book with four to five hundred pages, as scholarly *Nihonjinron* books often are, cost at least two or three thousand yen even thirty or forty years ago. Most consumers would not want to spend that much money for a single book. Thus it is imperative to keep the cost down – to less than a thousand yet. Aforementioned Yamashita Hideo's *Nihon no kotoba to kokoro*, for example, is available at 860 yen.
- Second, in order to keep the cost down, the book should be short. Most consumers do not have the patience to read through hundreds of pages – unless it is a novel, regardless of the cost.
- Third, for the sake of readability, the argument has to be uncomplicated. The greater the number of pages, the more difficulty it is for the general reader to follow the argument to the end. This is another reason why a consumer *Nihonjinron* book should be short.

If sales figures are expected to be small, as scholarly *Nihonjinron* books tend to be, the publisher must increase the price per copy to recover the cost of production, which discourages the reader from buying the book. Since a scholarly book is expected to be read only by a handful of fellow scholars, its market is highly restricted. Given the limited market, the price has to be marked up sufficiently to recover the cost of production. Often these stratagems are not enough to recover the cost, and external subvention, government or private,

is needed to publish a scholarly book of limited sale. Thus an entirely different strategy is employed for scholarly books.

- Fourth, to increase the profit, popular *Nihonjinron* books are printed in paperback – in editions known as *shinshō* or *bunko*. These are »pocket book« varieties that can be produced inexpensively, costing around 400 yen in the 60s and 70s at bookstores. Even now in years 2000s, they do not exceed 1,000 yen in price. They are inexpensively produced and printed in large quantities, realizing the economy of scale.
- Fifth, another way of keeping the cost down is to eliminate illustrations, or to keep them to the minimum. If they are included, they are virtually all black-and-white, rather than in color. The cover, however, is generally in color and attractive, indeed to catch the attention of those who come to bookstore to browse.
- Sixth, cost conscious publishers are shy of footnotes, endnotes, index, and bibliographic citations, all of which mean additional costs in layout. Therefore popular *Nihonjinron* books generally lack these features, or have only a minimum amount of them. This is, of course, contrary to scholarly practices, in which these references are required in order to indicate the sources of information that one uses as bases for further development of ideas.

Conclusion

Much ink has been spilled to criticize *Nihonjinron*. But much of it is misplaced criticism. Peter Dale (1986) and Roy Andrew Miller (1982) are fond of ridiculing Japanese *Nihonjinron* writers for their essentialist writings. But they direct their criticisms against popular *Nihonjinron* writers, not to serious and scholarly writers. Also, of late, critics have directed their criticism at the *Nihonjinron* thesis of the homogeneity of the Japanese. The argument stems from the realization of increasing numbers of foreign populations in Japan, notably from Latin America, South and Southeast Asia, and Middle East who come to Japan to work, creating a multi-ethnic society in Japan. These protagonists criticize proponents of the homogeneity thesis in face of increasing numbers of minorities.

But these critics do not sort out scholarly *Nihonjinron* from consumer *Nihonjinron*; they do not realize that the two have fundamentally different characters and objectives. Scholarly *Nihonjinron* seeks »truth« whereas consumer *Nihonjinron* seeks to create a subjectively pleasing collective portraiture of themselves, setting aside the matter of »truth« as of secondary relevant. If these critics critique scholarly *Nihonjinron* which seeks »truth«, the exercise is appropriate. But they virtually all criticize consumer *Nihonjinron* in terms of their »truth-seeking« function, when its objectives are not necessarily to

seek »truth« but to please consumers. Critics of *Nihonjinron* seem to be unaware of the fact that their criticism is misguided and misplaced.

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