

JAPAN STUDIES REVIEW

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the tenth volume of the *Japan Studies Review* (JSR), an annual peer-reviewed journal sponsored by the joint efforts of the Institute for Asian Studies at Florida International University and the Southern Japan Seminar, with partial funding from the Japan Foundation. JSR continues to be both an outlet for publications related to Southern Japan Seminar events and a journal that encourages submissions from a wide range of scholars in the field.

Appearing in this issue are four articles dealing with a variety of topics on Japan, including the Tokugawa era poet/theorist Kagami Shikō, the increase in the use of subtitles in Japanese television, the local importance of lacquerware in the Tsugaru region, and the significance of the popularity of Korean television programs in Japan.

The first article, "The Changing Views of the *Zhuangzi* in Kagami Shikō's *Haikai* Theory" by Peipei Qiu, looks closely at the use of Daoist sources in the works of a productive yet controversial Shōmon School theorist, Kagami Shikō (1665-1731), tracing his changing interpretations of the *Zhuangzi*, and how *haikai* gradually moves away from Daoist ideas by replacing those principles with Confucian values.

Following this, "Japanese People Watching Subtitled Japanese-Language TV Shows: Function or Aesthetic?" by Yuki Watanabe, studies the boom in subtitling on Japanese television programs, its history, details and causes, in addition to future implications of this phenomenon. The article also examines why the subtitles both benefit and hinder Japanese viewers.

The third article, "Meaning and Representation of Traditional Craft: The Case for a Local Japanese Lacquerware" by Anthony Rausch, analyzes the significance of Tsugaru *nuri*, lacquerware from Aomori Prefecture in northern Japan, and its importance to the identity of the area. Through a series of surveys and other research methods, the article shows how the lacquerware is perceived by locals and outsiders alike.

The final article, "Middle-Aged Japanese Women's Love Affair with *Winter Sonata* and Its Social Implications" by Kinko Ito, focuses on the recent popularity of Korean television shows, especially *Winter Sonata*, and how and why Japanese women embrace them, as well as what they mean to Japanese society as a whole.

Also appearing in this issue are three essays, including a student essay. In a featured essay by multiple authors, “Pedagogy and Experience: Bringing Japan into the Classroom,” six participants in a year-long program known as the Faculty and Curriculum Development Seminar on Japan reflect on their experiences traveling and learning about the country. My essay, “The Development of a Japanese Studies Program at Florida International University” provides advice for other institutions in creating a similar program. The essay by Natali Garcia-Diaz, an alumna of the FIU Asian Studies program, “Foreign Workers in Japan: A Look at Japanese Cultural Perspectives Regarding Nikkeijin,” details the lives of Nikkeijin, Japanese heritage immigrants from Brazil who return to Japan.

Additionally, the volume contains five book reviews of recent publications on Japanese studies. Harald Fuess’ work on divorce in Japan is reviewed by Bernice J. deGannes Scott of Spelman College; Emily S. Rosenberg’s examination of Pearl Harbor in American memory is reviewed by John Hickman of Berry College; and John Nathan’s exploration of Japanese identity after World War II is reviewed by Don R. McCreary of the University of Georgia. Also, a work by Lu Yan about the Chinese perspective of Japan is reviewed by Yuki Takatori of Georgia State University. Finally, Martha Chaiklin’s book on the Dutch influence on Japan in the Tokugawa era is reviewed by Laura Nenzi of Florida International University.

Please note: Japanese names are cited with surname first except for citations of works published in English.

Steven Heine, Editor

Re: Submissions, Subscriptions and Comments

Submissions for publication, either articles or book reviews, should be made in both hard copy and electronic formats, preferably Word for Windows on a disk (please inquire about other formats). The editor and members of the editorial board will referee all submissions.

Annual Subscriptions are \$15.00 (US). Please send a check or money order payable to *Florida International University* to:

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All comments and feedback on the publications appearing in *Japan Studies Review* are welcome.

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Articles

THE CHANGING VIEWS OF THE *ZHUANGZI* IN KAGAMI SHIKŌ'S *HAIKAI* THEORY

Peipei Qiu
Vassar College

The use of Daoist ideas in *haikai* during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was a prominent phenomenon in Japanese literary history. While presenting different interpretations, three major *haikai* schools of the period, the Teimon, the Danrin, and the Shōmon, shared a conspicuous interest in using Daoist ideas to justify *haikai* and to construct its themes, theories, and values. The Shōmon School, in particular, sought inspiration in the correspondences between Daoist principles and the Chinese recluse tradition, and the leader of the school, Matsuo Bashō (1644-1694), made the *Zhuangzi* a fundamental source of his poetry that went against worldly values. The Shōmons' interest in Daoist sources continued after Bashō's death, but there was a general shifting away from the spiritual and literary values the master had emphasized, and Daoist texts used in Shōmon writings after Bashō often were regarded as no more than catchphrases to show the author's Chinese learning.

This paper looks closely at such a seemingly meaningless use of Daoist sources in the works of a productive but controversial Shōmon theorist, Kagami Shikō (1665-1731). Tracing Shikō's changing interpretations of the *Zhuangzi*, it examines how his view of the fundamentals of *haikai* gradually moves away from Bashō's concept that is deeply informed by Daoist ideas, and how his replacing Daoist principles with Confucian values at the center of his *haikai* theory reflects an impulse to meet the taste of the populace and to popularize *haikai* at the time.

Shikō joined the Shōmon School in 1690, around the time when Bashō moved into the "Unreal Dwelling" (*Genjūan*). In the fall of the following year, he accompanied Bashō on his journey to the east, arriving in Edo at the end of the tenth month. During that period, a group of poets in the area, including Bashō's disciples Takarai Kikaku (1661-1707) and Matsukura Ranran (1647-1693), in addition to his close friend Yamaguchi Sodō (1642-1716), enthusiastically studied the Daoist classic, the *Zhuangzi*. The Shōmons' interest in the *Zhuangzi* traces back to the beginning of the school. The preface to *Inaka no kuawase* (*Hokku Contest in the Boondocks*, 1680), a collection of 50 verses by Kikaku arranged in the form of a contest with Bashō's comments, for example, contains clear references to the

Zhuangzi, “Master Tō¹ taught us the *haikai* doctrines of boundlessness in his ‘Flitting and Fluttering Study’ (*Kukusai*)... His comments captured the quintessence of Zhuang Zhou’s thought.”² *Kuku*, or flitting and fluttering, is a description of the butterfly in the famous story about Zhuang Zhou’s (*Zhuangzi*) dream in the *Zhuangzi*.

It is remarkable that Bashō named his study after a term from the *Zhuangzi* and his teaching was characterized as having “captured the quintessence of Zhuang Zhou’s thought.” The Shōmons’ early interest in the *Zhuangzi* was the extension of a larger *haikai* movement that strived for truthfulness and profundity, a movement that went against the artificiality and vulgar laughter of earlier *haikai*. Over the years, Bashō continued to use the *Zhuangzi* as inspiration in building *haikai*’s theoretical, aesthetic, and epistemological framework. Shikō’s travels with Bashō and his encounter with poets of Edo exposed him to the Shōmons’ general interest in the *Zhuangzi*. This influence is clearly reflected in his *Kuzu no matsuhara* (*Arrowroots on the Pine Plain*, 1691), a work that mainly records Bashō’s remarks on *haikai*. At the beginning of the book, Shikō writes of his master:

One day Master Bashō appeared vacant and far away, and with a serious expression he said: “Since *haikai* became popular in the world, it has been like a piece of cloud in the wind. It changes constantly, now turning into a black dog, and now turning into a white fabric. Yet there is one principle running through all the changes.”³

The peculiar description of Bashō, “vacant and far away,” is borrowed from the beginning of the second chapter of the *Zhuangzi*, “Discussion on Making All Things Equal.” The original text reads:

¹ Tōō, the term in the original Japanese text, literally means “Old Gentleman Tō.” “Tō” comes from Tōsei, one of the literary names Bashō used at the time.

² Hattori Ransetsu (1654-1707), Preface to *Inaka no kuawase, Kōhon Bashō zenshū* [The Complete Works of Bashō: An Edited Collection], 10 vols., eds., Imoto Nōichi, Miyamoto Saburō, Kon Eizō, and Ōuchi Hatsuo (Tokyo: Kadokawa shoten, 1962-1969), 7: 357 [hereafter KBZ].

³ Kagami Shikō, *Kuzu no matsubara*, in Minami Shinichi, ed., *Sōshaku Shikō no hairon* [Comprehensive Explanations of Shikō’s *Haikai* Theory] (Tokyo: Kazama shobō, 1983), p. 15 [hereafter SSH].

Ziqi of South Wall sat leaning on his armrest, staring up at the sky and breathing – vacant and far away, as though he'd lost his companion.⁴

The second chapter of the *Zhuangzi* was familiar reading among the *haikai* poets of the seventeenth century. As early as 1671, it was cited by the Teimon poet Yamaoka Genrin (1631-1672) in his pioneering work of *haibun*.⁵ Bashō also alluded to the same passage in praising a *haikai* sequence.⁶ The Chinese term *taran* that translates into “vacant” originally meant “despondent,” but the term is used in the *Zhuangzi* to imply a state of mind that has no subjective consciousness. Both Genrin and Bashō use the term following the usage of the *Zhuangzi*.

Evidence shows that during the late 1680s and early 1690s, the Shōmon poets seriously studied the *Zhuangzi*, particularly the second chapter. One of the extant letters Bashō wrote to his disciple Dosui⁷ indicates that in the early spring of 1691, Dosui was teaching the *Zhuangzi* to other Shōmon poets. Another letter Bashō wrote during the same period strongly encourages his disciples to study the *Zhuangzi*.⁸ “I am very glad to hear that you have studied about half of the ‘Discussion on Making All Things Equal’ of the *Zhuangzi*,” says Bashō, “and I wish you more accomplishments in your study. The way of life and the way of *haikai* can also be made equal; in fact, they are one.”

The fusion of art and life here is consistent with Bashō’s assertion of one fundamental principle running through all arts in his famous travel account, *Oi no kobumi* (Essay in My Pannier, 1687): “In the *waka* of Saigyō, the *renga* of Sōgi, the paintings of Sesshū and the tea ceremony of Rikyū,

⁴ Burton Watson, *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1968), pp. 36-37 (romanization of the names has been altered).

⁵ Prose written with the spirit and stylistic features of *haikai*, usually accompanied by a *haikai* verse or verses.

⁶ Imoto Nōichi, Yayoshi Kanichi, Yokozawa Saburō, and Ogata Tsutomu, eds., “Kasen no san,” KBZ, 6: 303-304.

⁷ Dosui’s name consists of two characters from the sentence, “Who does the sounding?” which appears at the end of the conversation between Ziqi and Ziyou in the second chapter of the *Zhuangzi*.

⁸ Ogino Kiyoshi and Kon Eizō, eds., “Shiyū Kyosui ate” [To Shiyū and Kyosui], KBZ, 8: 146.

the fundamental principle is the same. Those who dwell in art follow *zōka* (the creative, *C. zaohua*) and have the four seasons as their companion.”⁹ In both cases the poet returns to the *Zhuangzi* for rationale and inspiration. It has been suggested that Bashō’s concept to “follow *zōka*” could well have formed around the same time, and his notion of *zōka*, which embodies the fundamental principle he asserts, is rooted in Daoist assumptions.¹⁰

One draft of “On the Unreal Dwelling,” dated early autumn of 1690, a few months earlier than the letter cited above, contains a similar passage about the “fundamental principle” in the last paragraph of the prose:

In the poetry of Saigyō and Sōgi, the painting of Sesshū, and the tea of Rikyū, despite the differences of their talents, the fundamental principle is one.¹¹

Although in this excerpt Bashō does not mention what the fundamental principle is, the similar wording points to his idea revealed in *Oi no kobumi*. Shikō’s use of an expression from the *Zhuangzi* in describing Bashō

⁹ KBZ, 6: 75.

¹⁰ For earlier studies on the issue, see Nose Asaji, *Bashō kōza* [Studies on Bashō] (Tokyo: Sanseidō, 1943), 6: 34; Nonomura Katsuhide, “Bashō to Sōji to Sōgaku” [Bashō, the *Zhuangzi*, and Song Confucianism], *Renga haikai kenkyū* [Renga Haikai Studies] 15/11 (1957): 33-39; Hirota Jirō, *Bashō no geijutsu – sono tenkai to haikai* [Bashō’s Art – Its Development and Background] (Tokyo: Yūseidō, 1968), pp. 372-444; and Konishi Jin’ichi, “Bashō to gūgensetsu” [Bashō and Zhuangzi’s Parabolical Phraseology], *Nihon gakushiin kiyō* [The Japan Academy Bulletin] 18/3 (1960): 151-158 (this is part of a larger article, Konishi, “Bashō and Chuang-tsu’s Parabolical Phraseology,” *Nihon gakushiin kiyō* 18/2 (1960): 97-118, also 18/3 (1960): 145-184). See also, Peipei Qiu, “Daoist Concepts in Bashō’s Critical Thought,” in Steven Totosty de Zepetnek and Jennifer Jay, eds., *East Asian Cultural and Historical Perspectives* (Research Institute for Comparative Literature and Cross-Cultural Studies: University of Alberta, 1997), pp. 323-340.

¹¹ Bashō, *Genjūan no ki*, in KBZ, 6: 474. A complete translation of a different draft of the *haibun* can be found in Donald Keene ed., *Anthology of Japanese Literature from the Earliest Era to the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (New York: Grove Press, 1960), pp. 374-376.

speaking of “one principle running through all changes” further demonstrates the Daoist impact on Bashō’s concept of the fundamental principle of arts. In *Kuzu no matsubara*, Shikō also draws upon Zhuangzi’s name to praise the good quality of poetry. In a comment on Kikaku’s following poem,

<i>Kabashira ni</i>	A floating bridge
<i>Yume no ukihashi</i>	of dreams, hanging on
<i>Kakaru nari.</i>	swarming mosquitoes.

Shikō writes, “To compose a verse that captures an illusory world, a world that is neither dream nor reality like this one, we need someone we can only hope to see once in a millennium like Zhuangzi.”¹² Shikō’s use of Zhuangzi as a synonym of supreme poetic quality here was a common practice of the Shōmon School at the time. Along with the development of Shōmon *haikai*, the reading of the *Zhuangzi*, which had a deep impact on the themes of the school in the 1680s, was given more theoretical significance, and the *Zhuangzi* was cited frequently in the Shōmon’s compositional theory. Yet, Shikō’s *Kuzu no matsubara* didn’t go beyond sporadic citations of terms and names from the *Zhuangzi*, and his understanding of the Daoist classic was far from that of Bashō’s.

Kuzu no matsubara was published when Bashō was still alive and it was Shikō’s first full-length book on *haikai* theory. After Bashō’s death, Shikō remained the most productive theoretician among Bashō’s disciples. In addition to four lengthy books on *haikai* theory – *Kuzu no matsubara*, *Zoku goron* (Sequel to the Five Essays, 1699), *Haikai jūron* (Ten Essays on *Haikai*, 1719), and *Nijūgo ka jō* (Twenty-Five Issues, 1736) – and a number of shorter *haikai* treatises, he also compiled two huge *haikai* collections, *Honchō bunkan* (Selected Works by Contemporary Writers, 1717) and *Wakan bunsō* (Best Writings in Japanese and Chinese, 1727). Despite his impressive accomplishments in publication, however, many of Shikō’s works written after Bashō’s death have been criticized as having forged writings in Bashō’s name. One notable change in Shikō’s theory construction after Bashō was his view of the *Zhuangzi* in relation with *haikai*, while the name and ideas of the *Zhuangzi* continued to appear in Shikō’s verses and prose, Confucian values gradually replaced the Daoist

¹² Shikō, *Kuzu no matsubara*, in SSH, pp. 41-42.

principles at the center of his *haikai* theory. In his “Preface” to *Honchō monzen*, a collection of *haibun* published in 1706, he writes:

All writings transmit the heart of the Kings of the Zhou¹³ and Confucius, and elaborate in the way of the *Zhuangzi* and *Mengzi*; works in both Japanese and Chinese convey that spirit, but it is rare to have a work that also conveys their style.

Unlike Bashō, who asserts the fundamental principle of all arts in light of Daoist thought and rarely includes Confucian teaching in his theoretical framework, Shikō now sees the meaning of the *Zhuangzi* primarily in its elaborative writing style. He places Confucian values above the Daoist classic and often treats them as an overarching rubric that encompasses the thought of Lao and Zhuang. In *Nijūgo ka jō* he defines “The Way of *Haikai*” as the following:

Someone asked, “For what purpose do we compose *haikai*?” I replied, “It is to put vernacular words and daily language in an appropriate way.” Someone asked again, “What is the way *haikai* should follow?” I answered, “It is to break the existing way, like what Bodhidharma did to Buddhism and Zhuangzi did to Confucianism. *Haikai* follows the way of *waka* in the same manner. Based on this understanding we can see that departing from the way is to follow the way. Although *haikai* as a poetic form stands after *waka* and *renga*, its heart must follow the way toward enlightenment.”¹⁴

While stating that the *Zhuangzi* broke the existing Confucian way, in the final analysis he synthesizes the way of Lao-Zhuang and Confucianism, comparing them to the relationship between Bodhidharma and Buddhism. Shikō concludes ultimately that the way of *haikai*, though appearing anti-conventional, is consistent with the Buddhist and Confucian way toward enlightenment. Shikō’s point of view further develops into a frame of reference for his discussion on *kyō* (emptiness) and *jutsu* (substantiality),

¹³ The first rulers of the Zhou dynasty (1122 BCE-249 BCE).

¹⁴ Shikō, *Nijūgo ka jō*, in SSH, p. 601. The work was circulated privately among *haikai* poets before its publication around the end of the 1690s and the beginning of 1700.

which forms the foundation of his *haikai* theory. In *Haikai jūron*, a comprehensive book of theory produced later by Shikō, he describes the evolution of *haikai* as the following:

The way of *haikai* is originally about the monopoly of *kyo* and *jitsu*. It was handed down from the three emperors and five sovereigns to the mighty rulers Yu, Tang, and King Wen and King Wu of the Zhou Dynasty [in China], and its name takes its current form in Sima Qian's *Shi ji* (Records of History). Indeed, ever since Confucianism, Buddhism, and Lao-Zhuang parted ways from the way of Tai ji, *kyo* is substantialized by *jitsu*, and *jitsu* is canceled out by *kyo*, as seen in examples such as Zhuang Zhou who negated Confucius' benevolence and righteousness, and Bodhidharma who broke the transmission of Sakyamuni's scripture. The same is the change of *haikai*. We can say that *haikai* makes Confucianism and Buddhism easier to understand and it is a medium of Japanese and Chinese poetry.¹⁵

The discussion of the terms *kyo* and *jitsu* in *haikai* theories began long before Shikō. As indicated in Shikō's passage above, these terms are used widely in Confucian, Daoist, and Buddhist writings, and therefore have different connotations in different contexts. Earlier discussions of the terms in *haikai* literature, including the writings by the Danrin School in the 1670s and the remarks by Bashō in the 1690s, all spoke of these concepts in close relationship with the *Zhuangzi*. Nishiyama Sōin, the founder of the Danrin School, for example, used the terms in the following famous statement, "The art of *haikai* places falsehood (*kyo*) ahead of truth (*jitsu*). It is the *gūgen* of *waka*, the *kyōgen* (comedy) of *renga* (linked verse)."¹⁶ The intertextual source of Sōin's statement, though not mentioned explicitly, is the *Zhuangzi*. *Gūgen*, or *yuyan* in Chinese, literally means fable, allegory, or parable. In the *Zhuangzi*, it refers to words said through the mouth of historical or fictional figures to make them more compelling. The Danrin

¹⁵ Shikō, "Haikai jū ron," in SSH, p. 714.

¹⁶ Nishiyama Sōin, "Orandamaru nibansen" [Holland II], in Iida Masakazu, Esaka Hironao, and Inui Hiroyuki eds., *Koten haibungaku taikai* [A Collection of Classical *Haikai* Literature] (Tokyo: Shueisha, 1971), 4: 439-440 [hereafter KHT]. The translation is from Donald Keene, *World Within Walls* (New York: Grove Press, 1976), p. 49.

School *haikai* poets took it as the essence of the *Zhuangzi* and used it as an essential literary device in composing *haikai*. Sōin himself made this clear elsewhere, “*Haikai*, a form of miscellaneous style, is the *gūgen* of *renga*. How can we not learn from Zhuang Zhou’s writings and revere Moritake’s tradition?”¹⁷ Indeed, *kyo* and *jitsu* in Sōin’s *haikai* theory are based on the following discussion in the *Zhuangzi*:

What does the Way rely upon, that we have true (C. *shi*; J. *jitsu*) and false (C. *xu*; J. *kyo*)? What do words rely upon, that we have right or wrong? How can the Way go away and not exist? How can words exist and not be acceptable?¹⁸

The *Zhuangzi* declares that the Way does not rely upon concepts such as “true” and “false;” words do not rely upon concepts such as “right” and “wrong.” Both “true” and “false” and “right” and “wrong” are equally an individual universe of infinite proportion. This assumption of the *Zhuangzi* provided a good argument for Sōin when he was defending himself against accusations from the contemporary Teimon School. Around 1674, a conflict occurred between the Teimon and the Danrin schools. When Nishiyama Sōin published a hundred-verse sequence entitled *Kabashira hyakku* (Swarming Mosquitoes: One Hundred Verses), the Teimon responded with a criticism called *Shibuuchiwa* (An Astringent Fan), whose metaphorical title means a powerful fan to beat off the mosquitoes of the Danrin.¹⁹ The work criticized Sōin’s verses as “having lost the essence (*hon’i*) of poetry while simply spitting out whatever he wanted to say.”²⁰ Defending his leader’s work, Sōin’s disciple Okanishi Ichū wrote *Shibuuchiwa hentō* (A Response to “An Astringent Fan”). Thus, the two schools began a lengthy quarrel unprecedented in Japanese literary history. The focus of the debates was whether the essence of *haikai* was “to assist government and to edify

¹⁷ Nishiyama Sōin, “Sōji zō san” [Eulogy of the Picture of Zhuangzi], quoted in Hirota Jirō, *Bashō no geijutsu – sono tenkai to haikai* (Tokyo: Yūseidō, 1968), p. 217.

¹⁸ Watson, *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*, p. 39.

¹⁹ The work is attributed to Saruhōshi, whose identity is not clear. He might be a person from Nara. Some scholars suspect that the author might be Kitamura Kigin.

²⁰ KHT, 4: 41.

people,”²¹ as the Teimon, following the Confucian view of poetry, insisted, or “to make free exaggerations and create the most deluding falsehoods,”²² which the Danrin saw in the essence of both *haikai* and the *Zhuangzi*.

It needs to be noted that *kyo* and *jitsu* as bipolar structures in the *Zhuangzi* have no impassable boundary between two opposites and *kyo* as an extremely important concept in Daoist epistemology is more often used to mean “emptiness.” For example, the *Zhuangzi* says, “The Way gathers in emptiness (C. *xu*; J. *kyo*) alone. Emptiness is the fasting of the mind.”²³ Here “emptiness” refers to a mental condition totally free of subjectivity, a state appropriate for attaining the *Dao*. The *Zhuangzi* stresses that supreme cognition occurs when one has completely eliminated subjectivity and let the self become one with the cosmos. This notion of *xu/kyo* had a profound impact on Chinese literary theories and Bashō’s remarks on *haikai* in his last years also used the term in this sense. He describes the appropriate state of mind in poetic composition as, “Staying in emptiness (*kyo*) while dealing freely with substantiality (*jitsu*), or to capture substantiality by entering emptiness.”²⁴ His famous statement, “Learn about pine from pines and learn about bamboo from bamboos,” according to his disciple, also is to teach his students how to empty their minds and “eradicate subjectivity.”²⁵

Comparing Shikō’s interpretation of *kyo* and *jitsu* with that of the Danrin and of Bashō, it is clear that Shikō’s view is fundamentally different from Bashō’s and closer to the Danrins’ view. Yet, while defining *haikai* as an art monopolizing false and true as the Danrin did, Shikō differs from the Danrin in that he denies the oppositional nature of *haikai*’s liberal expressions and supports his view through synthesizing Confucianism, Buddhism, and Lao-Zhuang teaching. In *Haikai jūron*, there is a more elaborate discussion of “The Way of *Haikai*”:

The Way of *haikai* lies primarily in the freedom of *kyo* and *jitsu*, in staying away from the worldly concepts and following the truth of

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ichū, “Haikai mōgyū,” in KHT, 4: 83.

²³ Watson, *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*, p. 58.

²⁴ Zushi Rogan (?-1639), “Kikigaki nanoka gusa” [Notes Taken During the Seven Days with the Master], KBZ, 9: 269. The work records Bashō’s words during his stay at Haguro in 1689, when he was on his journey to the far north.

²⁵ Hattori Dohō, “Sanzōshi,” in KBZ, 7: 175.

poetry. People who don't truly understand this way cannot see the breadth of *haikai* and focus only on wild expressions or enchanting language. However, we should know that the principle point of *haikai* is to let one's heart wander freely between *kyo* and *jitsu* and to have an appropriate judgment of using language. *Kyo* and *jitsu* originate from the heart and manifest in language. Some people say that *haikai* represents the style of the *Laozi* and the *Zhuangzi*. Those people do not know the difference between yellow and white. The way of Zhuang and Lao places the heavenly wandering above the sage's benevolence and righteousness, twists the right and wrong of the common world, and indulges in the primitive state of *kyo* and *jitsu*. *Haikai*, on the other hand, deals with the right and wrong of the common world and pacifies the present life of common people. Therefore, *haikai* finds its way in the changes of *kyo* and *jitsu*, and seeks its principle in the harmony of common world....In this sense, the way of *haikai* conveys what exists among Confucianism, Buddhism, and Lao-Zhuang, and its principle exists in the balance of *kyo* and *jitsu*. We should know that the great ways of Confucianism and Buddhism are distinguished by where they place *kyo* and *jitsu*, and that *haikai* is a medium of both.²⁶

Although obscure and not without contradictions at times, Shikō makes it clear in the passage that *haikai* as a medium of *kyo* and *jitsu* is not the same as the Way of Lao and Zhuang; rather, it conveys "what exists among Confucianism, Buddhism, and Lao-Zhuang." Although Shikō repeatedly emphasizes that his work is based on Bashō's teaching, the difference between his position and Bashō's principle of following *zōka* and returning to *zōka* is unmistakable. It was not a surprise that Shikō was condemned by his fellow Shōmon poets not long after Bashō's death. The criticism toward Shikō must have been very harsh. In 1711 Shikō pretended to be dead. He wrote an essay, "On My Deathbed," and even compiled a volume in memory of himself. Afterward he published either under different names or in the name of his own disciples. These acts only worsened Shikō's reputation among contemporary *haikai* poets and his works were often regarded as phony. Modern *haikai* scholars also generally hold a negative view of Shikō's writings after Bashō's death, dismissing them as expressions of Shikō's self-glorification that are beneath consideration.

²⁶ Shikō, *Haikai jūron*, in SSH, pp. 727-728.

However, putting it in historical context, Shikō's peculiar theory construction and his replacing Daoist principles with Confucian values at the center of his *haikai* theory were not accidental. Shikō's theory sheds light onto the literary tradition from which *haikai* evolved. It also yields insights into the social and cultural environment of the time. Shikō's use of Confucian themes and vocabulary in his *haikai* theory first mirrors the increasing interest in Confucian thought in Tokugawa society in general. Early Japanese chronicles indicate that Confucianism was introduced to Japan in the third century CE, but over the centuries it was eclipsed by the doctrines of Buddhism, which were linked first to an aestheticism that enchanted courtly circles and later to a popular appeal that captured the faith of a broad audience.²⁷

With the establishment of the Tokugawa government in the early seventeenth century, Confucianism began to enjoy official recognition as one of the most important schools of thought that affected the political and intellectual discourses, and rapidly penetrated the emergent popular culture in early modern Japan. The penetration of Confucian thought into the popular sphere was propelled by the popular education of the time. Before the seventeenth century, knowledge of Confucian texts was transmitted as esoteric learning and was open only to a few privileged families, typical of the Japanese tradition of secret transmission of art and learning. Since the Tokugawa period, Chinese classics with punctuations for Japanese reading became available to audiences consisting of lower classes. At the same time, public lectures on Confucian classics also opened the way for common people to learn the Confucian teaching.²⁸ The remarkably quick and wide spread of Confucian teaching was clearly documented in the emerging popular literature, including the works of the popular fiction writer Ihara Saikaku (1642-1693), the playwright Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653-1725), and some of the *haikai* masters.

The general popularity of Confucianism in Tokugawa literature made Bashō's extensive use of the *Zhuangzi* in his *haikai* particularly significant; it demonstrated a conscious effort to reinvent popular linked

²⁷ Peter Nosco, "Introduction," in Peter Nosco, ed., *Confucianism and Tokugawa Culture* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, rpt. 1997), p. 5.

²⁸ For the presence of Confucianism in Tokugawa literature, see Donald Keene, "Characteristic Responses to Confucianism in Tokugawa Literature," in Nosco, ed., *Confucianism and Tokugawa Culture*, pp. 120-137.

verse through a carefully chosen classical frame of reference. As the latter half of the seventeenth century witnessed the renaissance of *haikai*, the *haikai* poets faced paradoxical demands in revitalizing *haikai*. On the one hand, they had to go beyond the limits of the classical linked verse tradition to reach a popular audience and to establish *haikai*'s identity as a commoners' poetic form. On the other hand, they needed codified poetic signifiers and intertextual structures to transform the vernacular *haikai* language (*haigon*) into poetry. Bashō's interest in the Daoist classic was rooted in the intersection of deconstructing and reconstructing the classical Japanese poetic tradition. He used the *Zhuangzi* as an authoritative source to help both turn the parodic and vernacular *haikai* expressions into poetic language and to translate the classical poetic conventions into the vernacular in the popular linked verse.²⁹ Bashō's emphasis on classical references in

²⁹ For studies in Japanese on the relationship between the seventeenth century *haikai* and the *Zhuangzi*, see Yamamoto Heiichirō, "Haikai to Sōji ga gūgen" [*Haikai* and *Zhuangzi*'s Parable], *Kokugo to kokubungaku* [Japanese Language and Literature] 14/1 (1937): 60-87 and 14/2: 167-192; Kon Eizō, "Danrin haikai oboegaki – gūgensetsu no genryū to bungakushiteki jittai" [Notes on Danrin *Haikai* – The Origin of *Gūgen* Theories and its Presence in Japanese Literary History], *Kokugo kokubun kenkyū* [Japanese Language and Literary Studies] 7 (1953): 1-27; Nonomura Katsuhide, "Danrin haikai no gūgenron o megutte" [On the *Gūgen* Theories in Danrin *Haikai*], *Kokugo to kokubungaku* [Japanese Language and Literature] 33/11 (1956): 36-44; Konishi, "Bashō to gūgensetsu"; Hirota Jirō, *Bashō no geijutsu – sono tenkai to haikai* [Bashō's Art – Its Development and Background] (Tokyo: Yūseidō, 1968); and Peipei Qiu, "Haikai no kakuritsu to Sōji – Nihon shiika koten jūshi no dentō no kanten kara no bunseki" [The Establishment of *Haikai* and the *Zhuangzi* – In the Context of Japanese Poetic Tradition], *Nihon kenkyū* [Bulletin for Japanese Studies] 20 (2000): 261-291. For studies in English on the subject, see Peipei Qiu, "Onitsura's *Makoto* and the Daoist Concept of the Natural," *Philosophy East & West* 51/3 (2001): 232-246; "Bashō's *Fūryū* and the Aesthetic of *Shōyōyū*: Poetics of Eccentricity and Unconventionality," *Japan Studies Review* 5 (2001): 1-36; "Inventing the New Through the Old: The Essence of *Haikai* and the *Zhuangzi*," *Early Modern Japan* 9/1 (2001): 2-18; "Adaptation and Transformation: A Study of Taoist Influence on Early Seventeenth Century *Haikai*," in Amy V. Heinrich, ed., *Currents in Japanese Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp. 185-

his *haikai* reform warrants our particular attention here. Shikō's shifting away from the *Zhuangzi* to Confucian values, although a departure from Bashō's legacy, followed the same tradition of constructing literary theories on the basis of classical references.

As seen in the debate between the Teimon and the Danrin, the different schools of *haikai* poets all looked to classical references for authority. This emphasis on classical references, which is evident throughout the history of Japanese literature, does not suggest an inability to theorize. Rather, it indicates a tradition that derives authority from classical texts. Not only the fundamental purpose of poetry but also the legitimacy of a new genre and sub-genre, the criteria of a style, and the appropriation of significance, have to be justified through proper reference to canonical texts. When a classical reference was not available in their native texts, Japanese writers often used Chinese classics as the source for authority. Although *haikai* as a popular poetic form broke the classical conventions with its parodic and vernacular expressions, it carefully carried out the tradition of classical reference in its theory construction. From the Teimons' insistence on the Confucian definition of poetry, to the Danrins' interest in the free fabrication of the *Zhuangzi*, to Bashō's seeking inspiration in Daoist ideas, all three major *haikai* schools relied on the canonical texts to legitimize their theories. It was precisely in line with this tradition that Shikō constructed his theory in the peculiar way we have seen above. His synthesis of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Lao-Zhuang thought, although not always logical, was to help him justify the shift of emphasis in *haikai* from Bashō's lofty literary and spiritual values to more pragmatic and earthy interests. This shift was necessary to attract an audience among the commoners at the time.

Ogata Tsutomu characterizes the period from the Genroku (1688-1703) to Kyōho Era (1716-1735) in *haikai* history in terms of commercialization and vulgarization.³⁰ During that period, which roughly coincided with Shikō's *haikai* activities, *tentori* (point-garnering) *haikai* and *maekuzuke* (verse-capping) overshadowed the poetic and spiritual communities formed at the *renku* (linked verse) compositions among urban *haikai* practitioners. At the same time, provincial *haikai* schools geared their *haikai* production to meet the taste of a growing audience among the

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³⁰ Ogata Tsutomu, "Haikai," *Shinchō Nihon bungaku shōjiten* (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1968), pp. 916-919.

populace. The *haikai* of Shikō and his followers at Mino was representative of this trend. This trend, as Horikiri Minoru points out, was a product of the time. In his discussion of the changes Shikō promoted after Bashō's death, Horikiri notes that "the vulgar and straightforward style was not a characteristic limited only to *haikai* at the time. It was a period that witnessed the contradiction and refraction of the Tokugawa system, which was reflected in the rapid growth of the commercial economy that shook the feudal government, the increased oppression on townsmen, and the dissociation of the peasant class. The commoners' aspiration for freedom and pressing demands were gradually turned into leisurely hedonism and practical wisdom, which determined the general tendency of arts and culture of the time."³¹

Amid the high waves of the popularization and commercialization of *haikai*, the poetic idea and practice Bashō had promoted – to do away with worldly concerns by living as an aesthete-recluse and perpetual traveler – became somewhat too high-brow for the commoner's taste. Consequently, the Daoist ideas in which Bashō found the inspiration for his *haikai* ideal were less fitting to Shikō, who sought a *haikai* style that could appeal to the ears of common people. As seen earlier, Shikō spelled out this change clearly in his *Haikai jūron*, "The way of Zhuang and Lao places heavenly wandering above the sage's benevolence and righteousness, twists the right and wrong of the common world, and indulges in the primitive state of *kyo* and *jitsu*." The *haikai* of Shikō's time, on the other hand, "deals with the right and wrong of the common world and pacifies the present life of common people." Therefore, Shikō stressed the need to find the way of *haikai* "in the changes of *kyo* and *jitsu*, and to seek its principle in the harmony of common world." It is not a surprise that Shikō describes the function and practice of *haikai* as being, "to pacify the minds of common people, and to teach the principle of the five cardinal articles of morality (*gorin*)," the same as the way in which "the *Analects* enlightens Confucius' disciples."³²

As demonstrated above, Shikō's *haikai* theory mirrors his time. As Bashō's disciple, Shikō could not completely deprecate the Daoist classic in his theorization, but he consciously incorporated Confucian values, which

³¹ Horikiri Minoru, *Shōfū hairon no kenkyū – Shikō o chūshin ni* [A Study of the Bashō School *Haikai* Theories – Focusing on Shikō] (Tokyo: Meiji shoin, 1982), p. 18.

³² Shikō, *Haikai jūron*, in SSH, p. 815.

addressed issues in the daily life of the common people, in order to attract wider public interest. In this effort, although he was denounced by Buson as “a boondocks Shōmon,” his “easy and vulgar” approach played an important role in popularizing *haikai* in the provincial areas.

JAPANESE PEOPLE WATCHING SUBTITLED JAPANESE- LANGUAGE TV SHOWS: FUNCTION OR AESTHETIC?

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Introduction

This paper looks into the development and function of Japanese subtitling on television shows in Japan. In the mid-1990s, subtitling of Japanese television programs began to grow. Significantly, this phenomenon was not a mere extension of the long-standing practice of providing Japanese subtitles for imported foreign language television programs and films. Rather, this was a new use of subtitles, i.e., the addition of Japanese subtitles for Japanese television programs. This novel use, which started with documentaries, was initially motivated by the desire to help audiences better understand interviewees whose speech was not fully intelligible. New computer technologies have led to even more sophisticated techniques for integrating subtitling with colorful graphic images. As a result, the use of subtitling has spread from documentary and news programming to various entertainment shows scheduled for both prime-time and late night. Today, Japanese television viewers are exposed to massive amounts of subtitling on a daily basis. In fact, many of the top-rated prime-time and late night programs feature subtitling in one or more of their segments.

The burgeoning popularity of subtitled programs in Japan leads to several questions. Why has subtitling become an identifiable phenomenon? Also, why has subtitling endured and, indeed, grown to become such a prominent feature across such a wide spectrum of contemporary Japanese television programming? This paper proposes to answer these questions about Japanese subtitling by examining the phenomenon's origins, growth, and overall impact, with a consideration of future implications for both producers and consumers of Japanese television. In the process, the paper will explore the impact of subtitling on program format, program content, and the aesthetics of television as a presentational medium. The paper will also examine the changing structure of the Japanese television industry and the shifting viewing habits of the Japanese television audience as forces driving the subtitling phenomenon.

Development and Functions of Japanese Subtitling

Most scholars agree that the recent vogue for Japanese subtitling began in documentaries as a means of helping viewers better understand what was being said by on-screen interviewees who were not professionally trained to speak articulately or clearly on camera.¹ Indeed, members of the general population often speak with an accent, a dialect, a soft voice, or imperfections. Such problems are often exacerbated when interviewees are older people, children, or persons with speech disabilities. In documentary and news situations where the subject's identity needs to be protected, the voice of the shrouded interviewee is often electronically disguised, thus making that person more difficult for viewers to understand. In other instances where the filmmaker has little or no control over the shooting site, environmental noise and other distractions sometimes ruin the on-location soundtrack. Eventually, documentarists found that they could use such audially flawed yet visually authentic footage by subtitling the content of interviewees' responses either verbatim or in summarized form.

Starting in the 1980s, entertainment television programs such as variety shows, reality shows, and talk shows increasingly featured ostensibly non-professionals, as opposed to professionally trained actors and entertainers.² This trend intensified significantly due to increasing budget constraints imposed on the television industry after the onset of Japan's economic depression in the early 1990s. In broadcasting, professional performers, of course, work for guaranteed wages stipulated by industry and union agreements. In contrast, there is no minimum pay for non-professionals. Indeed, many non-professionals, lured by the prospect of their "fifteen minutes of fame," are happy to appear on TV without financial compensation. Thus, it makes business sense for television producers to use as many non-professionals as possible. Significantly, there are only a few professionals whose star power is sufficiently strong enough to guarantee consistently high viewership and ratings. This, in turn, has helped create a talent market of non-professionals groomed and used and promoted as overnight sensations. Such nonprofessionals are essentially disposable.

¹ For example, see Kitada Akihiro, "Terebi no shisen to ura-riterashii," *Gengo* 31/13 (December 2002): 42-47; Shiota Harumi, "Media to kanrensei," (online article retrieved from <http://homepage2.nifty.com/nishitaya/lec2002c2.htm> on March 6, 2004); and Sakamoto Mamoru, "Hanransuru jimaku bangumi no kōzai," *Galac* (June 1999), pp. 36-39.

² Sakamoto, "Hanransuru jimaku bangumi no kōzai," p. 36.

Indeed, when the drawing power of an overnight sensation begins to fade, he or she is immediately replaced by a new novelty, who is trotted before the cameras where the process starts cycling anew.

As a result, and due largely to subtitling, the use of non-professional talent with less than perfect speech has become a common feature of Japanese prime-time entertainment programming. Among members of this non-professional talent pool are the elderly, non-native speakers of Japanese, people with strong dialects, very young children, and even the inebriated. For example, a program called *Sokoga hendayo Nihonjin* (This is Where the Japanese Are Weird) (1994-2003) featured foreigners living in Japan, with each episode consisting of their discussions in Japanese about quirky aspects of Japanese people and society. Since none of the participants are native speakers of Japanese, all of their remarks are subtitled. For Japanese viewers, these “strange-speaking” foreigners with their varied and quirky styles of accents and pronunciations are among the show’s main attractions, with subtitling being the principle means for making the participants’ foibles and follies clear.

Another example, *Sanma no karakuri TV supaa* (1995-present) includes various segments that incorporate non-professional people who speak non-standard Japanese. The show also features several quiz show segments. In one, inebriated participants call home in hopes of trying to get answers to quiz questions from family members. In another segment, contestants aged 70 and over compete to answer simple questions. *Karakuri TV* also features street interviews of native English speakers about their “Oh-my-god” experiences. These participants are asked to first explain their terrible experiences in English and then to repeat the same response in their quirky Japanese. A “Video Letter” segment consists of video recording of messages from parents living in local areas to their sons and daughters living in Tokyo. Most parents speak very emotionally in strong accents laced with dialects. All of these segments use extensive subtitling because the funny things said by the participants would not be clear without printed transcriptions to clarify and reinforce what is being said.

The purpose of the type of subtitling mentioned above is to make clear for viewers what has already been spoken on camera by contestants. With the growing sophistication of computer-generated captioning, Japanese subtitling has added increasing amounts of information, thereby expanding the meaning of what is being presented, especially when computer graphics are combined with written text to supplement or enhance meaning. For instance, the names of celebrities can be superimposed on the

screen along with written transcriptions of their speech so that viewers can more easily and quickly identify those particular celebrities.³

A newer variation of subtitling involves the enhancement of on-screen comments by changing the size and color of fonts embellished with various visual effects. Instead of simply retracing the spoken content of on-screen conversations, subtitling is now used strategically and selectively to emphasize punch lines, malapropisms, and other funny moments in conversations. This use can be seen in the show called *Majikaru zunō pawaa* (Magical Brain Power).⁴ This quiz show first used subtitling to help viewers understand the discussions of more than ten contestants (including professional singers, actors, and actresses). But the subtitling later developed into a strategic means for emphasizing or exaggerating laugh lines, a technique that became a distinctive feature of the show. This, in turn, evolved into the use of varied character sizes and colors with special effects and graphics (e.g., fonts that fly around the screen, exaggerated long vowels, and jumping question marks). Other variety and talk shows soon adapted this strategic use of subtitling to increase entertainment value.

Another genre that began to employ extensive subtitling is what is now called the “reality” show. This genre usually features a person or group of people placed in variously contrived situations in which they are confronted with the challenge of achieving specific goals.⁵ Reality shows are shot mainly outside the studio with limited equipment and preparation because of the unscripted and spontaneous unfolding of the events which distinguish the genre. As a result, most of the synchronized on-screen location speech is far from perfect, thus requiring subtitling. In addition, most of these shows subtitle the comments of the narrators or producers along with those of the on-screen cast. Subtitled narration between sequences, which accompanies the narrator’s spoken words or the unspoken interior thoughts of the producer, adds dramatic effect to the narrative by emphasizing or exaggerating twists and turns in the show’s implicit dramatics. These subtitles designate and enhance the pause leading into punch lines and unexpected surprise developments. For example, *Susume*

³ This “reference” function of subtitling is used extensively in variety talk shows, such as “SMAPxSMAP” (CX, 1994-present) and “Love love aishiteru” (CX, 1995-2001).

⁴ Aired on NTV 1990-1999.

⁵ Frances Bonner, *Ordinary Television* (London: Sage Publications, 2003), p. 26.

denpa shonen (Go! Electric Wave Boys) was one of the first shows that featured punctuating set-up words such as “BUT,” “AND THEN,” or “HOWEVER,” as full-screen subtitles between sequences.⁶ These linguistic bursts emphasize and forewarn of unexpected developments in the sequence to follow, and have proved to be effective in holding viewers’ attention by heightening the sense of excitement and humor.⁷

Ainori (Love Ride) also demonstrates the effective use of subtitling in a reality format.⁸ The show deals with a group of young adults traveling around the world in a van who try to establish love-matches within the group. The cast members’ emotional ups and downs are exaggerated with various subtitles that reprise portions of the narrator’s remarks. One segment which aired in September 2001, showed a male cast member trying to hit a softball to impress the group’s females. Accompanying the sequence was a superimposed graphic of burning fire placed over the young man’s eyes which was subtitled, “HIS AGGRESSIVE SPIRIT WAS ON FIRE.” The sequence’s next shot showed him swinging wide of the ball with the full-screen subtitle, “THREE STRIKES OUT,” accompanied by the sound of a bat swooshing through the air. *Ainori* also features subtitling to summarize the emotional outcome of a sequence in comedic ways through the use of special visual and sound effects. In one episode, when the passionate advances of a male cast member failed to attract a female cast member, a full-screen subtitle proclaiming “ALL THE EFFORTS CAME TO NAUGHT” was dramatically flashed to the accompaniment of shocking sound effects. Another function of subtitling is to advance the narrative. For example, in a scene from *Ainori*, as one of the men proposes, the audience learns that the couple has become lovers and plan to return to Japan. To underscore the young man’s steamy proposal, his words were subtitled in full and in a manner suggesting the heated prose of a romance novel.

In such reality shows, subtitling functions as a driving force, pushing the development of the overall narrative line, thus demonstrating many of the characteristics of “classic realist narrative” as articulated by television theorist John Fisk.⁹ According to Fisk, the classic realist narrative tries to “construct a self-contained, internally consistent world which is real-

⁶ Aired on NTV 1992-1996.

⁷ In “Hanransuru jimaku bangumi no kōzai,” Sakamoto attributes this innovative use of subtitling to Kazuo Gomi, the first producer of the show.

⁸ Aired on CX 1999-present.

⁹ John Fisk, *Television Culture* (London: Routledge, 1987), pp. 130-131.

seeming.”¹⁰ Although, at least theoretically, reality shows are not scripted, many of the episodes of such series take on aspects of Fisk’s kind of classic realism due largely to elaborate post-production. Indeed, producers of reality shows construct rough story outlines with linear cause-and-effect progressions which bind the apparently chaotic reality segments together. In the post-production process of these shows, subtitling is added along with other sound and visual effects to, among other things, enhance the logic of the cause-effect flow of the narrative. In other words, subtitling, although written after the shoot, functions like a script.

For example, in the case of *Ainori* mentioned above, a specific event is presented as the cause for one cast member falling in love with another. In that episode, one of the men helps an orphan with his homework and the child starts crying with joy. In the next shot, one of the women gazes raptly, presumably at the boy and man.¹¹ Here, the subtitle and narration announce, “AT THIS MOMENT SHE REALIZED THAT HE IS HER MAN.” This sequence is a good example of how editing and subtitling can establish a clear cause-and-effect link between otherwise unrelated shots and/or sequences with a subtle, abstract, or obscure meaning.

It is interesting to note that even some Japanese prime-time television dramas use subtitling. Television drama, one might reasonably presume, is a genre that can stand on its own without the intervention of subtitling since the author, director, actors, and other members of the crew can plan and control the deployment of all production elements. Yet, a prime-time drama entitled *Antique* employed occasional subtitling to provide background on the setting and characters, and to give voice to the inner thoughts and emotions of the protagonists.¹² This, and the other example cited above, suggests that by the late-1990s, subtitling had become such a commonplace in Japanese television programming that it had become naturalized as a non-intrusive element in *Antique’s* otherwise scripted narrative style.

Discussion

The development of Japanese subtitling and the resulting shift in television programming formats in the 1990s seems to reflect some of the significant changes in the Japanese economy as well as in broadcasting

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 130.

¹¹ Aired in September 2002.

¹² Aired on CX in fall 2001.

technology. The collapse of the stock market and real estate bubbles of the early-1990s caused increased pressure on the Japanese television industry to be more cost conscious and competitive. The 1990s also saw significant increases in satellite broadcasting subscriptions, a recent distribution service that had started in the 1980s. By 2000, more than ten million households in Japan had satellite subscription services.¹³ This meant that viewers had considerably more channels from which to choose, thus increasing competition among television program providers. The combination of these conditions resulted in a need for television producers to originate more and cheaper program ideas that would attract and hold increasingly more selective and fickle viewers.

The public's embrace of reality shows that could be shot mainly on location and use non-professional talent became increasingly attractive to producers. As a result, the substantially more costly television dramas which required expensive talent (i.e., actors, directors, and writers) and elaborate studio sets started to decline in number and popularity.¹⁴ Ultimately, it was subtitling that made it possible for non-professionals with unorthodox speech to be cast in prime-time programs. Subtitling also enabled less than perfect, on location synchronized sound sequences to be used. At the same time, subtitling enhanced the shorter and more briskly paced segments of talk and quiz shows by emphasizing funny lines and by supplementing information that was either vague or simply not present in the original footage. Also, this significantly helped accommodate television audience's increasingly shortened attention spans. In sum, subtitling helped prepare for the emergence and establishment of new and cost effective programming forms.

These shifts coincided with extensive innovations in computer technology in television production, especially in the post-production processes of digitally-based editing and sound mixing, which were also introduced in the early-1990s. In fact, computer based non-linear editing had virtually replaced video recorder-based linear editing systems in television production facilities by the mid-1990s. Significantly, computer-

¹³ "Current State of Satellite Broadcasting" (<http://www.mainichi-msn.co.jp>).

¹⁴ Nishitani Marika cites the proliferation of television channels as the main cause of the decline of prime-time drama in her "Wakamono muke renzoku dorama no henka," *Suzuki kenkyūshitsu sotsugyō ronbun* (Thesis, 2002), pp. 13-15 (<http://pweb.sophia.ac.jp/~s-yuga/semithesissummary02.pdf>).

generated systems greatly sped up the process of adding subtitled words to the image. Other computer-generated special effects also proliferated and became widely disseminated among post-production facilities. Therefore, the rapid increase in the use of subtitling can also be understood as a consequence of the proliferation and integration of newly developed, digitally-based television production technologies.

Seen from another angle, the emergence of subtitling also marks a new style of entertainment in Japanese television. During the 1970s and 1980s, most of the prime-time dramas and comedy shows were dependent on the talents of experienced professionals. These performers presented carefully scripted narratives with flair and panache. One popular representative of the scripted approach was the *owarai būmu*, or comedy boom, of the 1980s.¹⁵ The two popular comedic styles of the period, which are still performed today, were stand-up comedy duos (*manzai*) and comedy skits (*konto*). *Manzai* duos consist of an intellectually challenged but funny person (*boke*) and a straight man (*tsukkomi*). The humor is based largely on the funny lines and situations deriving from the clash between the *boke*'s and *tsukkomi*'s contrasting personalities. The successful *manzai* presentation depended on well-written scripts, mastery of the art of comedic delivery and timing, and the skillful use of body language. In contrast, *konto* provokes laughs from a slapstick-based style of physical humor, rather than from the wordplay at the heart of *manzai*. *Konto*'s skit comedians, to succeed, exemplified a masterful performance style requiring humorous movements, poignant expressions, and the deployment of costumes carefully designed to appear bulky. *Manzai* and *konto* both require careful planning and elaborate rehearsals. Once prepared, there is little production or post-production work except for crediting the performers and crew.

Although not relying on elaborate production values, the *manzai* and *konto* styles of entertainment in the 1980s were costly largely because of hefty talent fees. Also, the long-term success of these programs was largely dependent on the star power of individual performers and the ability of those stars to pre-plan and perform their complex routines without extensive rehearsals or re-takes. Because each segment of the program was highly planned, there was little room for modifying or improving a show in

¹⁵ One of the most popular shows of *owarai būmu* was titled *Oretachi hyōkinzoku* (We Are the Funny Tribe), which aired on CX from 1981 to 1989. The show featured *manzai* duos such as Kitano Takeshi's "Two Beat."

post-production once the performance had been taped. Finally, this fixed form of entertainment did not have a long television shelf life. Once aired on national television, the specific performance lost its aura of newness or novelty value. By the end of the 1980s, the popularity of scripted comedy shows rapidly waned.¹⁶

Compared to scripted comedies and dramas, unscripted formats such as variety talk shows and reality shows offer producers greater flexibility at lower costs. All that is needed for a new project is a carefully planned concept. Once the concept is set, it can be repeated with different casts or settings (as with the successful U.S. reality series *Survivor*). These shows, of course, do not require professional performers or extensive rehearsing. Thus, non-professionals with less than perfect speech can be cast in main roles. Their comments and conversations do not even have to make sense, since subtitling and editing can shape the on location footage for continuity as well as humor. In this sense, the unedited tape is “raw material to be mined and reworked.”¹⁷ Mastery of the art of subtitling along with sensitive editing is central to the genre’s success. Not including dramas and newscasts, programs using subtitled segments comprise more than one-third of prime-time programming on Japanese commercial television. Further affirmation of the success of Japanese reality television is the fact that these shows frequently rank among Japan’s top ten in terms of ratings.

Subtitled television shows can be seen as a new entertainment form significantly different from the dominant comedy forms of the 1980s, the *manzai* and *konto*. In *manzai*, humor is based on the give-and-take of spoken language, while with *konto* the humor is more visual or physical. In part, the difference is explained by the fact that the *manzai* form existed before television mainly in the forms of live performance and radio broadcast, while *konto* emerged after television became an established part of Japanese life.

It is significant to note that subtitled shows emerged in step with developments in computer technology. Much of the humor resulting from subtitles is based on a visual presentation of language, which it seems reasonable to suggest can be seen as a combination of the speech-centered *manzai* with the visual-centered *konto*. Television in the 1990s was no longer a medium that merely combines audio and visual. Thanks to

¹⁶ Sakamoto, “Hanransuru jimaku bangumi no kōzai,” p. 7.

¹⁷ J. T. Caldwell, *Televisuality: Style, Crisis, and Authority in American Television* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1995), p. 229.

advancements in computer technology, television today has acquired an additional channel of communication: on-screen written text.

Subtitling, now virtually omnipresent in Japanese television, also has problematic aspects. The Broadcasting Research Group reports that many viewers have become tired of what is perceived as an overuse of subtitling, especially in poorly produced programs.¹⁸ This team reveals that for many, subtitling without a well thought out strategy detracts from a show's quality. Moreover, subtitling adds yet one more stream of information to an already cluttered television image – and, therefore, television experience – in which viewers often feel a sense of sensory overload. A related complaint has to do with the redundancy of information doubled in speech and subtitling. Sakamoto Mamoru also criticizes the frequent incorrect use of kanji in subtitling. In sum, subtitling is no longer a sure bet in terms of producing high ratings.¹⁹

Some viewers have expressed concern about what they perceive as the declining quality of the performing arts, especially those including entertainers and comedians on Japanese television.²⁰ Since elaborate editing and special effects with subtitling can construct as well as heighten humor, there are viewers who feel that some entertainers no longer feel obliged to give top performances since their performances can be heightened in post-production. Other viewers accuse subtitling of over-determining content by making everything too clear and obvious.²¹ Accompanying this view is the sense that producers show disrespect for Japanese viewers by treating them in what is sometimes regarded as an infantile manner. J. T. Caldwell describes the contemporary trend of digitally packaged television as “stylistic exhibitionism,” where everything is excessive and over-determined with little space left for imagination.²² Since meanings are often excessively clear in subtitled segments, reading subtitles tends to leave little room for viewers to actively engage content by interpreting and making meaning for themselves. This, some contend, tends toward greater passivity among viewers. Compared to Stewart Hall's “active audience” fully

¹⁸ Broadcasting Research Group, Department of Art, Japan University, “Teroppu no seitai-gaku” [Ecology of Telop], *Galac* (April 2000): 7-13.

¹⁹ Sakamoto, “Hanransuru jimaku bangumi no kōzai,” p. 39.

²⁰ Broadcasting Research Group, “Teroppu no seitai-gaku,” p. 11.

²¹ Sakamoto, “Hanransuru jimaku bangumi no kōzai,” p. 39. Also see Kitada Akihiro, “Terebi no shisen to ura-riterashii,” pp. 42-47.

²² Caldwell, *Televisuality*, p. 5.

engaged in decoding media messages offered in a progressive manner, the passive audience's pleasure is limited.²³

While most media scholars are critical of excessive subtitling, Shiota Hideko points out more abstract and intangible effects of subtitling on Japanese viewers.²⁴ According to her, subtitled shows involve a compound system of information transmission. The content of a program is mediated not only by the television medium itself, but by the producers who are in charge of the post-production process. This two-tiered view of television invokes what Shiota calls "the observer's viewpoint" among television viewers.²⁵ She claims that if a viewer is successful in seeing the struggle or cooperation of the parties involved in the production of a subtitled segment (e.g., cast members, writers, directors, television network executives, among others), the viewing experience should be more profound and thus also more pleasurable. She suggests that a viewer who fails to achieve this observer's perspective tends to find subtitles excessive and boring.²⁶ At the same time, Shiota acknowledges that a compound communications system using subtitles (where contrasting messages "sent" and inflected by both producers and on-camera talents) creates a "shared impression" on top of "shared knowledge."²⁷ Therefore, sophisticated subtitling could potentially yield an emotional response as rich as that produced by reading poetry. In this sense, subtitling could be seen as a kind of contemporary aesthetic related to postmodernism.

Conclusion

In spite of their inherent problems, subtitled shows have become a staple of Japanese television. Today's young people who grew up watching subtitled shows admit that they cannot imagine variety shows without subtitles flying about the screen.²⁸ If subtitled shows continue to thrive, they might eventually become another traditional aspect of Japanese television. But, with further technological innovations, subtitling could even become

²³ Stewart Hall, "Encoding/Decoding," *Culture, Media, Language* (London: Hutchinson, 1980), pp. 128-139.

²⁴ Shiota Hideko, "Moji teroppu to suiron moderu," *Hyōgen kenkyū* 74 (2001): 49-55.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55.

²⁸ Broadcasting Research Group, "Teroppu no seitai-gaku," p. 11.

obsolete. In Japan, digital broadcasting started in December 2003. It will be interesting to see how the high resolution images and high quality sounds of digital broadcasting will further transform the nature of Japanese television in general, and the practice of subtitling in particular.

MEANING AND REPRESENTATION OF TRADITIONAL CRAFT: THE CASE FOR A LOCAL JAPANESE LACQUERWARE¹

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Introduction

Together with the Tsugaru dialect, Tsugaru *shamisen* music, and Tsugaru *kogin* stitching, Tsugaru lacquerware is an important part of the representation of the Tsugaru District of Aomori Prefecture, Japan.² In addition to the local connection by place-name designation, Tsugaru *nuri*, as the lacquerware is known, is a commodity both commonplace, and highly valued within Tsugaru. As will be detailed in this paper, Tsugaru *nuri* can be found in the vast majority of households in the Tsugaru District in one form or another, even if nothing more than a pair of lacquered chopsticks. It is also highly regarded as a gift object, an act of great social importance in Japan, and can be purchased at a number of Tsugaru *nuri* specialty shops in Hirosaki City, the principal city of the Tsugaru District, as well as in area department stores throughout the prefecture. Tsugaru *nuri* is also an important tourist commodity, cast as the primary traditional craft of Tsugaru at most tourist centers and shops throughout the area.³ As such,

¹ This research reflects a continuation of research reported on in the author's chapters "Tradition and Modernity in Tsugaru Nuri Lacquerware: Perspectives of Preservation and Promotion, Production and Consumption," in Christopher S. Thompson and John W. Traphagen, eds., *Wearing Cultural Styles in Japan: Concepts of Tradition and Modernity in Practice* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2006), pp. 234-263; and "Tsugaru Nuri Lacquerware: Nation-State Patronage and the Representation of a Local Craft" in Nanyan Guo, ed., *Tsugaru: Regional Identity on Japan's Northern Periphery* (Dunedin, New Zealand: Otago University Press, 2005), pp. 99-119.

² The Tsugaru District comprises the western half of Aomori Prefecture, the northernmost prefecture of Honshu, Japan. These are examples of place-designated indexing of Tsugaru: a local dialect (Tsugaru *ben*), a traditional and highly distinctive form of *shamisen* playing and musical style (Tsugaru *shamisen*), and a particular stitched pattern (Tsugaru *kogin*).

³ Examples of advertising will be referred to in this paper; inclusion of Tsugaru *nuri* lacquerware in prefectural and municipal brochures is, for the

Tsugaru nuri is an important presence in both the everyday lifestyle and the socio-cultural consciousness of Tsugaru residents, as well as having important potential in the economic vitality of the Tsugaru District and Aomori Prefecture as a whole.

In order to contextualize this multi-dimensional character of the lacquerware in its contemporary setting, this paper examines the varied meanings and representations which have characterized Tsugaru nuri over its history. After briefly outlining the historical background of Japanese lacquerware as a whole in terms of meaning and representation, this examination focuses on how the meanings ascribed to Tsugaru nuri have evolved over its 300-plus year history – first from status symbol by Edo-period (1600-1868) feudal elites to a representative traditional Japanese craft by modern-day administrations both national and local, and ultimately to an expensive yet highly-valued local commodity for the area and the prefecture. This paper illustrates how various representations have accompanied this historical arc, from the secretive *te-ita* hand samples of Edo to a legally designated traditional craft in the 1970s, and now to a lacquerware being reinvented by the local lacquer crafters and rediscovered by the people of Tsugaru. The paper closes by noting how the contemporary representations of Tsugaru nuri lacquerware, focusing on a human interest orientation and reflecting an educational/experiential orientation, point to new considerations of the common frameworks of localism and the attributes of craft, together with traditional status signification and touristic commoditization.

Research on crafts, both in general and in Japan, is extensive, yielding diverse frameworks and underlying a number of meaningful interpretations of contemporary socio-cultural phenomena. Noris Ioannou, in prefacing his edited work *Craft in Society: An Anthology of Perspectives*, noted that the art versus craft debate that accompanied serious study of crafts in the past has given way to an integration of approaches which includes the historical, cultural/anthropological, socio-political, socio-economic, and philosophical.⁴ The approach adopted here is thus multi-

most part, a given – for web-based examples of such portrayals see www.pref.aomori.jp/tour/bussan/bus_06e.html, www.city.hirosaki.aomori.jp/kankou/tewaza/tewasa/html, and www.city.hirosaki.aomori.jp/gaiyou/yutaka/jiba-e.html.

⁴ Noris Ioannou, *Craft in Society: An Anthology of Perspectives* (South Freemantle, Australia: Freemantle Arts Centre Press, 1992), pp. 11-45.

dimensional, grounded first and foremost in examination of the history and contemporary reality of the lacquerware itself. As outlined by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss, grounded research involves first, the development of broad categories which organize the examination, second, the identification of specific cases which demonstrate the relevance of the categories, and third, the development of generalizable analytical frameworks.⁵ For the research herein, these are seen in terms of the historical progression of evolving meaning for the lacquerware, the accordant representations that accompany this evolving meaning, and what this contributes to heretofore developed theoretical frameworks.

In that this paper focuses on Japanese lacquerware, which is relatively unexamined as a Japanese craft, and does so in a manner that covers a broad historical expanse up to the present using varied methods based principally on a highly grounded approach, the paper is offered as a “position piece,” a starting point for examining and framing meaning and representation found in the social context of traditional crafts. Further contextualizing the paper is its use of a specific local case for the Tsugaru District of Aomori Prefecture, significant in light of David Torsello’s reference to the scarcity of social scientific literature focusing on both the Tohoku Region of Japan in general and Aomori Prefecture specifically.⁶

The Historical Background of Japanese Lacquerware

Lacquer sap had been used in Japan in the Prehistoric Period, evidenced in the numerous findings of lacquer use in artifacts from Jōmon (ca 10,000 BCE – ca 300 BCE) archaeological sites, several of which are located in Aomori Prefecture. It was, however, with the introduction of Buddhism in the middle of the sixth century that lacquerware use in a more contemporary sense had been identified, primarily in the appurtenances like sutra boxes and altar bases that accompanied Buddhist practices. The ensuing history of lacquerware in Japan followed the broadest political and cultural trends of Japanese history, which, to a degree, highlight the meanings of the lacquerware throughout this history. While various works have included descriptions of specific pieces of lacquerware, detailing the

⁵ Barney G. Glaser and Anselm Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (Chicago: Aldine Transaction, 1967).

⁶ Davide Torsello, “The Paths to Difference: Social and Economic Choices in Three Post-war Agrarian Settlements of North-Eastern Japan,” *Social Science Journal Japan* 5/1 (2002): 37-53.

artisan and the technique, Onishi Nagatoshi, Beatrix von Rague, and Ann Yonemura provide detailed accounts of the historical development of Japanese lacquerware overall, with ample references to how this development was influenced by political, sociological and cultural events of the time. Much of the historical summary which follows is based on their works.⁷

The lacquerware of the Heian period (794-1185), one of the earliest periods with an extensive array of lacquered goods, reveals the extent to which early consumption was a function of the aristocracy of the Kyoto Court, seen in demand for religion-related lacquerware, as well as a wide variety of utensils, writing boxes, bookshelves, chests and tables, comb boxes and toilet cases, lamp and mirror stands, and sword scabbards and saddles. While this early consumption had a clear religious function, it was also an indicator of social status. The transition from the Heian to the Kamakura era (1185-1333) ushered in a 250-year period of domestic war, as the two lines of the Japanese Imperial House engaged in a struggle for succession. While these courts continued to foster and patronize the arts, including lacquerware, up to the beginning of the Muromachi era (1333-1568), the long wars of succession left them so financially impoverished that they no longer had the means to support artistic undertakings of any kind. With the power of the Imperial Court decentralized at the end of the era of Civil Wars, the large *daimyō*, feudal clans situated throughout Japan, invited the now-impoverished artisans to their provincial seats. In those places that were spared the ravages of war there arose localized centers of

⁷ Japanese lacquerware is well-described as a traditional craft and the specifics of particular pieces and artisans are available; see for example Japan Craft Forum, *Japanese Crafts* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1996); Rupert Faulkner, *Japanese Studio Crafts: Tradition and the Avant-garde* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995); and Masami Shiraishi, *Rainbows and Shimmering Bridges: Contemporary Japanese Lacquerware* (New York: Japan Society, Inc., 1996). Examinations of lacquerware which include consideration of the social context, historical or contemporary, include Onishi Nagatoshi, *Urushi: Uruwashi no Ajia* [Urushi: Elegant Asia] (Tokyo: Dai-Nippon insatsu, 1995); Beatrix von Rague, *A History of Japanese Lacquerwork* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976); and Ann Yonemura, *Japanese Lacquer* (Washington D.C.: Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, 1979), as will be detailed herein.

culture, which in many cases fostered production and development of lacquerware, most notably in Yamaguchi, the then-seat of the Ouchi clan, Odawara, seat of the Hojo clan, and the port city of Sakai, an independent area of Osaka. In the Momoyama period (1568-1600), a growing consciousness of the relationship between the function of an object and its decorative form on the part of the elite patrons ushered in the notion of functional beauty. This would result in two tiers of production of lacquerworks, one which was of high decorative quality and another of practical items for everyday use. A class barrier had thus been broken; lacquerware was no longer just beautifully decorated lacquer objects primarily used for votive offerings to temples or status symbols for nobility, but also included simply-styled functional utensils for everyday use by the middle classes as well.

The Edo period (1600-1868) provided a backdrop for great development in Japanese lacquerware directed by both central and local systems of patronage – in this case, an act of sponsorship of the works for a specific form of private consumption. The Tokugawa shogun and his successors, after establishing centralized power, summoned numerous lacquer artists to their court in Edo and provided them with handsome commissions for the production of original lacquerware pieces. The Edo period also saw the institution of the *sankin-kōtai* system, the stipulation that *daimyō*, the provincial feudal leaders, spend alternate years in the Edo capital and at their provincial estates, providing the means for lacquerware to further prosper in outlying areas. While ostensibly a means of keeping the *daimyō* under control while imposing a costly standard of living, the *sankin-kōtai* system also allowed for lacquerware pieces, as well as a variety of innovative patterns and the techniques to create them, to find their way to the regional power centers. This process ultimately provided the social mechanism for emergence of the *kawari-nuri*, or “changed lacquer techniques,” the highly localized lacquering techniques which developed in the provinces under the patronage of the local feudal families and led to the emergence of distinct local lacquerwares. The chief concern of the lacquer masters of this period was to satisfy the needs of the feudal elites for ceremonial showpieces. Innovation of style, often a function of the use of local materials and development of specific lacquering techniques, was key to the success of the lacquer master. One example of this can be found in the sword scabbard and saddles used by the shogunate and local *daimyō*, with an estimated three hundred types of *saya-nuri* (sword-scabbard-lacquering) developed over the Edo period. The major provincial lacquers

which emerged under the patronage of the *daimyō* and still exist today include Wajima nuri (Ishikawa Prefecture), Aizu nuri (Fukushima Prefecture), Wakasa nuri (Fukui Prefecture), and Tsugaru nuri (Aomori Prefecture).

In 1867, the last Tokugawa shogun was forced to resign his power, and so began the Meiji period (1868-1912), bringing fundamental changes in the power structure of the nation-state and the meaning of lacquerware. The *daimyō* lost their existing sources of revenue, and thus their capacity for patronage. The lacquer masters, with their principal means of financial support gone, now had to adapt to living off the sales of their work. This was a difficult transition, as the time investment for producing even relatively ordinary lacquerware was substantial, yet the return on such an investment of time was tenuous. However, from the late 1880s, efforts aimed at institutionalization of the lacquer industry were undertaken. The Tokyo Art School (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō) was founded in 1888, and included a lacquer training division. The Nihon Shikki-kai [Japan Lacquer Association] was established in 1889, and in 1890, the Emperor Meiji (1852-1912) convened the Imperial Academy of Art, an art advisory council which included a representative for lacquerware, signaling support by Japan's most exalted personage. The creation of the National Museums in Tokyo (proposed 1871; completed 1882), Kyoto (founded 1889), and Nara (founded 1889) helped foster public interest in the native arts of Japan, including lacquerware. By the end of the Meiji period, the patronage of the feudal elites had been replaced by the institutionalized support of educational institutions, a lacquer association, and various museums. These institutions provided legitimacy and some measure of support for Japanese lacquerware in this period of transition.

In the mid-1920s, during the early years of the Showa period (1926-1989), Yanagi Muneyoshi's (1889-1961) expression of the notion and meaning of Japanese folk crafts brought about a revival of interest in Japanese folk art, sparking awareness of the beauty and importance of local lacquerwares among the general public. In 1927, lacquerwork was included for the first time in the annual government-sponsored art exhibition, the Teiten (later changed to Nitten). In 1928, the Industrial Arts Institute (Sangyō Kōgei Shiken-jō), a technological research institute, was founded, with lacquerware the special province of the Tohoku Institute located in the northern part of Honshu. In response to the overwhelming national focus on industry and mechanization that accompanied the period of high economic growth in the decades following World War II, the Japanese government

took measures to protect Japanese arts and crafts. Under the provisions of a 1951 legislative act, the National Commission for the Protection of Cultural Properties (Bunkazai Hogo Iinkai) was established in 1954. In 1975, the Association for the Promotion of Traditional Craft Industries was established by what is now the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, as a means of promoting traditional crafts at a grass-roots level.⁸

The Meanings and Representations of Tsugaru Nuri

As Yonemura pointed out, Japanese lacquerware was, and is, as much art as craft, “a living art in contemporary Japan, providing functional bowls, trays, and containers of familiar traditional shapes for daily use as well as exquisitely formed and decorated objects which are unique works of art.”⁹ The artistic lustre and functional durability of Japanese lacquerware was, and is, a combinative function of the lacquer and the lacquering technique. The lacquer, *urushi* in Japanese, is applied in multiple layers, each a thin coating which is allowed to harden before the application of the next layer. It is in these many layers of lacquer that the beauty and the value of the lacquerware piece emerge. There are any number of local varieties of lacquerware found throughout Japan, and currently twenty-two traditional lacquerwares designated by the Association for the Promotion of Traditional Craft Industries.¹⁰ These regional lacquerwares are differentiated primarily on the basis of some aspect of regional representativeness: an aesthetic element such as a particular motif, pattern or color scheme; the application of some specific lacquering technique developed by the lacquerers in that locale; or use of a particular local variety of wood as the base or some local material in the lacquering process. This combination of material, technique, and motif is important in producing both a local meaning, a connection with the lacquerware among local residents, as well as a regional identity, wherein the lacquerware serves to represent the place. The lacquerwares are not just figuratively

⁸ See the Association for the Promotion of Traditional Craft Industries [Zaidan hōjin: dentōteki kōgeihin sangyō shinkō kyōkai] website at www.kougei.or.jp.

⁹ Yonemura, *Japanese Lacquer*, p. v.

¹⁰ The Association for the Promotion of Traditional Craft Industries' website (see Note 8) lists twenty-two such regional lacquerwares on its English-language page for lacquerware at www.kougei.or.jp/english/lacquer.html.

representative of the place of origin, but take on the characteristics of the place in a very literal sense as a tangible part of the place, as well.

Summarizing Satō Takeji, Tsugaru nuri is the joining together of wooden base forms with lacquer sap in what were once highly secretive, and are now still little-known techniques.¹¹ Through a labor-intensive and time-consuming process of lacquering and polishing, these techniques result in lacquered pieces with intricate and exquisitely detailed surface patterns and astonishing longevity. In that respect, Tsugaru nuri differs little from other regional lacquerwares. From the standpoint of a designated traditional craft, as established by the Association for the Promotion of Traditional Craft Industries, the meaning of Tsugaru nuri, like other lacquerwares, emerges through: (1) being used mainly in everyday life; (2) being primarily manufactured by hand; (3) being manufactured using traditional techniques; (4) being made with materials which have been traditionally employed; and (5) being an industry of regional nature.¹² The artistic and complex character of the four designated patterns of Tsugaru nuri are, however, distinct from other regional lacquerwares, emerging through specific techniques in applying the multiple applications – as many as forty for a single piece of Tsugaru nuri – of base lacquers, then pattern lacquers, and finally surface lacquers. The final patterns are dictated by the pattern lacquer layers, which after being covered by the colored surface layer lacquers, are brought out with sanding and polishing, a lengthy process which works through the overlying surface lacquer, revealing the pattern that lies underneath. These techniques and patterns are reflected in the naming of the four contemporary lacquerware styles. *Kara-nuri*, written with the character meaning Chinese, foreign, or, most likely applied to the

¹¹ Satō Takeji, *Tsugaru nuri* (Hirosaki: Tsugaru shobo, 1977); see also Satō Takeji and Hashimoto Yoshiro, *Tsugaru nuri shikki* [Tsugaru Nuri Lacquerware] (Aomori: Asahi insatsu, 1987).

¹² See the Association for the Promotion of Traditional Crafts Industries' homepage at www.kougei.or.jp/english/promotion.html. See also Takashina Seiya and Takazawa Miyuki, “Dentōteki kōgeihin sangyō no shinkō” [Promotion of Traditional Crafts Industries], *Refurensu: kokuritsu kokaizushokan chosa – rippo – kosa – kyoku* [National Government Library Legislation Examination Bureau], 51/2 (2001): 121-129; and Miwa Ryusaku, “Tokushu: dentōteki kōgeihin no shinkō to mirai e no keishō” [Special: Succeeding to the Future of Promotion of Traditional Crafts], *METI Chūgoku keizai sangyō-kyoku* [2001 Bulletin] 726 (2002): 20-32.

lacquerware as it emerged at the time, arabesque, and created with a specially designed spatula-like tool to apply the pattern lacquer which yields a colorfully specked pattern, is by far the most common Tsugaru nuri style. *Nanako-nuri*, written in either the phonetic hiragana syllabary or with the kanji character for fish repeated twice followed by the kanji for eggs, is made by spreading dried rapeseed on the surface of the wet pattern lacquer layer, which then resembles roe (hence the naming) and which produces in the final pattern minute circles covering the entire piece. *Monsha-nuri*, written using the characters for crest and lace or gauze, has a surface pattern that is just that, the appearance of lace created by application of burned rice husks to a layer of wet lacquer, which itself overlays a previously created pattern, all of which is then sanded through and polished. *Nishiki-nuri*, written in characters which mean brocade, has the most stylistically structured pattern of the Tsugaru nuri styles, consisting of combinations of specific techniques yielding a combined arabesque and fret pattern.

Status Symbol, Traditional Craft and Contemporary Commodity

As with other regional Japanese lacquerwares, the origins of Tsugaru nuri lie in the patronage-based quest for originality on the part of the local elites of the Edo period and the development of a local *kawari-nuri* as described above. Like other regional lacquerwares, following this origin, Tsugaru nuri also underwent local and national processes of institutionalization and eventually traditionalization.

After taking control of the region in 1589, the Tsugaru clan gained formal recognition by the Tokugawa government, and in 1610, began building a castle in what was to become Hirosaki City. Following the practice of the time, the Tsugaru Lord sponsored craftsmen from the southern castle towns of Kyoto and Osaka, among them carpenters, stoneworkers, blacksmiths, and lacquer masters, to lead in the construction. Following completion of the castle, these lacquer craftsmen, in responding to the demand for original works of lacquerware on the part of the local elites, established a local lacquer industry – what would become Tsugaru nuri. Numerous entries in the feudal clan diaries show the practice of patronage for these lacquer artisans, most notably in the issuing of invitations and provision of salaries of rice and property offered to lacquer masters.¹³ Clearly the meaning of Tsugaru nuri for these feudal elites was status, a status purchased with patronage. Proof of the extent of this

¹³ Mochizuki Yoshio, *Tsugaru nuri* (Tokyo: Rikogakusha, 2000), p. 18.

patronage and the variation in lacquer designs in the multitude of local *kawari-nuri* styles produced in the Tsugaru District can be seen in the 514 *te-ita*, literally hand-boards, discovered recently by descendants of the Tsugaru family.¹⁴ The hand-sized *te-ita* (hence the term) are lacquered in what would have been either the lacquer crafter's best and most original style or a color and pattern scheme that the crafter thought would be pleasing to a particular potential patron.

With the abolition of the Tokugawa government bringing the end of local clan control and the associated patronage, Tsugaru nuri was, like all Japanese lacquerware at the time, forced to accommodate a more market-oriented approach. However, an example of the initial institutionalization of Tsugaru nuri was the inclusion of the lacquerware in Meiji-period government attempts at showcasing Japanese crafts on a global stage, as Tsugaru-produced lacquerware was shown at the Vienna International Exhibition of 1873, and thereafter at Philadelphia in 1875, and Paris in 1878. It was for these events that the term "Tsugaru nuri" was coined, in order to distinguish it from other regional varieties of Japanese lacquerware. Throughout the Edo period, what would come to be called Tsugaru nuri lacquerware was in fact referred to with a variety of other terms, in most cases reflecting combinations of craftsman (*Tsugaru-kozaki-nuri*), local place-name (*Hirosaki-nuri*), technique (*hineri-nuri*, literally twisted lacquer), and pattern (*shimofuri-nuri*, literally salt and pepper lacquer).¹⁵ The Vienna International Exhibition represented the first established reference to the lacquerware produced in the Tsugaru District using a regional reference, highlighting a meaning for the lacquerware as a craft representative of Japan on the international stage and Tsugaru on the national stage. It also signaled the start of a process of standardization of Tsugaru nuri, as representative patterns of what was to be referred to as Tsugaru nuri had to be established and maintained.

As shown in Table 1, production of Tsugaru nuri from this period

¹⁴ As reported in both of the local Aomori and Tsugaru newspapers, the prefecture-wide *Tōnippo* and the Tsugaru-based *Mutsu shinpo* (both April 4, 2003). Property of Hirosaki City, the *te-ita* have been designated cultural artifacts and are being analyzed by a committee of leading local Tsugaru nuri artisans.

¹⁵ Satō Takeji, "Tsugaru urushi kōhin no koshō ni tsuite" [Regarding the Naming of Tsugaru Lacquerware Goods], *Shi-shi Hirosaki* 10 (2001): 122-133.

on reflected both events on a national and global scale and increasing institutionalization of the production of the lacquerware. Modest good fortune and the establishment of a production association in 1907 were followed by setback with the start of World War I, after which, the economic depression which occurred in the late 1920s and the national concentration toward World War II adversely affected lacquerware production. The post-war period from 1950 to 1980 saw a steady increase in the fortunes of Tsugaru nuri, as what had to that point been considered a luxury item was designated a product worthy of prefectural promotion in 1949 and, corresponding to Japan's period of high economic growth and increasing disposable incomes, became an item purchased in greater amounts by ordinary residents through the 1960s and 1970s. The suspension of imports of Chinese lacquerware products in 1958 represents an early government attempt to shelter the industry, while in 1975, Tsugaru nuri was designated a Traditional Craft Product by the Minister of Economy, Trade, and Industry, further establishing and solidifying the four techniques and accordant patterns as standards of the craft tradition. Post-1980 saw a slight downturn in production, most likely attributable to the increasing availability of reasonably-priced alternative goods of functional and stylistic character to accommodate the changes in the lifestyles and preferences that were taking place even among the rural Aomori residents, who still make up the primary market for Tsugaru nuri.

Table 1. Tsugaru Nuri Lacquerware Production 1880-present

Year	Prod (yen)	Major Events
1881	5,697	Tsugaru Nuri in the 2nd Domestic Promotion Exhibition ¹
1897	9,079	
1906	45,056	Tsugaru Nuri Production Association ² established (1907)
1914	26,000	Start of First World War
1921	140,337	Market in Tohoku and Hokkaido Districts enlarged
1928	129,600	Global depression; 55 lacquer enterprises – 98 employed

1931	91,400	Aomori Prefectural Industrial Experimental Station ³ established
1936	202,337	79 lacquer enterprises – 233 employed
1939	153,171	Second World War begins
1949	13,950,144	Tsugaru Nuri designated as Prefectural Small Business Promotion Product ⁴
1951	26,82,930	Tsugaru Nuri Exhibition opened in Tokyo
1958	203,100,000	Suspension of imports of Chinese lacquerwares
1973	1,535,000,000	Establishment of the Tsugaru Nuri Danchi (production complex)
1975	1,930,800,000	Designation of Tsugaru Nuri as Traditional Industrial Art Object ⁵
1980	2,186,690,000	Production peak in 1978: 2,397,695,000; 678 lacquer craftsmen identified
1995	1,840,000,000	449 lacquer craftsmen identified (1996)
2000	1,121,000,000	

Note: (1) Dainikai naikoku kangyō hakurankai; (2) Tsugaru nuri sangyō kumiai; (3) Aomoriken kōjō shikenba; (4) Aomoriken chūshō kigyō shinkō taisaku; (5) Dentō kōgeihin. Source: Mochizuki, *Tsugaru nuri*, pp. 35, 36 and 39.

As the focus of the meaning of Japanese lacquerware in general shifted from that of social status for the feudal elites to a high-priced commodity with the end of the feudal era, early post Edo-period institutionalized support can be seen in the establishment of various associations and museums in the Meiji period, culminating thereafter in the National Commission for the Protection of Cultural Properties and the Japanese Arts and Craft Association in 1954. For Tsugaru nuri, such institutionalization and support came with its inclusion in an international exhibition in 1873 and its subsequent designation as “Tsugaru nuri.” Local support came with the establishment of the Tsugaru Nuri Production Association in 1907 and the Prefectural Industrial Experimental Station in 1931 (which included a lacquerware research division), and with the lacquerware’s designation as a Prefectural Small Business Promotion Product in 1949.

However, to fully contextualize the transition from traditional craft to contemporary commodity, it is necessary to examine the Traditional Industrial Arts Products Promotion Plan: Tsugaru Nuri Lacquerware (Shinkō jigyō ni kakaru dentōteki kōgeihin: Tsugaru nuri), inclusion in which accompanied Tsugaru nuri gaining status as a Traditional Craft Product in 1975. This promotion program is underwritten by the national government under the Law for the Promotion of Craft Industries of 1974, with the First Stage of the Promotion Plan for Tsugaru nuri lacquerware undertaken during the period from 1976 to 1984, the Second Stage from 1996 to 2001, and the Third Stage now underway. The objectives and budgets of the First, Second and Third Stages are clearly identified in the respective Promotion Plan Activity Reports.¹⁶ There are nine principal areas of activities, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Principal Activity Areas in Promotion Plan Activity Plans

-
1. Activities related to securement and training of successors
 2. Activities related to maintenance and reform of techniques
 3. Activities related to the securement of raw materials
 4. Activities related to development of demand
 5. Activities related to improvement of working conditions
 6. Cooperative-based activities: securement of raw materials and sale of goods
 7. Provision of product information to consumers
 8. Activities associated with aged society
 9. Activities related to promotion with other Traditional Industrial Arts and Crafts
-

Source: Hirosaki City Commerce, Industry and Tourism Division, Promotion Plan for Tsugaru nuri Lacquerware, first and second Stage Promotion Plan Activity and Status Reports, third Stage Promotion Plan Proposal.

¹⁶ Copies of the reports for the three stages, first (Dai-ichiji shinkō keikaku ni okeru shinkō jigyō no jishi jōkyō hōkoku), second (Dai-niji shinkō keikaku ni okeru shinkō jigyō no jishi jōkyō hōkoku), and third (Shinkō keikaku nikakaru nitei shinseisho: dai-sanji shinkō keikaku), were obtained from the Hirosaki City Commerce, Industry and Tourism Division.

Examining the focus and progress of the promotion plan reveals how the meaning of Tsugaru nuri has changed from traditional craft to commodity over the period of the plan itself. The budget plans and actual expenditures for each of the Promotion Plan activity areas for the First and Second Stages as well as the budget plan for the Third Stage are given in Table 3. More important to note than the fact that the amount of funding budgeted and ultimately allocated has dropped over the three stages is the clear shift of focus in the provision of funds from the First Stage to the Second and Third Stages. In the First Stage, both plan and expenditures are, as shown in Table 3, concentrated on “cooperative activities” (activity area #6) and “improvement of working conditions” (activity area #5); combined, these two areas accounted for ninety-four percent of total budget expenditures.

Table 3. Promotion Plan Budgets and Expenditures

Activity Area	First Stage			Second Stage		
	Plan	Expend	Percent	Plan	Expend	Percent
1. Successor Training	2.9	1.4	63	2.9	3.7	63
2. Technique Maintenance/Reform	.1	.01	23	9.8	2.6	17
3. Securement of Raw Materials	3.9	2.7	93	10.9	2.8	17
4. Development of Demand	1.3	1.9	198	25.4	52.8	131
5. Working Conditions	35.4	17.8	67	18.0	0.0	0
6. Cooperative Activities	55.3	75.5	181	3.5	3.5	64
7. Product Quality	.6	.4	84	1.5	3.2	250
8. Aged Society Activities	.2	.1	51	4.4	7.4	107
9. Industrial Arts Crafts Industry	.3	.2	73	23.7	24.0	64
	(100)	(100)		(100)	(100)	(100)
Total Budget ('000 yen)	1,191,184	1,584,763	133/100	61,160	38,710	63/100

Table 3 (Continued)

	Third Stage Budget Proposed
1. Successor Training	6.5
2. Technique Maintenance/Reform	1.7
3. Securement of Raw Materials	3.0
4. Development of Demand	84.2
5. Working Conditions	0
6. Cooperative Activities	1.1
7. Product Quality	1.3
8. Aged Society Activities	0
9. Industrial Arts Crafts Industry	2.2
<hr/>	
Total Budget ('000 yen)	29,079

Note: Plan is budget plan, Expend is budget expenditures, and Percent is expenditure as percent of budget plan. Source: Hirosaki City Commerce, Industry and Tourism Division, Promotion Plan for Tsugaru nuri lacquerware, first and second Stage Promotion Plan Activity and Status Reports, third Stage Promotion Plan Proposal.

In the Second Stage, the scope of the plan was much broader, prioritizing “development of demand,” followed by “activities for promotion of Traditional Industrial Arts Crafts Industry,” “working conditions,” “provision of raw materials” and “maintenance of technique.” However, expenditures ultimately focused on “development of demand” (activity area #4) which comprised over half of expenditures, and “promotion of Crafts Industry” (#9) which comprised another quarter, together accounting for seventy-seven percent of total budget expenditures. In the budget plan for the Third Stage, the focus is further concentrated, focusing almost exclusively on “development of demand” (#4), set to comprise eighty-four percent of the budget. Clearly the focus of the activities prioritized in the plan has shifted from those directed toward improving the local infrastructure and productive capability of the Tsugaru

nuri lacquerware industry itself to those directed toward the national market potential of the lacquerware through increasing consumer demand for Tsugaru nuri. The meaning of lacquerware as promoted through the Promotion Plan has shifted from that of a local traditional craft in need of industry reform and stabilization to that of a Japanese traditional craft worthy of recognition on a national level, yet requiring state-supported efforts to stimulate consumer demand.

Contemporary Meanings Reflected in Consumption and Media Representation

Investigations on the consumption of Tsugaru nuri undertaken in 1989 and 1993 reveal a variety of contemporary meanings for the lacquerware, some related to the craft itself with others related more to aspects of the consumption of the lacquerware.¹⁷ The 1989 report shows that ninety percent of prefectural respondents indicated having Tsugaru nuri. Contextualizing this level of possession, however, is a response showing that over eighty percent of these prefectural respondents have received Tsugaru nuri in some form as a gift, with just under fifty percent indicating having purchased Tsugaru nuri for themselves. The report shows that Tsugaru nuri is seen as expensive by a majority of local consumers, as well as being a high quality item having pleasing coloration, design, and an attractive form. When purchasing Tsugaru nuri, nearly sixty percent indicated that the coloration and design were significant factors, with a little over one-third citing the presumably negative aspect of price.¹⁸

¹⁷ The most complete data on Tsugaru nuri are found in the *1989 Hirosaki City Regional Industries Conditions Investigation Report*, *1993 Tsugaru Nuri Production Investigation Report* and the *Aomori Prefecture Traditional Craft Industries Promotion Plan "Development of Demand" Activity Report (1998)*. Sponsored by the Hirosaki City Chamber of Commerce, the 1989 report is based on responses of 128 lacquer craftworkers. The 1993 report, undertaken by the Aomori Prefecture Economic Affairs Bureau, the Hirosaki City Chamber of Commerce, and the Prefectural Industrial Experimental Station, is based on responses by 115 lacquerware enterprise respondents, 24 lacquerware sales enterprises within Aomori Prefecture and 61 outside, as well as the 120 participating consumers within the prefecture and 113 from outside.

¹⁸ As for the exact responses: Tsugaru nuri as expensive (expensive: 71%; ordinary: 25%; inexpensive: 4%); as a high quality item (high quality: 52%;

The 1993 report cites a national survey by the Association for the Promotion of Traditional Crafts Industries that shows Tsugaru nuri is recognized nationally by just over thirty percent of respondents, well behind the other main regional lacquerware, Wajima nuri (Ishikawa Prefecture), which had near universal recognition (95%), and Aizu nuri (Fukushima Prefecture (67%). Within the Hokkaido-Tohoku regional block, however, Tsugaru nuri was recognized by nearly three-quarters of respondents, still behind Wajima nuri but equal to Aizu nuri. The report shows that for respondents from outside Aomori Prefecture, the price of the lacquerware is less of a concern than for prefectural buyers, as less than half considered Tsugaru nuri to be expensive and price was cited as a factor in purchases by fewer than ten percent. The coloration, pattern, and form are seen for the most part as ordinary by the tourist respondents, but, together with references to the Tsugaru nuri brand and the quality of Tsugaru nuri, these were viewed as important considerations in making purchases.¹⁹

Perhaps more revealing were the free responses on Tsugaru nuri included in the 1993 survey, which, as was the case above, revealed both positive and negative sentiments. Respondents cited the “high quality” and the “high value” of Tsugaru nuri, the “specialized skill” of the lacquer craftsman in creating a “special good,” the “traditional and historical value” of a lacquerware which was “representative” of the area, the “strength” of the lacquerware, and its “calming influence.” One respondent opined that lacquerers should make less Tsugaru nuri and charge more for each piece. However, responses also alluded to the fact that the overall uniformity of the designs made each piece “unoriginal,” the darkness of the coloration was “depressing,” and the fact that Tsugaru nuri was “too expensive,” doesn’t match a “modern lifestyle,” and lacks a “modern feel.”

The meanings ascribed to Tsugaru nuri are also revealed in contemporary media representations, where the lacquerware is contextualized on the basis of its history, its local presence, and its human interest value, while also oriented toward the product itself, for which there

ordinary: 44%; inferior: 4%); as having pleasing coloration and design (good: 50%; ordinary: 45%; bad: 5%); and as having attractive form (good: 32%; ordinary: 58%; bad: 10%). Respondents indicated a focus on the following when purchasing Tsugaru nuri: pattern and color (56%); price (36%); quality of the piece (4%); lacquering skill and technique (2%); and form (2%).

¹⁹ *1993 Tsugaru Nuri Production Investigation Report.*

is equal contextualization of elements of tradition and modernity. This examination of media representation is guided by the work of Martin Bauer and George Gaskell on the notion and practice of social representation, which is based on an analysis of the following components:

- (1) the typified process of communicating the contents – the diffusion, propagation, and propaganda of the contents;
- (2) the contents of the communication itself – the objectification in images and metaphors, which yield anchors in naming and classification;
- (3) the consequences of the communication – the opinions, attitudes, and stereotypes that result from the communication; and
- (4) the eventual social segmentation that results – the functional referencing and carrier systems that emerge.²⁰

This examination of media representation of Tsugaru nuri lacquerware is based on two separate analyses of newspaper articles related to Tsugaru nuri as carried in a local Tsugaru and a prefectural-level newspaper (the *Mutsu shinpo* and the *Tōnippo*, respectively), one analysis is an overview of the thematic orientation (n=43) and the other an analysis of a traditional versus modern orientation in the representation (n=27), both as assessed by native Japanese speakers and readers. In the two examinations, native Japanese speakers were given instructions and then asked to provide evaluations as to the thematic orientation in the former and the traditional versus modern orientation in the latter.

As shown in Table 4, while descriptions of new products, information on events including exhibitions and product fairs, and historical references were common elements of the media representations of Tsugaru lacquerware, representation focusing on a human interest element and educational and experiential activity associated with the lacquerware were also evident.

²⁰ Martin Bauer and George Gaskell, “Towards a Paradigm for Research on Social Representations,” *Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior* 29/2 (1999): 163-186.

Table 4. Social Representation of Tsugaru Nuri in the Media

focus on general activity	18	focus on events	14
<i>education/experiential</i>	7	local (exhibitions)	12
lacquerware piece designation . . .	3	national/international	2
government policy action	3	focus on history	11
organization/association activity . .	5	<i>focus on human interest</i>	10
focus on product and production . .	15	crafter profile	4
new products	10	award report	4
aspects of production	5	Tsugaru nuri essay contest	2
		Newspaper in Education columns	5
		total =	78

Note: Figure is number of articles; articles viewed=43; multiple coding (1.8 codings/article)

Examples of the human interest orientation can be seen in lacquerware artisan profiles, as in an article headlined “Relating the Warmth of Tsugaru nuri – This Woman’s Job” (August 2, 1999, *Tōnippo*) and “Widening the World of Tsugaru nuri with a Feeling of Commonality” (February 3, 2002 in a *Mutsu shinpo* column titled “Form of the Modern Family”), both of which introduce local lacquerware artisans.²¹ Examples of the educational aspect to the media representation of Tsugaru nuri can be found in the three-times per month “Newspaper in Education” columns in *Mutsu shinpo*, which, in six columns over a two-year period, focused exclusively on Tsugaru nuri lacquerware.²² The contents of these columns focused on the “skill and technique of the Tsugaru nuri artisan” (two columns), the connection of Jōmon period lacquer and contemporary Tsugaru nuri (weak as it is), two columns highlighting the use of Tsugaru nuri lacquering techniques and patterns in the medals awarded at the 2002 Asian Winter Games held in Aomori Prefecture, and finally, a column describing the Edo, Meiji, and Taisho period history of Tsugaru nuri lacquerware. The experiential representation can be seen in the following

²¹ Translation of article headlines by author.

²² For a full consideration on Newspaper in Education in rural Japan, see Anthony Rausch, “Newspaper in Education in Rural Japan: Education and Local Identity Creation – The Practice of Locally Scholastic NIE,” *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication* 14/2 (2004): 223-244.

two examples: “Hirosaki Junior High School Students Experience Making Tsugaru nuri” (January 28, 2000, *Tōnippo*) and “Aomori Traditional Craft Exhibition – Hands-on Classroom Opened” (November 30, 2002, *Mutsu shinpo*). A visit to a Tsugaru nuri specialty shop confirms this educational focus on a broader as well as “point-of-sale” basis, as detailed explanations accompanying lacquerware displays are now standard. Likewise, lacquer crafters working on pieces are now featured in the largest tourist center of Hirosaki City, with pieces in need of a final buffing available for tourists to purchase, complete, and take home. The techniques of Tsugaru nuri, guarded secrets of the Edo period and mysterious to most since then, are now on display for all to see.

Further contextualization of the representation of Tsugaru nuri reflects the inherent tension of tradition versus modernity in considerations of traditional crafts in contemporary society – to be traditional, the craft must stress its traditional character, but to be popular, the craft must adapt to modern functions and tastes. Using a five-point Likert scale, informants evaluated the 27 articles on the basis of whether the focus was predominantly on the lacquerware product, some sort of human interest perspective or providing some information, as well as indicating the relative emphasis on tradition or modernity of the article. Of the 27 articles considered by respondents, 18 had a photo or photos, with eight photo depictions of individuals, 16 of objects, and six of lacquerware-related events. Eight of the 27 articles focused on individual lacquer crafters in some way, an indication of the human interest element associated with the lacquerware, and 12 of the articles were part of a series-based column. The results can be summarized overall as an equal balance between a focus on the representation of the lacquerware, some sort of human interest angle, and informational content. This is seen numerically, in the number of articles and individual responses for which the particular assessment exceeded the median for that assessment category (for focus on the lacquerware, 13 articles and 170 responses in which the assessment of the focus on lacquerware exceeded 3.46 on a five-point Likert scale, as compared with 14 and 154 for focus on human interest and 14 and 156 for focus on information). It is also seen in terms of the relative strength of the focus (the mean assessment: 4.52, 4.46 and 4.49, respectively; see Table 5). Likewise, within each of these broad focus categories, the emphasis was fairly even between tradition and modernity, based on similar comparison of article/case numbers and the mean responses, with modernity slightly more emphasized in the human interest category of articles.

An example of an article which focuses on traditional aspects of lacquerware is, “Prefectural Treasures: Edo-period Tsugaru nuri *te-ita* (sample boards) Designated Cultural Objects” (April 4, 2003, *Tōnippo* and *Mutsu shinpo*), whereas an example stressing modernity with the human interest orientation is, “Using a Youthful Personal Style to Create – Introducing Tsugaru nuri Crafter Mr. M” (December 13, 2002, in a *Mutsu shinpo* “Living in Tsugaru” column).

Table 5. Tradition versus Modernity in the Representation of Tsugaru Nuri

	mean (SD) :	median	articles -	cases
focus on lacquerware aspect	4.52 (.50) :	3.46 ..	13	170
focus on tradition	4.09 (.79) :	2.80 ..	8	116
focus on modernity	4.07 (.82) :	2.82 ..	8	110
focus on human interest aspect	4.46 (.50) :	3.28 ..	14	154
focus on tradition	3.86 (.84) :	2.59 ..	6	101
focus on modernity	4.10 (.77) :	2.87 ..	9	109
focus on information aspect	4.49 (.50) :	3.50 ..	14	156
focus on tradition	3.99 (.85) :	2.77 ..	6	100
focus on modernity	3.90 (.82) :	2.87 ..	9	101

Note: n=27; number of articles per reader=avg 12.5; mean based on 5 pt. Likert response with 5 high; articles/cases indicated assessment which exceeded median by article readers.

In a similar manner, promotional materials carried in the local newspaper media also seem to strike a balance between tradition and modernity. In an advertisement declaring November 13 as *Urushi no hi* (Lacquer Day), the title and text stresses both the history and local tradition of Tsugaru nuri as well as the modern character of lacquerware (November 12, 2002, *Mutsu shinpo*). While citing Tsugaru nuri’s 300-plus year history and stressing its essence as a *dentōteki kōgeihin* (traditional craft) of the local area, the advertisement also stresses the importance of “discovering the *new* traditional craft of Tsugaru nuri – one which matches contemporary lifestyles.”

The consumption of Tsugaru nuri is a complex combination of attitudes about price, quality, design, coloration, and form. The media and advertising-based representations outlined above highlighting the history and local character of traditional local lacquerware, together with images of an accessible, humanized and contemporary lacquerware through a focus on educational and experiential activities, constitute a contemporary construction of Tsugaru nuri that reflects efforts to create a new meaning to be adopted by consumers.

Discussion and Concluding Remarks

A description of the background and historical arc of meaning and representation for both Japanese lacquerware and Tsugaru nuri lacquerware comprised the body of this paper. For Japanese lacquerware overall, the meaning was shown to have shifted from a primarily religious function in the Heian period to one of social status over the succeeding 600-plus years, which then gave way to lacquerware becoming an institutionalized traditional craft in recent times. In the case of Tsugaru nuri, the detailed overview outlined how the meaning ascribed to it originated in the early 17th century in signifying social status among the Edo-period local Tsugaru elites, which with the onset of the Meiji period gave way to simultaneous meanings in representing Japanese crafts on the international level as well as being a highly-prized and highly-priced commodity for the local people of Tsugaru. Standardization of process and form together with institutionalization through association-based activity and efforts to promote the industry at the local level followed, which was accompanied by traditionalization of Tsugaru nuri on a national level with its designation as a Traditional Industrial Art Object in the mid-1970s. Over the course of the three-step Promotion Plan that accompanied this designation, the focus of traditionalization evolved to commoditization with the shift from preservation by way of industry stabilization to promotion and development of demand. Thus, this is clearly a transition of meaning for Tsugaru nuri from status symbol to being a representative Japanese craft, to a place-designated traditional craftware, and ultimately to an important local craft commodity.

Contextualizing the meaning ascribed to Japanese lacquerware in its Heian period origins, Mary Helms, in a study of craft production in traditional, non-industrial societies, argued that objects produced by skilled artisans, and available only to the elites of the society represented a tangible means of embodying intangible characteristics of gods, ancestors, or heroes,

qualities which confer honor and power in the human realm.²³ By the Edo period, however, the meaning of lacquerware, both in the major political center of Japan as well as in the outlying domains, had shifted to that of social status, and this was the case for Tsugaru lacquerware as well. The incorporation of Tsugaru lacquerware into the realm of national craft showpiece in international exhibitions in the late 1800s together with its “naming,” presumably mutually agreeable to promoters at the national as well as local level, can conceivably be contextualized by Karen Wigen’s explanation of how the local proto-industrial crafts were drawn into broad agendas in which regional pride expressed in such crafts furthered national goals. In her study of an area of Nagano Prefecture, cotton-spinning, paper making, the production of lacquerware, and silk reeling, all important factors of local identity, were utilized in the drive to industrialization in the late 19th century; “[a]ll of these legacies could usefully be invoked in the name of modernization.”²⁴ A paradoxical outcome of local craft as an accomplice to national modernization is complex, but it is clear, as Wigen points, out that while most understood that such local industries represented a means of enticing national resources into the region and bringing the region into modernity while at the same time potentially undermining local identity, the incentive of fully realizing such opportunities prodded many to take up serious study of the premodern history of these crafts, thus contributing to a strengthened local identity. At this point in the examination of Tsugaru lacquerware in the history of the Tsugaru District, however, it is not clear if this was the specific dynamic at work, signaling an important question for further research.

This paper opened by outlining three circumstances of Tsugaru nuri lacquerware that serve to contextualize its contemporary but still evolving meaning: its ubiquity in the households of Tsugaru, its social function in the act of gift-giving, and its potential as a tourist commodity. That Tsugaru nuri, a locally-produced craft with a long local history and a powerful place-name signification, is a common commodity within its own geographical frame of reference is not surprising. The ubiquity of

²³ Mary Helms, *Craft and the Kingly Ideal: Art, Trade, and Power* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1993).

²⁴ Karen Wigen, “Constructing Shinano: The Invention of a Neo-Traditional Region,” in Stephen Vlastos, ed., *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998), p. 238.

possession of Tsugaru nuri by local residents, whether by purchase or received as a gift, is a function of what can be seen as a combination of historical and contemporary localism – the fact that Tsugaru lacquerware has long been and continues to be produced in Tsugaru.

Tsugaru nuri as important in both gift-giving and tourism is a more combinatively complex question, explained by the continued status signification of the lacquerware as this pertains to the social ritual of gift giving together with Tsugaru nuri's attributes as craft as portrayed in its local representation and tourist advertising. While cheap plastic-based Tsugaru nuri-patterned lacquerware is produced and sold in Tsugaru, the status signification generated by the attributes of the highest quality Tsugaru lacquerware as craft is still apparent. Gloria Hickey outlined such attributes of craft in general as rarity in being handmade, sophistication in the skill required to make it, preciousness due to the nature of the materials and the time invested in labor, expressiveness in its referencing as an object in function and/or historical or traditional background, and its enduring character.²⁵ Tsugaru nuri is handmade, it is created in mysterious and laborious processes, it is comprised of precious raw materials in the raw lacquer sap, and it is referenced as a local object, highly functional, with strong associations of tradition and history, and it is long-lasting.

The institutionalized support, which was offered to Tsugaru nuri on the basis of such attributes as recognized by the Association for the Promotion of Traditional Craft Industries, shifted, from an early focus on the nature of the production of the craft to the development of demand for the craft. This points to a recognition that objects are ultimately seen in a social sense as not simply possessing such essential properties, which is to say the attributes of craft, but rather as also deriving significance from the social meanings that are attached to such properties. Brian Moeran pointed out that what often is deemed “aesthetic” in Japan is, in fact, an amalgam of three divergent qualities: aspects of “aesthetic” (*biteki kankaku*), “commodity” (*shōhin kankaku*), and “social” (*shakai kankaku*) values.²⁶ Considering this with respect to the ritual of gift giving in Japan, John Clammer theorized that cultural capital in the ritual of gift exchange is

²⁵ Gloria Hickey, “Craft Within a Consuming Society,” in Peter Dormer, ed., *The Culture of Craft* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), pp. 85-86.

²⁶ Brian Moeran, *Lost Innocence: Folk Craft Potters of Onta, Japan* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984), p. 132.

accumulated not so much by the act or the timing of exchanging the gift, but rather through a demonstration of mastery of the current and continually evolving semiotics of the objects themselves, which Hickey furthered in direct reference to crafts by pointing out the necessity for a semiotic, shared association of the essential character craft between giver and recipient.²⁷

As detailed herein, Tsugaru nuri, with its combinative attributes of a distinctive color and pattern, a functional commodity form, and an important social weight, still clearly fulfills the demands of this complex ritual for many in Tsugaru. For others, negative characteristics, which are likewise conceived of as beyond the extent of the attributes of craft, such as uniform patterns, depressing coloration, and unappealing forms, marginalize the craft in all respects, not just in the realm of gift-giving. Likewise, the commoditization of Tsugaru nuri as a tourist commodity depends not so much on the object itself or the representation of its history or tradition, but rather, as Toda Kazuhiro, Watanabe Takasuke, and Murata Takao point out, on an organized and systematic phase approach to incorporating traditional crafts into the realm of tourism in a manner in which tourists, through the manipulation of touristic place, touristic time, and touristic motivation, come to know the craft, appreciate the craft, buy the craft, and ultimately disseminate the craft.²⁸ Marion Markwick, however, notes that, given the complex forms which modern tourist commoditization of craft take on, local craft production often ultimately splits into two distinct lines, with different meanings ascribed the craft for the tourist, on the one hand, and for locals, on the other.²⁹

The question that emerges from this paper and will organize future research on traditional crafts, not only in Japan, but elsewhere, concerns to what degree localism and the attributes of craft, together with the traditional status signification and touristic commoditization, will continue to provide

²⁷ John Clammer, *Contemporary Urban Japan: A Sociology of Consumption* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Press, 1997), p. 17; and Hickey, "Craft Within a Consuming Society," p. 86.

²⁸ Toda Kazuhiro, Watanabe Takasuke, and Murata Takao, "Dentōteki kōgeihin no kankōteki shiyō shuhō ni kansuru kenkyū" [A Study on Ways of Application of Japanese Traditional Crafts for Tourist Promotion], *Toshi keikaku: bessatsu – toshi keikaku ronbunshū* [City Planning Review: Special Issue – Papers on City Planning] 32 (1997): 271-276.

²⁹ Marion Markwick, "Tourism and the Development of Handicraft Production in the Maltese Islands," *Tourism Geographies* 3/1 (2001), p. 28.

meaning, and ultimately sustainability, to traditional crafts in contemporary society. From the examination outlined herein, most notably the articles profiling individual lacquer artisans and describing the lacquer-related educational and experiential activities, it may be that the focus on the essential attributes of Tsugaru nuri, as well its status signification and its touristic potential, is giving way to a localism based on knowing the “who” and the “how” of the lacquerware. While such a focus on the individual is clearly antithetical to the notions of Japanese craft as the outcome of the craft community, as outlined by Soetsu Yanagi, notions which Moeran asserts were adopted by most Japanese when he wrote “the moral tone found in Yanagi’s concept...and adopted by present folk craft leaders, would appear to extend to a large section of the Japanese public,” this trend toward recognition of individualism in the traditional crafts in Japan is a reflection of the reality of the meaning folk crafts take in contemporary society.³⁰ As innovations in both design and form of lacquerware progress, it is ultimately the individual crafter that is recognized as innovator, as it was in the Edo period of patronage-supported lacquerware production.

The undertaking of Tsugaru nuri-based educational and experiential activities, together with the media representations of such activities, may be indicative of a turn toward development of both a Tsugaru nuri knowledge base and a more involved appreciation of Tsugaru nuri. Millie Creighton explored these themes in her examination of Japanese craft vacations, contextualizing such activities with notions of nostalgia, gender, and identity.³¹ The findings on representation highlighted herein, however, identify an element of modernity that is as apparent as tradition and nostalgia. Moreover, rather than targeting Tsugaru tourists, the representations which focus on lacquer crafters and educational and experiential activities ultimately influence Tsugaru locals, albeit locals who can be conceived of as Tsugaru nuri tourists – those who, despite living in

³⁰ Soetsu Yanagi, *The Unknown Craftsman: A Japanese Insight into Beauty* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1972), pp. 197-215; and Brian Moeran, “Making an Exhibition of Oneself: The Anthropologist as Potter in Japan,” in Eyal Ben-ari, Brian Moeran, and James Valentine, eds., *Unwrapping Japan: Society and Culture in Anthropological Perspective* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990), pp. 117-139.

³¹ Millie Creighton, “Spinning Silk, Weaving Selves: Nostalgia, Gender, and Identity in Japanese Craft Vacations,” *Japanese Studies* 21/1 (2001): 5-29.

Tsugaru, know little about their local lacquerware or want to know more.

For Tsugaru lacquerware, a localism based in local origin and continued local production, together with traditionalization and commoditization that combine the inherent attributes as craft with status signification with an increasing focus on human interest and educational/experiential elements, all point to a complex conceptualization of traditional crafts in contemporary society. While history and tradition were evident in the representation that underlies the focus on development of demand in the recent promotion of Tsugaru nuri, an equal focus on knowing both the crafters and about the craft itself signals new elements that will shape the future place of Japanese traditional crafts in contemporary society. The meanings that have emerged over the history of Tsugaru nuri have provided the basis for contemporary representations that focus on origin and history as well as the products. However, contemporary representations that focus on a human interest element together with the educational and experiential activities that are increasingly associated with Tsugaru nuri are indicative of the new meanings of traditional craft in Japan: meanings based on a more personal connection with the individual artisan and an educational-based understanding, together with an experiential appreciation of the lacquerware.

MIDDLE-AGED JAPANESE WOMEN'S LOVE AFFAIR WITH WINTER SONATA AND ITS SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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Fuyu no sonata, or *Winter Sonata*, is a soap opera that was broadcast by KBS Korea on Mondays and Tuesdays as a 20-episode, TV drama miniseries from January to March of 2002. The tear-jerking, overly sentimental melodrama with complicated story and character development, breathtakingly beautiful winter scenes, great acting, and very soothing, melancholic music instantly became a sensational social phenomenon in South Korea. Young Koreans adopted the fashion and the lifestyle, had dates at the shooting locations, and bought CDs and DVDs. The average audience rating was 23.1% in Korea.¹

Hanryu is a Chinese word coined for the “Korean boom” that encompasses various aspects of today’s popular culture scene in Asia.² *Hanryu* also refers to the social phenomenon of the powerful influence and great popularity of Korean-style movies, TV dramas, and K-POP (music). Korean pop culture has now become one of the leading exports of the country. It is also due to the Korean government’s support of the entertainment industry beginning in the 1990s. Japan was a bit late in appreciating *hanryu* as compared to other Asian nations, but its Korean boom started with an action film blockbuster *Shuri* in 2000.³ Many fans of *Winter Sonata* in Japan are also familiar with popular Korean movies such as *Christmas in August* (1998), *Il Mare* (2000), *My Sassy Girl* (2001), *Brotherhood* (2003), and *The Classic* (2003), as well as Korean TV dramas like *Autumn in My Heart* (2000), *Hotelier* (2001), *Beautiful Days* (2001), *All In* (2003), *Scent of Summer* (2003), and *Stairway of Heaven* (2003-2004).

¹ Okumura Junro, *Aishiteru! Kankoku dorama* [Loving Korean Dramas!] (Tokyo: TOKIMEKI Publishing, 2004); and Diana Lee, “Why Is *Winter Sonata* a Big Hit in Asia?” (www.koreanfilm.org/tvdramas/wintersonata.html, 9/10/2003).

² *Josei sebun* (5/13/2004).

³ Setsuko Kamiya, “Korean Love Story Heats Up Japan,” *The Japan Times* (4/7/2004).

The Korean TV dramas are known for their excellence in dramatic story development, intelligibility, tempo, straightforward and extreme expressions of emotions, and tears.⁴ Korean melodramas also have all the essential ingredients for a big success – the secret of birth, a rich and charming male protagonist who is a “prince,” amnesia, double love triangles, traffic accidents, bullying, conflicts and struggles between parents and their adult children, an incurable disease afflicting the protagonist, studying abroad (especially in the United States and France), and lovers running together along the shoreline.⁵

The Nippon Hōsō Kyōkai (NHK), which is a Japanese version of the BBC, broadcast *Winter Sonata* on BS2, one of its satellite channels, in April of 2003. The 20-episode melodrama was broadcast at 10:00 PM on Thursdays, and it was very popular and well accepted by the Japanese, especially women in their 30s to 80s. The avid viewers requested that NHK rebroadcast the program. The broadcasting company received more than 20,000 positive responses and requests for reruns mainly from women in their 40s and 50s. The NHK complied and aired all 20 episodes again on the same satellite channel in December 2003. In April 2004, the NHK started a weekly broadcast of *Winter Sonata* again on its terrestrial main channel on Saturdays at around 11:10 PM. The exact starting time depended on the preceding program, such as a professional baseball game or a special news report. This time slot had traditionally been reserved for such popular American TV series as *Ally McBeal*, *ER*, *The West Wing*, and *Beverly Hills 90210*.⁶ *Fuyu no sonata*, or *Fuyu sona* for short as it is generally called by Japanese fans and the mass media, has become a social phenomenon in Japan, as well as many other Asian countries such as China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam, and the Philippines, not to mention Korea where it was produced.

The NHK's book division sold 860,000 novelized books of the screen play, which became a best seller, 280,000 program guidebooks, and 150,000 DVDs and videos.⁷ The NHK's secondary income from the copyrights of the *Winter Sonata* logo and the production of the Japanese version DVDs topped 100,000,000 yen, which is approximately 909,000 US dollars. This brought about NHK's 14th consecutive year of being in the

⁴ *Nikkei Woman* (Tokyo: Nikkei hōmu shuppansha, June 2004), p. 147.

⁵ Okumura, *Aishiteru!*, pp. 18-21.

⁶ Kamiya, “Korean Love Story Heats Up Japan.”

⁷ *Nikkei Woman*, p. 147.

black.⁸ Other related goods such as Polaris necklaces and cell phone straps, post cards, photographic magazines, jigsaw puzzles, playing cards, wool mufflers, and CDs are sold in stores and on the internet, which is a very brisk business in Japan and Asia. Tour packages to visit the shooting sites in Korea also became very popular.

Middle-aged Japanese women are crazy not only about the beautiful love story but also the leading actor, Bae Yong Joon, who was born in 1972. He visited Japan on April 3, 2004. More than 5,000 avid fans, mostly housewives in their 30s and 40s, showed up at Tokyo's Haneda International Airport on the day of his arrival. Many stayed up all night at the airport the night before.⁹ More than 60,000 women applied for the lottery of one of the 2,000 seats in the Shibuya Public Hall where Bae Yong Joon met and talked on stage with his fans. Another two thousand women, most of them in their 20s to 50s, flocked to the Hall and waited outside just to have a glimpse of the handsome actor.¹⁰

Bae Yong Joon, or Yon-sama as he is affectionately called by his enthusiastic Japanese fans and the mass media, stayed in Japan for several days to promote his new movie *Untold Scandal*, which is a Korean version of a Hollywood flick, *Dangerous Liaisons*, based in turn on a French classic. Many restaurants and coffee shops in Tokyo where the handsome actor dined instantly became popular tourist spots with the Japanese women who wanted to have the same food that he ate.

Many middle-aged Japanese women who are avid fans of *Fuyu no sonata* are acting just like the American teenaged girls who became fans of the movie *Titanic* and its leading actor Leonardo DiCaprio in 1998. The avid fans of *Fuyu sona* watch the TV program on TV, videotape it, and view it again and again, especially the memorable scenes with wonderful, romantic, or philosophical lines, and they cry.

Each episode of the Japanese version of *Winter Sonata* is 60 minutes long in order to fit into the time frame, and director Yoon Soek Ho edited the melodrama himself. Many buy the DVDs, whose episodes are 70 minutes long (not an abbreviated version), and listen to the melodies of the soundtrack CDs. There are many websites, or rather "clubs," where the fans can communicate via internet. More than 10,000 sites show up upon entering "Bae Yong Joon" in an internet website search. At Yahoo.com

⁸ *Asahi Shinbun* (5/27/2004).

⁹ *Josei seibun* (5/13/2004).

¹⁰ *Asahi Shinbun* (4/05/2004).

17,000 sites showed up when I searched for *Winter Sonata* in June 2004. The Japanese fans interact with one another on the internet exchanging points of view, sharing emotions, reactions, and experiences, and providing information on Korean culture, customs and manners, geography, and tourism. More than 900 fans joined the tour called “Visiting Korea to Meet Bae Yong Joon,” during which they visited the shooting locations of *Fuyu sona* in Korea. The leading actress, Choi Ji Woo, was appointed “ambassador of Korean tourism and public relations” by the Korean Ministry of Culture and Tourism to promote tourism in Korea as part of the program called “The Korean Wave 2004.”¹¹ Choi Ji Woo and the director visited Japan in March 2004 as the NHK prepared for the rerun of *Fuyu no sonata* that was to start the next month.

The tear-jerking *Winter Sonata* is a melodrama that truly makes the audience cry with emotions. A box of Kleenex and a handkerchief (or even a towel!) is a must for at least 19 of the 20 episodes. *Winter Sonata* starts with the high school days of the two destined lovers Jung Yu Jin and Kan Joon Sang, a transfer student from Seoul who was searching for his father whom he had never met. The first two episodes entail their first encounter on a bus in Chunchon, Korea on their way to school, the development of their friendship, their falling in love, first kiss, and the “death” of Joon Sang in a traffic accident. The third episode takes place ten years later in Seoul. Yu Jin is now engaged to Kim Sang Hyuk, her high school classmate and Joon Sang’s rival. On her way to their engagement party, Yu Jin encounters a man who looks exactly like the late Joon Sang, who was her first love whom she could never forget. She tries frantically to find him again on the streets of Seoul and misses the engagement party. Lee Min Yong, who looks like Joon Sang and was pursued by Yu Jin without success that night, happened to be the director of a company which had just signed the contract with Yu Jin’s interior design company. Yu Jin now starts working with Min Yong at a ski resort, and they gradually fall in love.

The main theme of the melodrama is love that encompasses various shades and kinds among the different characters and their relationships. Diana Lee lists them as: (1) puppy love, (2) first love, (3) possessive love, (4) lost love, (5) parental love, and (6) true love, at least one or a few of which the audience has had similar experiences with in their lives, and which enable them to empathize and identify with the emotions

¹¹ *Asahi Shinbun* (3/08/2004).

and feelings of different characters in the story.¹² The story also revolves around the complex love of three sets of parent-child relationships in addition to the double love triangles of the young offspring and their friends. It also entails much suspicion concerning the identity of the male protagonist (Can Min Yong be Joon Sang? Are Min Yong and Joon Sang twins or related?), as well as the mystery of his birth (Who is Joon Sang's father?). *Winter Sonata* evokes in its audience various emotions ranging from infatuation, affection, love and romance, self-worth, control, guilt, possessiveness, anger, frustration, embarrassment, resentment, jealousy, despair, and loss to repentance, and the like. The soap opera definitely is a department store of all human emotions that everyone can identify with.

Many attractions of the melodrama include the beauty of the cinematography with breathtakingly gorgeous winter scenes, good-looking actors and actresses, and clever, classy, and soothing lines and words of love and affection that resonate with one's soul. The popularity of the Korean soap opera is a reflection of what Japanese social life lacks. The story depicts strong love, affection, caring, and bonding among the family members in modern Korea that any person from a dysfunctional family can admire and envy. It also shows the beauty of the strong ties of Korean friendship and camaraderie among workmates. The Korean characters are depicted as caring, sympathetic, and always supportive of their friends and colleagues as well as strangers and the elderly. The older generation in Korea is respected by the young, and adult children listen to their parents (sometimes with much reservation, doubt, frustration, and anger). The Japanese, on the other hand, do not respect the elderly as much as the Koreans do, and when there is a parent-child conflict, it is usually the parent who concedes these days.¹³ Confucianism is still institutionalized and deeply-rooted in everyday Korean life, while modernity in the new millennium has been affecting the Japanese family and society more generally in negative ways due to child and elderly abuse, an increase in domestic violence and divorce, sexless marriages, adultery, and suicides of the breadwinners who were laid off during the recession, among others.

Any middle-aged Japanese woman whose life lacks the excitement of love and romance, intimacy, and effective communication with her husband as well as an appreciation from family members for her hard work of household chores could easily get involved with the soap opera

¹² Lee, "Why Is *Winter Sonata* a Big Hit in Asia?"

¹³ Okumura, *Aishiteru!*, p. 20.

emotionally. The Korean melodrama, just like Japanese ladies' comics,¹⁴ can complement their otherwise unsatisfactory, uneventful, and boring lives. The soap opera is an opiate, and it is very easy to get hooked on the intriguing story development.

The Japanese, especially men, tend to suppress their emotions whether it is love, sorrow, anger, or frustration. The Japanese samurai tradition dictated that men not show much emotion and the principle of communication is, "silence is golden." Implicit communication still dominates Japanese culture. Facial expressions, tone of voice, silence, grunts, eye contact, and other subtle hints are as important as explicit, spoken words. Japanese communication belongs to that of a high-context culture.¹⁵ The Koreans in the soap opera, on the other hand, are much more straightforward and honest in their show of emotions and feelings. Many Japanese middle-aged women do not get enough communication from their workaholic husbands who do not know how to express themselves, especially with feelings of love and affection. The women get thrilled, and their romantic fantasy is fulfilled when the super-close-up face of the handsome Bae Yong Joon says, "I love you," with sincerity and tears in his eyes. The situation is almost like hypnosis, as if he is saying these words to each woman in the audience directly.

Many middle-aged and older women are reminded of the good old days when they were young and when Japanese TV programs and movies showed more platonic and innocent kinds of love and romance. *Fuyu sona* does not have any romantic bedroom scenes, and the most that the protagonists do in terms of showing love and affection are hugs and kisses on the lips only. A 76-year old woman who was an avid fan of *Winter Sonata* said that the program and the protagonists' pure love reminded her of her youth. She was given a soundtrack CD for a Mother's Day gift.¹⁶ The melodrama also develops like a story in classical girls' comics from the

¹⁴ Kinko Ito, "The World of Japanese Ladies' Comics: From Romantic Fantasy to Lustful Perversion," *Journal of Popular Culture* 36/1 (2002): 68-85; and Kinko Ito, "Japanese Ladies' Comics as Agents of Socialization: The Lessons They Teach," *International Journal of Comic Art* 5/2 (2003): 425-436.

¹⁵ Edward Hall, *Beyond Culture* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press, 1977); and Hall, *The Dance of Life* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press, 1984).

¹⁶ Goto Hanei, "Wagaya no hahanohi," [Mother's Day in My Family] *Chikyū rajio dayori*, NHK (5/27/2004).

1960s and the 1970s. Middle-aged women are familiar with the clever schemes of their story development.

One of the reasons why *Winter Sonata* appeals to so many people is that watching the melodrama is a spiritual or religious experience. Many fans watch the program again and again after they videotape the program or on a DVD. The messages that are transmitted through the clever lines, beautiful sceneries, and human emotions shown in tears are soothing to the soul. The melodrama shows many aspects of human relationships, true emotions, and raw feelings as well as death, the meaning of life, love, compassion, hope, and prayers, in addition to coincidences and connectedness that brings wonder to our daily life. An opportunity to be able to meet again deceased loved ones is one of the most basic desires of human experience, and *Winter Sonata* fulfills that need very nicely. As the story progresses, not only the characters in the melodrama but also the viewers grow and learn lessons of life, especially in appreciating, respecting, caring, and loving those who are part of the fabric of their lives. Every moment they spend together is precious. It is a "gift" because we are in "the present." Taking on the roles of others, or putting ourselves in their shoes and seeing from their perspectives makes us more compassionate and humane because understanding comes through empathy. "I'm sorry," is one of the most oft-spoken sentences in *Winter Sonata*. Just about every single character says "I'm sorry," at one point or another, and the male and female protagonists say the phrase most often. Conflict is a natural part of human life, and we often end up hurting others whether we like it or not. Apologizing is also a very normal and natural part of *Winter Sonata*, and the female protagonist cries in every episode except the first two when she was in high school. The viewers might reflect on their own past or current lives and feel sorry for those whom they might have inadvertently hurt. Self-reflection is possible as the viewer sees the program.

One of the main symbols of *Winter Sonata* is Polaris, the North Star. Joon Sang, the high school aged male protagonist says to Yu Jin when he found her after she had gotten lost in the woods at night that she should follow Polaris because it always stays in the same place throughout the seasons. A decade later when Yu Jin gets lost in her relationships with her family and other friends, Min Yong tells her that he will be her Polaris. She would not get lost again. He would always be there for her regardless. He is the guiding star, and she just has to believe in him and follow her fate. Many Asian women might find these scenes very romantic and they are

greatly moved. They might have a secret desire to be led and protected by a man rather than staying independent.

Fuyu no sonata is basically about love and compassion. It teaches the audience that there are different kinds of love, how important it is to always act and behave out of love, and that you must believe in love. The very ending scene of the soap opera is the triumph of love and fate that Yu Jin and her man believed in.

Winter Sonata is a very popular form of entertainment, and it also has been playing an educational role for middle-aged Japanese women. They are eager to learn more about the Korean language, culture (customs and manners, values, social norms, ethics, philosophy, etc.), history, geography, and so on in order to understand the melodrama better. NHK's *Winter Sonata* website features several categories of information in regards to the melodrama, like the time table of the broadcast, introduction of the drama, the characters and their relationships, the actors and actresses, the story line for each episode, Korean customs and manners, location sites, geography, the photo gallery, and the lyrics of the theme songs.¹⁷

Interestingly *Winter Sonata* also helped many middle-aged to elderly people become familiar with new computer technology as they read and wrote to the many websites that featured *Fuyu sona* for the first time. These people, who had been computer illiterate before, learned how to hook up their new computers, manage a keyboard, and use websites to gain information about the melodrama and write their opinions.

“Chatting” on websites has also become a social phenomenon. It is very convenient for working women and mothers as well as housewives who stay home. They can access many people with whom they share the same interests at any time they like. The web pages also open a new world for them because they can “meet” people on the web whom they would not likely meet in their busy everyday life and “chat” with them. Men also write to these websites since they do not find many other men to chat with about the melodrama. Many websites offered off-site meetings where fans actually met the other fans in a restaurant, coffee shop, etc.¹⁸

¹⁷ www3.nhk.or.jp/kaigai/sonata/ (link no longer active).

¹⁸ Yatabe Yuko, *Fuyu no sonata koyuroku: nettode hanasaku idobata kaigi* [The Record of *Winter Sonata* Companionship – The Blossoming of Housewives’ Gossip on the Internet] (Tokyo: TOKIMEKI Publishing, 2004).

Fuyu sona, as it is shown on the NHK, is dubbed in Japanese, and the TV audience can either opt for the Japanese or Korean language version or try to listen to them both at the same time. Bae Yong Joon has a deep, soothing, sweet voice that turns any woman on (as far as I am concerned, I am convinced it does!). Many women started to learn Korean in order to listen to Bae Yong Joon's voice in the original language, which, believe it or not, almost sounds like melodic French, especially those softly spoken words of love and affection. The dubbed Japanese version has a higher pitch sound to it. The NHK offers a weekly language course on its educational channel called *Hangul kōza*, or *Korean Language Course* at 11:30 PM on Tuesdays. When Bae Yong Joon was featured in its monthly textbook published by the NHK in July 2003, the textbook was sold out. The NHK printed 200,000 copies of the language textbook for the month of May in 2004 in advance of the rerun that started in April.¹⁹

A woman whose handle is "Hamatteru Onna" (A Woman Who Is Hooked [on *Winter Sonata*]) wrote on a web page:

"I seriously decided to study Korean language. I want to understand Mr. Bae Yong Joon's dramas in Korean."²⁰

"I started learning Korean, aiming to master it somehow in half a year. I want to be able to read Hangul – good enough to be able to read the lyrics of the CDs. My motivation is so strong that I study Korean efficiently."²¹

Many other fans of *Fuyu sona* said on the websites that they had either started learning Korean already or were thinking seriously about taking up lessons on TV or in a language school. The language schools where they offer Korean language programs are popular, and they use scenes from *Winter Sonata* as a teaching aid.

This *Fuyu sona* fever among middle-aged Japanese women is a very positive step towards the improvement of mutual Japan-Korea understanding which started when the two nations co-hosted the FIFA World Cup Soccer Games in 2002. The games also propelled cultural exchanges between the two countries.

¹⁹ *Nikkei Woman*, p. 152.

²⁰ www.yomiuri.co.jp/komachi/reader (5/16/2003). Author's translation.

²¹ *Ibid.* (6/13/2003).

Historically the relationship between Japan and Korea has never been very favorable to the Koreans. Hideyoshi Toyotomi invaded Korea, a peaceful nation ruled by academics based on the principles of Confucianism, in 1592. The invading army was defeated, and Hideyoshi withdrew from Korea in 1598. However, the nationwide war had devastated Korea, and the invasion by the Army of the Qing Dynasty of China followed between 1627 and 1637.

In 1875 Japan forced open Korea which had a self-imposed seclusion policy, and imposed an unequal treaty in February 1876. Japan annexed Korea in 1910, created the government-general of Korea, and forced the people to speak Japanese. The March 1st uprising of 1919 demanded that Koreans attain independence from the Japanese, but it ended up killing more than 7,000 people. After the Great Kanto Earthquake that hit the Tokyo area, some 6,000 Koreans were blamed for the calamity and were killed by the Japanese military and police as well as armed citizens. Many Korean men were taken to Japan as forced laborers, and many Korean women were forced to be “comfort women” during World War II, serving as prostitutes for Japanese soldiers. This comfort women issue has not yet been resolved between the aging Korean women and the Japanese government. Japan’s defeat and unconditional surrender at the end of the war in 1945 brought the emancipation of Korea. It no longer was a colony of Japan.

Contemporary Japanese still tend to look down upon Koreans as a minority. Many Korean-Japanese who reside in Japan cannot obtain Japanese passports, and suffer from various kinds of both overt and covert prejudice and discrimination. Many Japanese do not know much about Korea, either – its history, culture, and society – even though it is the closest foreign country that influenced and contributed to the blossoming of ancient Japanese culture in the arts, crafts, textiles, and ceramics, as well as the introduction of Buddhism. In 1982, both Korea and China protested the wording of Japanese history textbooks, which promoted the revisionist approach to history in Japanese society.²² The Koreans are more sensitive about the history between the two nations, and very strong anti-Japanese sentiment, hatred, and resentment still linger among them.

Winter Sonata provoked Japanese interest in Korean culture and society in general. Mr. Chae Hyo An said in his interview:

²² Edwin O. Reischauer, *Japan: The Story of a Nation* (New York: McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, 1990).

“I heard that the image the Japanese have of Korea has changed thanks to *Winter Sonata*. There are increasing numbers of Japanese who are studying Korean as they watch the program. I consider dramas the supreme popular entertainment that includes the country's culture, emotions, and fashions, and it is great that the mutual understanding between Korea and Japan is promoted by *Winter Sonata*.”²³

This enthusiasm and desire of middle-aged Japanese women for learning Korean history, language, culture, and geography is very positive because it contributes to the understanding of the nation and the people that have been traditionally (both intentionally and unintentionally) looked down on by the Japanese. The willingness to learn should be the primary aim of education, not the forced kind of education with a classroom, a teacher, a textbook, exercises, and midterm and final exams. The good-looking Korean actor, Bae Yong Joon, is now a glamorous and desirable target of infatuation and longing which might lead to a dramatic decrease in the emotions and feelings that contribute to racism, prejudice, and discrimination against Koreans.

January 2004 in Korea marked “The Fourth Emancipation of Japanese Culture,” which lifted the prohibition of Japanese popular culture that had been banned for a long time. The Korean government is becoming more lenient in letting Japanese popular culture penetrate the society. Before the governmental emancipation, Korean youth were eager to learn about Japan through the internet.²⁴ It seems that greater mutual understanding between Korea and Japan is now truly possible.

Hanryu entertainment has been bringing not only the Japanese and Koreans together but also various other nations of Asia. Many Asians feel that the Korean movies and TV dramas are refreshing, and provide them with a sense of intimacy thanks to shared racial characteristics as well as both basic Asian cultural elements and a common mentality and sentimentality today. Many feel that they found “something” authentic they had lost in the process of modernization or from the influence and dominance of the West in popular culture.

²³ Okumura, *Aishiteru!*, p. 95. Author's translation.

²⁴ *Nikkei Woman*, p. 153.

Featured Essays

**PEDAGOGY AND EXPERIENCE:
BRINGING JAPAN INTO THE CLASSROOM**

Dwight Lang

Madonna University

“Purpose and Goals,” “Perceptions of the Other,”
and “Interdisciplinary Connections”

Jay Losey

Baylor University

“Connection and Identity”

Sabita Manian

Lynchburg College

“Gender and Culture in Japan”

Mariana Ortega

John Carroll University

“Searching for Memory”

Barbara Jean Scott

Madonna University

“A Land of Contradictions”

Jane Reinhart Spalding

U.S. UMAP (University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific)

“Introduction” and “Conclusion”

Introduction

The Faculty and Curriculum Development Seminar on Japan – the Japan Seminar for short – is a year-long program designed to help interdisciplinary teams of faculty members acquire the capacity to teach about Japan and create units, courses, and course sequences that infuse Japan-related content into undergraduate curricula. The ultimate goal of the Japan Seminar is to foster American undergraduates’ appreciation of Japan by arranging for them to encounter Japan as a part of their regular coursework, no matter what their major. Since its inception in 1998, the Japan Seminar has helped bring greater attention to Japan at almost 50 U.S.

colleges and universities and has trained more than 100 faculty members from the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences.

Arranged in three distinct yet related phases, the Japan Seminar first involves participants in a rigorous five-month (January through May) study of Japan with weekly discussions conducted both on campus and on-line. In July, directors G. Cameron Hurst and Jane R. Spalding lead participants on an intensively programmed study-tour of Japan, which is followed during the fall by a semester of guided curriculum development work. Through this 12-month project model, the Japan Seminar enables faculty members, who come as novices to the study of Japan, to teach about Japan within the context of their disciplines.

The Japan Seminar is a project of the University of Pennsylvania's Center for East Asian Studies and has, over the years, received funding from the Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission, the U.S. Department of Education's Center for International Education, the Japan Foundation's Center for Global Partnership, and the Freeman Foundation. All accredited U.S. institutions awarding baccalaureate degrees in the arts and sciences are eligible to participate.

Purpose and Goals

The study-tour of Japan during late July and early August of 2002 captured our imaginations and motivated us to seriously consider how we might integrate key experiences into our teaching about Japan. During the three week journey we often talked about how our Japan Seminar readings and experiences would shape and change courses that we would develop and teach in coming years. We represent five distinct academic disciplines, so it seemed appropriate to write separate essays, each one describing meaningful experiences that would be compelling and instructive regarding a careful examination of Japanese culture and society. We also provide examples of how we will engage students and enhance our teaching, while drawing on our scholarly knowledge/understanding of Japan. Our interdisciplinary efforts have implications for the development of collective and individual identity in a variety of cultural and pedagogical contexts (see *Interdisciplinary Connections*).

Searching for Memory

Gradually things around me came into focus. There were the shadowy forms of people, some of whom looked like walking ghosts. Others moved as though in pain, like scarecrows, their arms held out from their bodies with forearms and hands dangling... An old woman lay near me with an expression of suffering on her face; but she made no sound. Indeed, one thing was common to everyone I saw – complete silence.¹

Complete silence was also the only reaction that seemed acceptable that July morning as I stood looking at the watch that had stopped at 8:15, charred lunch boxes, melted bottles, students' burned summer uniforms, and human shadows in stone. 8:15 is a perfectly normal time for getting up and starting a new day, for having breakfast, for going to work – not for the destruction of an entire city, the death of 140,000 people, the beginning of a new era holding a new fear, and the rewriting of Japan's history.²

At the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, one can also see a replica of "Little Boy," that new technological wonder which was to guarantee peace when it exploded at 8:15, 580 meters above Hiroshima. One can hear the voices of the pilots in the planes which escorted the B-29 bomber carrying the deadly weapon, pilots excited about the success of the mission – and one can see the pictures of the devastation, of which only the A-Bomb Dome remains.

John Locke, in his famous *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, says that personal identity is based on consciousness, the consciousness of past events, our memory.³ So, it is the fact that I carry with

¹ Michihiko Hachiya, *Hiroshima Diary: The Journal of a Japanese Physician, August 6 - September 30, 1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1955), p. 4.

² See Naomi Shono's explanation of the effects of the bomb as well as figures of casualties in Gaynor Sekimori, trans., *Hibakusha: Survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki* (Tokyo: Kosei Publishing Co., 1986), p. 24.

³ John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (New York: Prometheus Books, 1994), Book II, Chapter XXVII, Section 9. Locke states, "For, since consciousness always accompanies thinking, and it is that

me memories of earlier times that guarantees my personal identity, my being the same person over time. As I walked the halls of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum I thought about identity, not personal identity, but the identity of a City, the identity of a Nation, and I thought about so many painful, horrific, silent memories now part of Hiroshima and its people and of Japan. To know one's memories is to know one's history and to know one's history is to know oneself. Both the East building of the museum, with its "Panorama of the Atomic Bombed City Area," and the West building, with its model of the A-bomb, provide us with an insight into the history of Hiroshima and of Japan. One wants to cry or shout, and yet remain silent and one wants to understand – the road to Modernity, Reformation, Transformation, Imperialism, and Defeat – and bring this knowledge to others, friends, students, to all who need to understand.

The Cenotaph for the A-bomb victims (Memorial Monument for Hiroshima), located at the center of Peace Memorial Park, honors the victims of the bombing. It is reminiscent of clay sculptures found in ancient burial mounds of the Kofun period. In a stone chamber under it are the names of the victims; more names are added every August 6. It would do us good to remember what is inscribed on this stone chamber holding the memories of many, "Let all the souls here rest in peace for we shall not repeat the evil if we want to avoid more painful silences."

Teaching is a way of remembering, of keeping in mind painful episodes of history. In my course, Japan and Modernity, I ask students to read narratives of *hibakusha*⁴ and to think about the significance of the relationship between personal narrative and memory, memory and history, and ultimately, to ask the question: How do we understand Modernity in light of what we learned about Hiroshima's painful memories? This is a difficult question, but one that nevertheless must be asked. Lisa Yoneyama's insightful book, *Hiroshima Traces*, informs our discussion and

which makes every one to be what he calls self, and thereby distinguishes himself from all other thinking things, in this alone consists personal identity, i.e., the sameness of a rational being; and as far as this consciousness can be extended backwards to any past action or thought, so far reaches the identity of that person; it is the same self now it was then; and it is by the same self with this present one that now reflects on it, that that action was done."

⁴ Sekimori, trans., *Hibakusha*.

helps us understand the complexities connected to particular acts of remembrance, understanding of the past, and a thrust towards the future.⁵ My aim is to carry out an exercise in remembering the experience of others, not only to learn more about the lives of particular Japanese involved in a momentous event, but also our own history.

Connection and Identity

On a hot, humid late July afternoon in 2002, my friend and I ascended a steep hill to the Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art. Walking up, we witnessed the trees of Hijiyama Park give way to a splendid structure, designed by the renowned architect Kisho Kurokawa and opened in May 1989. We saw a circular entrance connected by two long columns. Once inside the cool, shaded structure, we paused at the souvenir shop to regain our composure. Looking at an aerial photograph of the museum, I could see that Kurokawa had combined Western and Eastern features into the structure, a Western-style colonnade and an Eastern-style storehouse. (The Japanese storehouse is, in my view, similar to the Greek marketplace or *agora*, a place of assembly). This architectural combination of West and East complements the museum's holdings, giving the museum a universal appeal.

As my friend and I entered the various rooms housing the museum's permanent collection, we marveled at the contemporary art of both Japanese and Western artists. Yanagi Yukinori in *Akitsushima 50* (2000) and Yamaguchi Makio in *Square Stones and Round Stones* (1988) depict images of war and destruction, a pervasive theme in Hiroshima art. Tadanori Yokō in *Funeral Procession II* (1969-1985) powerfully captures this theme by depicting five Western people in the foreground, three young women and two young men, their faces irradiated by an atomic bomb blast, a disturbing reminder of the U.S. A-bombing of Hiroshima. On the other hand, Fernand Botero in *Little Bird* (1988) and Henry Moore in *The Arch* (1971) depict images of passing through air or space to new beginnings, perhaps. After a while, these Japanese and Western artworks began to fuse in my imagination, suggesting both the human history of destruction and the human need for renewal, for newness. As such, the Eastern and Western

⁵ Lisa Yoneyama, *Hiroshima Traces: Time, Space, and the Dialectics of Memory* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

artists in the collection offer tentative forms of communication with one another.

My visit to this museum was the singular experience of my journey to Japan because it undermined the central assertions of both Alex Kerr in *Lost Japan* and Patrick Smith in *Japan: A Reinterpretation* – i.e., the Japanese are unwilling to reveal who they are not only to strangers (*gaijin*) but also to themselves.⁶ According to Kerr, “[t]here is a vast chasm between the simplicity arriving foreigners often find in Japan and the furtive, unrevealed complexity that lies within. In this space the Japanese still make their hidden history – the record of their endeavor to achieve public, unmasked individuality.”⁷

I now realize that the Japanese do “achieve public, unmasked individuality” through their artwork. The singular vision and clarity conveyed by the mixed media of Japanese artists, architects, sculptors, fashion designers, etc., reveal a candid and at times intimate personality, one appealing to viewers who choose to read its unique message. While in Japan, as a participant in the 2002 Japan Seminar, I visited many art museums. From those experiences, I learned that the intimacy we prize so dearly in the West can also be discovered in the everyday artistic images that await Western visitors to Japan. The visit to the Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art clarified this impression, yielding an unexpected epiphany, a personal revelation that I recount here: As my friend and I wandered outside the museum and began contemplating Magdalena Abakanowicz’s movie theatre-like *Seats in Rock Garden* (1992-1993), we took photos of one another. I now realize that, like the images we witnessed, we were engaged in the postmodern condition of holding hands, of being momentarily connected.

One way to teach the mixed media of Japanese art is to study the interrelations among specific artistic forms. Take, for example, the work of two important twentieth-century artists Uemura Shoen (1875-1949) and Paul Jacoulet (1896-1960). Both artists have made significant contributions to *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints. Uemura experiments with traditional *ukiyo-e* depicting kimono-clad women, evoking the Edo tradition of *bijin-ga* (pictures of beautiful women). In *Beautiful Women in Snow* (1911), Uemura

⁶ Alex Kerr, *Lost Japan* (Oakland: Lonely Planet Books, 2001); and Patrick Smith, *Japan: A Reinterpretation* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998).

⁷ Kerr, *Lost Japan*, p. 39.

reveals a Western influence by capturing the movement of two women's garments in bold, flowing ink lines.⁸ She seems to evoke the *bijin-ga* traditions only to make it modern. Like Uemura, Jacoulet – Parisian born but who lived most of his life in Japan – also contributes to traditional *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints by depicting exotic settings, mainly influenced by his numerous visits to Micronesia from 1929-1937. To capture the exoticism of Micronesian women and the beauty of Micronesia itself, Jacoulet increased the number of blocks – on which artists layer colors – from 20 to 30 to as many as 200 blocks. As a consequence, he produced a modest number of woodblock prints. Further, he depicted women from East Asia, including Koreans, Ainu people, Chinese *bijin*, and even Western residents of Japan. His *Tattooed Women of Falalap, East Carolines* (1935) shows his mastery of the *bijin-ga* form while revealing his modernity in a kind of homage to Paul Gauguin.⁹ So his contribution to *ukiyo-e* woodblock printing was to internationalize this form. For me, Uemura and Jacoulet reveal their “unmasked individuality”; the teacher simply needs to understand the tradition and how Japanese artists continue to renew it.

Gender and Culture in Japan: Through the Prism of Politics and Economics

My pedagogical discussions in the classroom of Japan and its women allow students to discover sharp contrasts that straddle the time periods of Meiji, Taisho, Showa, and Heisei. Nowhere is this contrast felt so acutely as with the reading of anarchist women in the Meiji period – such as Kanno Suga, Ito Noe, and Kaneko Fumiko who questioned the dominant patriarchal paradigms and even espoused political violence as a relevant strategy for the re-creation of a new Japanese system – with that of the most recent one, Heisei, from 1989 onwards (described below).¹⁰ An article on

⁸ Jeff Hammond, “Bygone Beauties in the Modern Age,” *The Japan Times* (10/08/03).

⁹ Tai Kawabata, “Paul Jacoulet: The First Western Master of Woodblock,” *The Japan Times* (05/21/03).

¹⁰ Hélène Bowen Raddeker, “Resistance to Difference: Sexual Equality and its Law-ful and Out-law (Anarchist) Advocates in Imperial Japan,” *Intersections: Gender History and Culture in the Asian Context* 7 (2002) (<http://www.she.murdoch.edu.au/intersections/issue7/raddeker.html>).

these anarchist women by Hélène Raddeker stands in opposition to some of the personal observations I amassed during my trip to Japan.

The words of our Program Director, Dr. Cameron Hurst, expounding on the theme of gender in an email missive, were ringing in our ears as our journey through Japan unraveled its own curiosities.

There is still a greater division of roles between male and female along public and private lines...the old role of ‘good wife, wise mother’ is less acceptable to young women today...[However], *wait until you see the widespread proliferation of pornography*, and then let me know what you feel about the progress of women.¹¹ [Emphasis mine]

“Irasshaimase...” was the welcome greeting that erupted almost every time I stepped into a department store (or a pharmacy, shoe store, or restaurant for that matter). I would turn around startled, trying to locate the group of children from whom such a cacophonous salutation emerged. To my shock, I noted that the childish voices belonged to the young women assistants whose ages usually ranged from 16 to 30 years – like Italian operatic castrati, the saleswomen had preserved their infantile vocals to be appealing to their clients (and society).

Back in my hotel room (be it in Tokyo or Kyoto, Himeji or Kurashiki), the recurring theme of “capturing the infant in the woman” was evidenced in the glossy pamphlets surrounding the omnipresent television. The pamphlets advertised pay-per-view TV channels that would allow the (male) guest to consume child-like Japanese showgirls on screen for a moderate fee. In the majority of these pictures, the obsession with girls in school uniform or a “schoolgirl look” was obvious and it captured my attention – morality and cultural relativism notwithstanding. My program director’s email message: “*wait until you see the widespread proliferation of pornography*” echoed in my ears.

I pushed the glossies aside and in the search for some TV news, clicked my way through Japanese soaps, MTV, and films. My attention centered on the TV advertisements. Once again, infantile female voices screeched from the screen – selling laundry detergents, washing machines, cookies, and colas – and assailed my senses, reminding me of Mary

¹¹ Email from Dr. Cameron Hurst, Wednesday, May 8, 2002.

Wollstonecraft's words: "Kind instructors! What were we created for? To remain, it may be said, innocent; they mean in a state of childhood. We might as well never have been born..."¹² Eighteenth century statements by Wollstonecraft, a diatribe against those such as Rousseau who had described women as "graceful creatures in perpetual childhood," did not appear irrelevant in the context of Japanese women and the media.¹³ The television, as a mirror of contemporary culture, was preserving the child-ness in the voices of adult women even while they were courted as marketing and consuming agents of capitalist society. And where were the women in the same boardroom? Wollstonecraft's warning words rang in my ears, "She [woman] was created to be the toy of man, his rattle, and it must jingle in his ears whenever, dismissing reason, he chooses to be amused."¹⁴ The television images were stereotypically reinforcing women's place in the home, with female models ardently monopolizing the marketing of washing machines and baby items, while men sold electronics and computer games. One wondered, who in the advertising media business could possibly be persisting in producing commercials that trapped women in their childhood? A trip to a Tokyo-based advertising firm – ranked as one of the largest in the Asia Pacific region (that will remain unnamed in this article) – provided a possible response to this question.

The advertising firm, housed in an edifice that seemed to epitomize post-modern architecture in its neo-gothic appearance, only seemed to counter the not-so-modern status of women *in* the corporate world of the media business. The nine of us (2 program directors and the faculty), sat around a large polished table in an aesthetic boardroom to listen to three male executives who briefed us about the minutiae of the media business.

¹² Mary Wollstonecraft, "Observations on the State of Degradation to Which Woman Is Reduced by Various Causes" [Chapter IV], in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, ed. Carol H. Poston (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1988).

¹³ Mary Wollstonecraft points out, "Rousseau declares that a woman should never for a moment feel herself independent, that she should be governed by fear to exercise her natural cunning, and made a coquettish slave in order to render her a more alluring object of desire, a sweeter companion to man, whenever he chooses to relax himself." Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, Chapter IV.

¹⁴ Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, Chapter IV.

One of them (in carefully casual “Parisian” clothes) presented a suave slide show on the successful message of cross-cultural values (including race and gender issues) relayed by their advertisements and the products that they sold – what an irony! And where were the women?

The two women who were present in the room, distributed handouts, served drinks, and helped set up the show. They sat against the wall (not around the table with the rest of their colleagues and us), unobtrusive, and responded only when spoken to – thus confirming my premeditated opinion about the inconspicuous status of women in the (advertising) workplace.

Back in my class on Modern Japan at Lynchburg College, I had to present the place of Japan in the modern world and the complexity of gender relations that challenge simplistic and reductionist perspectives. Without glossing over my foregoing narrative, I resumed my lecture/discussion by stating that the face of peace in post-war Japan is female. I narrated to my students my astonishment at seeing the gargantuan “tribute to the unknown soldier of World War II” which was the imposing Kannon, the Buddhist goddess of compassion (a re-embodiment of the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara) located in Kyoto – an 80 ft. piece of concrete weighing 500 tons. I further noted that the first of the Japanese contingent of UN peacekeeping force involving the Japanese Self-Defense Forces, sent to East Timor in 2002, had seven women in its Engineering Unit.

I do not fail to inform my students that Japan, in the paradox of its everyday gender relations, also had Kawaguchi Yoriko, a woman Foreign Minister in Prime Minister Koizumi’s cabinet (the second of the two women he has nominated for the post)¹⁵ – this is not very different from the only two women in the United States, Madeleine Albright and Condoleezza Rice, who have enjoyed such positions in the upper echelons of the foreign policy circle as Secretary of State.

Before undertaking the unforgettable trip, all seven participants in the Seminar were immersed in listserv discussions of readings, one of which was based on the declarations of a Harvard-educated feminist, Sumiko Iwao, who underscored the point that it is narrow-minded to view Japanese women as merely powerless victims with no agency and control in

¹⁵ The previous woman foreign minister was Tanaka Makiko who served in the position from 2001-2002.

society.¹⁶ Indeed, she claimed, the career-oriented husband that a Japanese woman selects provides her with the money, time, and the climate that is conducive for her to pursue the “empowering vocations” [my words] of shopping and other cultural activities! Thus, while Japan and the average Japanese woman struggles between traditional roles juxtaposed with modern predicaments, at the political level some minimal steps have been taken to show the world that Japan has put its past behind it, but not necessarily to remedy the status quo regarding the gender dynamic in the public sphere.

I remind my students that empowerment may be a state of mind, nonetheless, the state of the woman’s body and how it is perceived, the status of her work as an equal in society and as an active agent in the public sphere, are worthier goals to aspire to in any society – be it in Japan or in the U.S. – than the mere status of a childish, naïve, and therefore desirable woman.

A Land of Contradictions

Serenity, ancient temples of worship, quiet landscaped gardens, all intermingled with modern structures of high finance and advanced technological achievement are the “Madison Avenue-like” trademarks that delineate the great Asian nation of Japan. Packed and ready to go, I would finally behold firsthand what had been vicarious knowledge most of my life.

I was elated to have been chosen as one of the participants in the 2002 Japan Seminar. After completing the recommended books and articles as well as participating in discussions pertaining to Japanese studies, my anticipation of the impending trip was at a fever pitch. As a social work educator, it is critical that I convey to my students the ability to ascertain knowledge relating to diversity, oppression, discrimination, and the drive for social justice as they impact subjugated populations. The trip to Japan could only be a once in a lifetime experience that aptly addressed the issues at hand.

Arriving in Japan, I found it hot and humid like Oklahoma City when a visitor has forgotten to wear a big hat for protection from the intense sun. Despite the heat, the visit to the Hiroshima City Museum of Modern

¹⁶Sumiko Iwao, *Japanese Woman: Traditional Image and Changing Reality* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994).

Art exemplified the artistry and majesty of Japanese culture in both structural splendors, as well as in the artifacts on display. The meticulously landscaped gardens and trees that had been tended with minute detail were mesmerizing. The Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park illustrated Japanese creativity, while echoing the anguish of the tens of thousands who had been incinerated in the atomic blasts at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. But through all the recognition of the artistry, majesty, craftsmanship, and attention to detail, my social work lenses easily spotted the modern-day scourges of discrimination and homelessness that often plague the great metropolises around the globe.

Imagine being caught up in the euphoria of the splendor and grandeur of the Tokyo Contemporary Art Museum, while simultaneously witnessing a massive park, filled with the homeless, their blue canvas tents forming a surrealist landscape. Here people wash their clothes in a beautiful pond, while the rest of humanity quickly criss-crosses their meager existence. Some of the museum patrons acted like they did not care, while others were probably glad that poverty was not their plight.

Lectures during our visit were very informative. Even though Japan is basically a monolithic society, it is experiencing problems usually attributed to pluralistic societies. Spousal abuse was on the rise in 2002 coupled with divorce rates soaring to an all-time high.¹⁷ Japan does not promote a barrier-free environment for its citizenry. As a result, many of the physically challenged are absent from the day-to-day routines of living.

The Japanese experience monumental struggles with the acceptance and assimilation of foreigners. For years, Koreans were forced to immigrate to the Japanese islands, only to experience extreme discrimination. Even today, Koreans make fifty percent less than their Japanese counterparts in positions of similar employment.¹⁸ They, like most foreigners, are only allowed limited participation in many activities afforded to the rest of the citizenry. Add gender discrimination, and a social worker could easily work around the clock correcting an array of social

¹⁷ Kumiko Fujimura-Fanselow, "Women in Japan." Japan Seminar Lecture: Tokyo (August 1, 2002).

¹⁸ Chegal Tok, "Koreans in Japan." Japan Seminar Lecture: Hiroshima (July 20, 2002).

injustices. Majesty, artistry, beauty, technology, discrimination and social injustice – that’s Japan.¹⁹

My social work students seek to develop an accurate picture of our diverse world. The greater their exposure to similarities and differences, the more they respect and celebrate diversity. Students reflect on ideas and values different from their own, explore other cultures, and recognize their own cultural biases and differences. They experience diverse ideas, worldviews, and peoples as a means of enhancing their learning and preparation for work and membership in a diverse society/world. I have developed two assignments that not only challenge students to understand Japan, but to gain an awareness of our modern global society.

The objective of my “Human Needs” paper is an accurate analysis of economic and social welfare developments from a global perspective. Students focus on Japan and the U.S. by comparing and contrasting the needs of people (e.g., housing, social services, employment, and medicine). I label another assignment: “Ethnic Group Raising Your Child.” Groups of students play the role of Japanese parents raising Japanese infants (male and female) to age 21. The objective is to identify one’s own values relating to diverse groups and describe how these values influence thinking and behavior that are relevant to the profession of Social Work. These assignments have successfully exposed my students to a critical and needed understanding of diverse human activities and the contradictions of modern societies.

Perceptions of the Other

For months we had been reading about a very ancient and complicated society. But would we be able to provide an authentic picture for our students after the 2002 Japan Seminar (JS) ended? This question led me to wonder how the Japanese view America. We share a common history, but does this mutuality assure accurate perceptions? Americans like to think they “know” Japan. Do the Japanese really “understand” America?

¹⁹ A number of scholarly publications examine modern social conditions in Japan. Two relevant books relating to family and immigration experiences in Japan are Edwin Reischauer and Marius Jansen, *The Japanese Today: Change and Continuity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995); and Yoshio Sugimoto, *An Introduction to Japanese Society* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

How do individuals in these cultures encounter the Other? What are the educational implications of this social engagement?²⁰ I find that my students better understand Japan when they know how the Japanese view aspects of American society.²¹

These questions and concerns formed the basis of my JS project. The task certainly could not be completed after just one visit to Japan, but I needed to start somewhere. Professor Kazuyuki Matsuo (Sophia University in Tokyo), who had lived in the United States while completing his Ph.D. at Georgetown University, graciously invited me to attend his class, “United States Social History.” Twelve students would present preliminary Senior Thesis findings addressing various aspects of American society and culture. This seemed like an excellent opportunity to experience how the Japanese view America, “the Other.”

Professor Matsuo asked me to meet him in front of the Sophia Library at 2 p.m. on July 15, just one day after we arrived in Japan. My body said it was 11 p.m. back home in Ann Arbor, but the stifling heat and humidity did not prevent me from arriving early to enjoy the commotion of finals week. At the appointed time, walking through a sea of students, Professor Matsuo greeted me and suggested we take a crowded elevator to the Institute of American and Canadian Studies, seven stories above Tokyo.

²⁰ George Herbert Mead, a well known twentieth century sociologist, recognized the importance of individuals successfully engaged with and understanding “significant” and “generalized” Other. This knowledge/interaction contributes to successful socialization and a healthy formation of self. Tolerance of the Other and unknown can have positive and desirable social/pedagogical outcomes. See Mead, *Mind, Self and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934, rpt. 1971).

²¹ Toward this end, I ask my students to read at least one book or article written by a Japanese citizen about the United States. For example, if a class is taught on gender or religion in Japan, my students benefit greatly from knowing how the Japanese view gender/religion in America. This experience helps to reduce a smug cultural superiority and enables U.S. students to gain a fresher and more objective view of Japan. The exercise also encourages tolerance and a productive understanding of the “Other.” A very useful journal providing a scholarly/Japanese view of North America, *The Journal of American and Canadian Studies*, is published by Sophia University through the Institute of American and Canadian Studies.

As students filed into the Institute, they also greeted me and found seats at the seminar table. When Professor Matsuo started class by identifying how we would proceed, many of the students seemed nervous. Each person would make a short ten-minute presentation, and I would have an opportunity to ask questions.

For the next two hours Japanese students described American society. My subjective state merged with their objective analyses, and I recognized myself in the words they spoke. I became the “Other.” Some students were interested in elements of African-American music, including rap and hip-hop, reflecting how African culture had shaped American culture. Another focused on how minstrel shows of the early 20th century helped to reinforce racial stereotypes, while contrasting this “entertainment” with Spike Lee’s critical portrayal of American race relations. There was a general concern with the changing nature of the American family, including how homosexual couples have trouble adopting children. One student asked whether the growing number of street children in the U.S. reflected a form of resistance to the pressures of the nuclear/isolated family and a highly individualistic culture. Still another explored the introduction of Zen Buddhism to America, how Zen had subsequently changed, and was then reintroduced back to Japan in “purer form.” One student who recently returned from New York was fascinated with how an evolving American coffee culture (e.g., Starbucks) influences Japan, especially as a direct challenge to the Japanese tea ceremony. Finally, students wondered how and why the Internet emerged in the U.S.

The insight of these Sophia students was impressive. They understood aspects of American culture better than many of my own students. By exploring how features of social structure and culture are constructed over time, they had developed a more complete picture of America. By seeing the “Other,” they also appreciated themselves. When students, whether in Japan or the U.S., study different societies, they not only move outside their own history, but also develop tolerance of difference. As we teach our students about Japan, they too can see how American culture constrains and constructs. By taking the role of the “Other,” we appreciate the beauty and complexity of worlds beyond direct experience. These efforts, on both sides of the Pacific Ocean, create an invaluable recognition of our common humanity.

Interdisciplinary Connections

These essays not only provide glimpses of experience in Japan, but also relate examples of how we approach our teaching about Japan and other social settings. One theme that emerges in our analyses elaborates (directly and indirectly) on how identity is perplexingly achieved within complicated cultural contexts. We explore, in part, how societies and individuals share this common quest and dilemma. By examining a diverse understanding of our Japan Seminar experiences, we are better able to show our students how identities inevitably emerge in all social contexts.

Ortega suggests that knowing the past and its complexities is to understand how one's identity emerges and flows into the future. An authentic balance between the past and present provides a reasonable and more productive vision of the future. Manian considers unequal gender relations and the tension between women as active agents in the public sphere and traditional marriage partners with childish characteristics. The experience of gender identity in public and private realms is a dilemma of modernity in Japan, as well as other countries experiencing rapid change. Losey explores how the Japanese are unwilling to reveal who/what they are to others and even to themselves. Art unmasks this public display and reveals a candid and intimate identity – authenticity. Individual and collective identity can be and is revealed through art. Scott examines how Japanese identity is expressed through the artistry, technology, and progress easily experienced and observed. A more troubling aspect of this collective identity emerges as we see manifestations of discrimination allowed to persist within social contexts. Individuals and groups are left to resolve the resulting and inevitable contradictions. Finally, Lang posits that when studying and encountering other cultures, we experience the possibility and uneasiness of knowing the other and by extension better knowing ourselves. This common and tentative experience, regardless of cultural context, can shape identity, as individuals come to encounter, tolerate, understand, and celebrate difference. Efforts to effectively use these interdisciplinary connections have numerous applications in the classroom.

Conclusion

From the outset, participants in the Japan Seminar have embraced the opportunity the Seminar offers them to become serious students of Japan. The quality of their engagement with the topic is evident in their contributions to the project listserv, the scope of their individual research projects, as well as the new courses they have created. By their own

evaluations, those of their institutions and the project directors, they have progressed rapidly in their general understanding of Japan.

Although each Japan Seminar officially lasts only one year, participation by some institutions has had a pronounced “ripple effect,” in terms of their engagement with Japan. Several colleges that prior to participation had not taught Japanese language now do so. Newly developed courses incorporating content on Japan have created student demand for these language courses. In addition, several Japan Seminar institutions have gone on to develop partner institution relationships with universities in Japan and are now sending and receiving exchange students. The momentum that the Japan Seminar has helped faculty create on campuses extends well beyond the initial year of participation.

In conclusion, the Japan Seminar has always served a variety of campus constituencies – the individual faculty who participate, the institutions that expand their capacity to offer Japan-related coursework, and, perhaps most important of all, the students whose lives are changed through a new engagement with Japan.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A JAPANESE STUDIES PROGRAM AT FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY*

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Overview of the Development of Japanese Studies in Florida

Less than ten years ago, Florida International University (FIU) in Miami – one of ten public universities in the state of Florida system of higher education and ranked number one in the country in serving Hispanics – offered only a short list of basic Japanese language courses taught by a part-time instructor and very few area studies courses. Now, FIU's Institute for Asian Studies (IAS) offers at least six language classes per semester by two full-time instructors and adjuncts with nearly 300 students attending each academic year, plus a strengthened study abroad program. There are also a number of courses regularly offered in various disciplines, including religion, history, international relations, and political science, including an innovative and popular course on Zen and the Art of Tea Ceremony. Japanese studies, which includes creative elements in research and publication projects, conferences, outreach activities, cultural events, study abroad initiatives, student clubs, and the like, has become a significantly well-rounded program that forms the core of the recently implemented Asian Studies B.A. (2002) and M.A. (2005) programs.

Based in large part on a combination of grants from the U.S. Department of Education, The Japan Foundation and other private funding agencies, IAS has supplemented curriculum in Japanese studies through the recruitment of specialized faculty and the creation of new courses. Japanese language and area studies at FIU has grown into a substantial program that is one of the leaders not only in the state university system, but in the Southeast region of the U.S. By working with other institutions in Florida, ranging from the University of Florida, Florida Atlantic University, and Miami-Dade College to community organizations, such as the Office of the Japanese Consul-General in Miami, the prestigious Morikami Museum and

*Note: This was originally presented at the 2005 annual meeting of the Japanese Studies Association of Brazil held at the University of Brasilia. Other panelists included representatives from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, France, Mexico, and Russia.

Japanese Gardens, the Southeast US-Japan Trade Association, and the Association of Florida Teachers of Japanese, IAS has helped build a network of Japan-related education and outreach associations. Known as *JapaNet*, this has been recognized by the Japanese Foreign Ministry for promoting friendship and exchanges between countries. During the past year, the Japan Foundation selected FIU on two occasions to sponsor a language pedagogy workshop in summer 2005 and to support a panel on the state of Japanese Studies in the Southern U.S. as part of the Southern Japan Seminar meeting held in March 2006.

In the late 1990s, some faculty at FIU were skeptical about whether a Japanese studies program would ever be able to develop successfully in Miami, often called the “capital” of Latin America with its focus on the southern hemisphere. There was a chicken-or-egg issue of how to get started. If the courses were not well enrolled, how could we be confident about the extent of student interest? At the same time, how would it be possible that student demand be mobilized and demonstrated if the curriculum was not available and if interested students were not sure that beginning the study of Japanese would pay off in completing two or three years of coursework along with related educational opportunities. The Institute for Asian Studies, then a fledgling interdisciplinary program, took a “build it and they will come” approach that has proven to be a great success, in large part through the support of higher administration, including President Modesto “Mitch” Maidique and then Provost Mark B. Rosenberg, currently Chancellor of the Board of Governors of the state system.

By taking small, incremental steps at program building and through gradually increasing the course offerings in language and area studies, a strong level of student support was grown and maintained. Currently, momentum is increasing on different fronts. Academic programs including the major, minor, masters, and Japanese Studies certificate enroll over 250 students at undergraduate and graduate levels, and research components include the publication of this annual peer-reviewed journal. Study abroad initiatives have resulted in successful intensive summer language programs housed at partner institutions Ritsumeikan University and Aichi Prefectural University, attracting students from throughout the state university system, in addition to semester exchanges with Ritsumeikan, Kansai Gaidai, and Kanda University of International Studies.

IAS EXTERNAL FUNDING**Department of Education**

Asian Studies Initiative (1997-2000), \$160,000

Asian Globalization and Latin America (1999-2002), \$160,000

South Florida Consortium for Asian Arts and Culture (2001-2005),
\$365,000

Japan Foundation

Library Support Program-Category A2 (2002), \$5,000

Japan-Language Teaching Material Donation Program (2002, 2003),
\$1,000

Training Program for Teachers of the Japanese Language (2003), \$5,000

Support Program for Japanese-Language Courses Abroad-
Salary Assistance (2003), \$71,000

Center for Global Partnership - Grass Roots Educational/Public
Outreach Program (2004-2007), \$60,000

Miscellaneous Grants for Pedagogy and Teaching Resources (2001-2006),
\$25,000

National Endowment for the Humanities

Development of Asian Languages (2006-2008), \$75,000

Fu Foundation

Scholarships for Students Traveling to Asia (2001-2006), \$18,000

Outreach has become a major focus through a Center for Global Partnership-funded professional development project for training teachers selected from K-12 schools throughout South Florida to infuse Japanese studies materials in their classrooms. The teachers participate in workshops featuring FIU faculty and a variety of national and international speakers. A wide variety of cultural events both on and off campus have included a lecture by Ambassador Ryozo Kato in May 2005 and the recent performance of a composition for Taiko and Flamenco created especially for IAS by then Dean of the School of Music and renowned composer, Fredrick Kaufman. The performance of “Kaminarimon” was applauded by the *Miami Herald* in 2002 as “one of the most creative artistic events of the year,” and has been expanded and revised for additional performances at venues around the country.

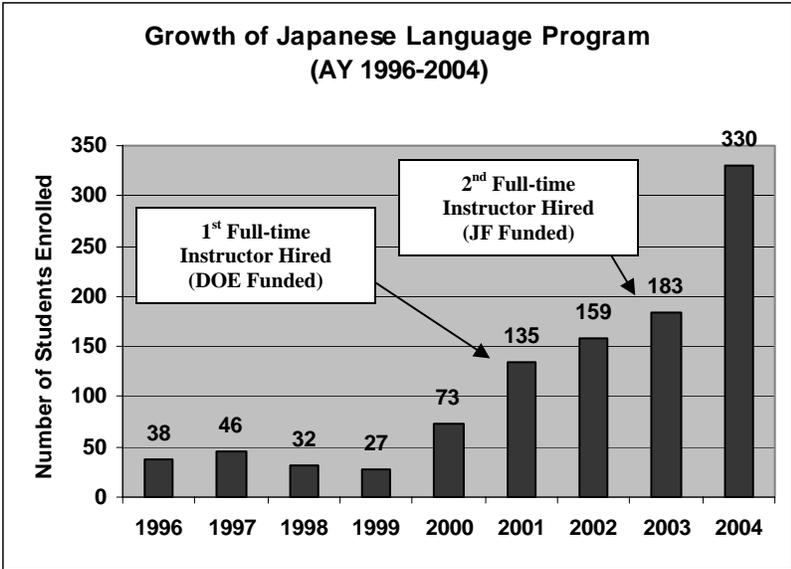
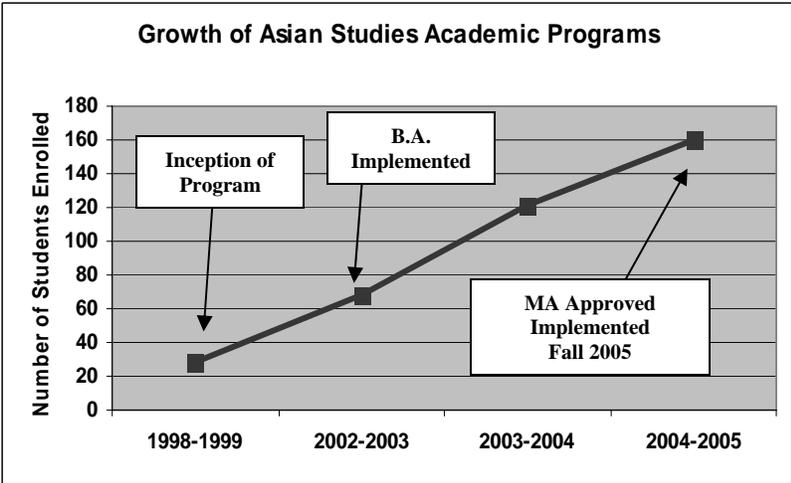
In the past couple of years, a new form of skepticism has arisen with regards to Japan’s decline in the world scene, while interest in China and other Asian countries is coming on strong. While the Institute for Asian

Studies is eager to see and accommodate the development of demand for Chinese studies and Asian studies more broadly conceived, we note that national trends show that there remains a longstanding and sustained interest in Japanese society and culture, with Japanese language enrollments holding their own. In some studies, Japanese is listed as the language with the third highest enrollments in American colleges (following Spanish and French, especially since demand for other European languages such as German and Portuguese has been diminishing, although it is the case that Chinese studies has been increasing). Our conviction is that Japanese studies is not a passing fad because the impact of Japan remains strong and pervasive, as can be seen by the ongoing popularity in the West of the “3N’s”: Nintendo, Ninjas, and aNime.

Growth of Japanese Language Enrollments and Asian Studies Academic Programs

IAS offers a variety of undergraduate and graduate academic programs. On the undergraduate level there is a B.A., a minor, and several certificate programs, including a certificate in Japanese Studies. At the graduate level, there is a certificate and a newly approved M.A. Because of the strength of our Japanese studies program, nearly 90 percent of Asian Studies majors are currently concentrating in Japanese. An important development was the approval of the major as a “stand-alone” program, although many students pursue a second major in international relations or international business.

Other developments that have enabled the programs to grow include: 1) strong student clubs, including the Anything Goes Anime Club, said to be the largest student organization on campus that sponsors conferences every summer with over a thousand attendees, the Asian Student Union, which produces cultural events in the student center, and several specialty clubs for martial arts; 2) new acquisitions of Japanese vernacular reference materials for the library; and 3) continuous upgrade of the language lab and internet learning resources. The first table below shows the steady growth of IAS academic programs, and the second table demonstrates how the language enrollments have been steadily increasing with the implementation of full-time instructors supported by external funding.



The Asian Globalization and Latin America Project (AGLA) is an innovative new trans-regional program, which originated at Florida International University partly through funding support from a U.S. Department of Education Title VI grant. This program brings together two major area studies programs at FIU, the prestigious Latin American and Caribbean Center, which has long been designated a National Resource Center, and the rapidly growing Institute for Asian Studies. The project focuses on links or points of intersection between the regions of Asia and Latin America by examining issues such as migration, identity, trade, education, and technology, with an emphasis on contemporary society as part of a comprehensive investigation of the significance of globalization affecting all regions.

Because this program remains unique, every month we receive messages from people around the country and the world who are eager to learn or participate in our project, and comment on how innovative it is. Similar projects emphasizing research have been undertaken at the University of California at San Diego and at Stanford University, and there may be initiatives at other universities as well. However, the FIU project seems to be the only one with a significant curriculum component including an ongoing certificate program that offers students a credential, making them competitive for graduate school or the workforce.

The following is a list of some of the main speakers who have contributed to the project:

Japanese Brazilian Migrants in Japan (Joshua Roth, Mt. Holyoke College)

Japanese Brazilian Identity and Japanese Immigrants, Other Minorities and Ethnic Identity in Brazil (Jeffrey Lesser, Emory University)

Kaminarimon: Taiko and Flamenco Performance
(Fred Kaufman and Karen Fuller, Florida International University, School of Music)

The Shakuhachi and Japanese Subcultures in South America (Dale Olsen, Florida State University)

Japanese Butoh Dance (Christine Grenier)

Butoh Dance Demonstration (Helena Thevenot)

Japanese Dance Traditions in Brazil (Susana Yamauchi, Japanese Brazilian dancer/choreographer)

Asian Cults in Brazil (Ronan Pereira, University of Brasilia's Center of Asian Studies)

Zen Buddhism in Brazil (Cristina Rocha, University of Western Sydney)

Nikkeijin in Japan (Natali Garcia-Diaz, FIU Student)

In addition, several lectures have stressed the role of Chinese in Cuba, including:

The People's Republic of China in Latin America: Economics or Strategic Maneuvering?

(Speakers and Discussants: Ralph S. Clem, FIU; Bud Cole, National Defense University; Dave Finkelstein, Center for Naval Intelligence; Linda Robinson, Harvard University; Jack Sweeney, Strategic Forecasting; Cynthia Watson, National Defense University)

Chinese Ethnic Communities in Cuba (Kathleen Lopez, University of Michigan)

Asian Languages in the United States (Yu-Lan Lin, Boston Public Schools)

The table below is a partial list of some of the new and infused interdisciplinary courses featuring the Asia-Latin America connection in cultural studies such as migration and diaspora or political economy including trade and commerce.

New and Infused Courses	
Department	Course Title
International Relations	Asia and Latin America in World Affairs
International Relations	International Relations of Developing and Third World Countries
Modern Languages	Asian & Latin Heritage Languages in North America
Modern Languages	Japanese Culture and Calligraphy
Modern Languages	Asia in 19th Century Hispanic Literature
Modern Languages	Eastern Thought & Latin American Literature
Religious Studies	Sacred Space, Sacred Travels
Religious Studies	Asian Religions in the Americas
Sociology/Anthropology	Labor Movements in Developing Countries
Sociology/Anthropology	Globalization and Society
Theater/Dance	World Perspectives in Dance

The Consortium Approach in Florida

In addition to collaborating with Title VI centers at FIU, including the Latin America and Caribbean Center, the Center for Transnational and Comparative Studies, and the Center for International Business Education and Research, Asian Studies has grown by working with other universities in Florida. With the Asian Studies Program at the University of Florida (UF) in Gainesville, we have formed the Florida East Asia Consortium, a dynamic network for organizing events and coordinating outreach efforts, such as a conference on Japanese films and a symposium on the theoretical writings of Natsume Soseki featuring an international group of scholars. UF is the flagship school in the state system and has an outstanding program in Asian languages and literatures supported in part by Freeman Foundation funding and producing over 50 Japanese majors per year. More locally, we have established the South Florida Consortium for Asian Arts and Culture involving Florida Atlantic University and Miami-Dade College, as well as

the Morikami Museum. Furthermore, we work closely with the Florida-Japan Linkage Institute housed at the University of West Florida, which has hosted two Florida-Japan Summit conferences, and other faculty statewide, particularly John Maraldo of the University of North Florida.

Study Abroad

IAS encourages study abroad opportunities for students to Japan, including semester or year-long exchange with Ritsumeikan University, Kanda University of International Studies, and Kansai Gaidai University. In summer 2005, we offered a new intensive language program in collaboration with Aichi Prefectural University (APU). The group of 15 students spent six weeks at the APU campus located outside Nagoya and took team-taught courses in Japanese language and culture as well as economics, history, and international relations. They also had the opportunity to visit Kyoto and Tokyo, and to experience directly the Japanese lifestyle through weekend homestays. This program, the first of its kind in the state system and successful in recruiting students from other universities in Florida, has been expanded to include Ritsumeikan. In addition, IAS has been gradually increasing the number of JET participants, having sent a dozen graduates in the past three years – the second highest number among universities in the state system.

Japan-Related Events

IAS sponsors activities with local businesses, colleges, schools, and other institutions to promote an awareness of Asian and Asian-American culture. Sponsored by IAS, the Southern Japan Seminar held March 3-4, 2006 in Coral Gables included a panel on linguistics organized by Stan Dubinsky (University of South Carolina), and featured lectures by Ann Wehmeyer (University of Florida) and Mark Ravina (Emory University) on the state of the Japanese studies field in the southern region. The Seminar held its third spring meeting at the Wolfsonian-FIU Museum on South Beach on February 25-26, 2005. It included a keynote presentation by Jeffrey Lesser (Emory University), *The Pacific Rim in the Atlantic World: Imagining Brazil's Japanese*, on the meaning of being Japanese and the role of the Japanese in Brazil. Following were two panels. One was on modernization, featuring John Mertz (North Carolina State University) and Martha Chaiklan (Milwaukee Public Museum). The other panel focused on women and society, and included discussions by Jan Bardsley and Hiroko Hirakawa (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), and Kinko Ito

(University of Arkansas). The Seminar meeting ended with a roundtable discussion on global affairs in the post-Perry era. The Seminar will hold its next meeting on Japanese Business on November 17-18, 2006.

In collaboration with the Consulate General of Japan in Miami, FIU was proud to host Japanese Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the United States, Ryozo Kato, who spoke about US-Japan Relations, in addition to several other “hot topics” on May 10, 2005. In his speech, the Ambassador also discussed Japan’s presence in Iraq, the situation in Korea, and future relations with China.

Between June 26-July 2, 2005 FIU had the privilege of hosting a state-wide professional development workshop for Japanese instructors held by The Japan Foundation Los Angeles Office. FIU instructors Asuka Haraguchi and Hiromi Tanis helped coordinate and also participated in the program. As Vice President of the Association for Florida Teachers of Japanese (AFTJ), Haraguchi also works closely with K-12 teachers in the state to develop standardized curriculum.

Research and Publications

IAS in conjunction with the Southern Japan Seminar publishes an annual peer-reviewed journal, *Japan Studies Review*, edited by Steven Heine, which involves interdisciplinary studies of modern Japan. The current volume (Vol. X, 2006) includes articles on Tokugawa era poetry theorist Kagami Shikō, the recent boom in the use of subtitles in Japanese television, the local importance of laquerware in the Tsugaru region, and the Korean television program “Winter Sonata” and its relation to Japan. Also appearing are featured essays, including one that provides a detailed view of Japanese studies and another dealing with the Japanese view of Nikkeijin. Past issues have included articles on the Japanese in Latin America and the Caribbean such as:

1. *Japanese Religions and Religious Diversity in Brazil* (Vol. III, 1999) by Ronan Pereira.
2. *The Appropriation of Zen Buddhism in Brazil* (Vol. IV, 2000) by Cristina Rocha.
3. *Circle K Recipes and Circle K Rules* (Vol. V, 2001) by Karen Tei Yamashita.

4. *Transcultural Possessions in/of Mahikari: Religious Syncretism in Martinique* (Vol. VI, 2002) by Erin Weston.

5. *Foreign Workers in Japan: A Look at Japanese Cultural Perspectives Regarding Nikkeijin* (Vol. X, 2006) by Natali Garcia-Diaz.

In the past few years Steven Heine, director of IAS, has presented lectures at the University of London School of Oriental and African Studies, Cambridge, Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Columbia, Pennsylvania, Hawaii, Pennsylvania, UCLA, Emory, Florida, and Florida Atlantic, in addition to the University of Tokyo and Komazawa University. Among his recent publications are *White Collar Zen: Using Zen Principles to Overcome Obstacles and Achieve Your Career Goals* (Oxford University Press, 2005), an edited book with Dale S. Wright, *Zen Classics: Formative Texts in the History of Zen Buddhism* (Oxford University Press, 2006), and an article, "Zen in the Workplace: Applying Anti-Structure to Enhance Structure," in *Global Business Language* 9 (2004), pp. 95-106.

Laura Nenzi, assistant professor of History and IAS assistant director for Asian area studies, has published articles in prestigious journals including *Monumenta Nipponica* and *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*. Also, her manuscript entitled *Intersections: The Place of Recreational Travel in Edo Culture and Society*, was accepted by the University of Hawaii Press and is forthcoming. Nenzi has presented papers at the national meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, and the International Conference of the European Association of Japanese Studies. This past year, she also presented lectures at Harvard University and Oxford University.

Paul Kowert, associate professor of International Relations and IAS Graduate Director, has received support from the Social Science Research Council and the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science for his continuing research on the causes and limits of national identity in US-Japan relations for which he has been conducting research in Kyoto and Aichi prefecture. Kowert also teaches a highly successful course on U.S.-Japan relations, and recently created a new graduate course entitled "New Asian Century."

Asuka Haraguchi, instructor of Japanese and IAS Assistant Director for Asian languages, won the Japanese Ambassador Cup, a prestigious national award in Shotokan karate, and was selected to be a member of the U.S. national team. She has also been elected to serve as the

vice president of the Association of Florida Teachers of Japanese, including organizing the annual Japan Bowl and speech contests for K-16 students. Haraguchi has received several Japan Foundation awards for pedagogy and teaching materials.

Bongkil Chung, Professor of Philosophy, teaches Buddhist thought and the philosophical traditions of China and Japan, and is an expert on Korean Buddhism. Chung has published a major translation of the Korean Won Buddhist school teachings published by the University of Hawaii Press. Eric Messersmith, full-time lecturer of Asian Studies, teaches several courses at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, such as Zen and Tea Ceremony, International Relations of East Asia, Politics of the Far East, and History of Japan. In addition to his regular teaching load, Messersmith recently developed a new, innovative online course on the cultures of Asia. This course will be offered on a regular basis and will be available to students at FIU and other schools. He also helps to organize cultural events such as tea and martial arts demonstrations. Messersmith serves as the faculty advisor for the very popular Shorinji Kempo student club.

In addition, there is faculty strength in FIU professional schools, especially the Colleges of Business and Law, which is planning to develop a study abroad trip to Japan. Faculty at other institutions in South Florida, including Florida Atlantic University, University of Miami, and Miami-Dade College, along with the very active Association of Florida Teachers of Japanese, provide a base for research and teaching initiatives, as well as for outreach programs.

***JapaNet*: South Florida's Center for Studies of Japan in the Global Environment**

A major component of *JapaNet* is a professional development project for certified K-12 teachers and other participants in South Florida funded by the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership (2004-2007), as well as a network of Japan related organizations in South Florida. The project is an ideal introduction to Japanese culture, history, and society that demonstrates to teachers how to infuse Japanese materials into their classrooms. In addition to these topics, the project develops the following three themes:

a) Japan-U.S. Relations in the Post-Perry Era: Building on the 2003-04 celebrations of the arrival of Perry and opening of Japan-U.S. relations taking place in Miami, this theme examines developments in public affairs

and political theory, including contemporary trade and economic issues with an emphasis on pre- and post-war eras.

b) Japanese Migrations to the Americas and National Identity: In connection with the centennial anniversary of the settlement of the Yamato Japanese colony in South Florida that was commemorated by the Morikami Museum in 2005, *JapaNet* will examine Japanese diaspora in North America and Latin America, with an emphasis on Brazil, Peru and representative smaller settlements in the Caribbean, including returnees to Japan.

c) Global Exchange in the Post-Bubble Era: The final theme focuses on the overall impact on Japan and Japanese heritage communities in light of globalization trends, including trade policies and regulation, socialization and assimilation, and expressions of ethnic identity.

By the end of the grant cycle, the project will produce a permanent record of teaching resources, including sample lesson plans created by project participants that will be disseminated throughout the region and nationwide. During the first two years of the project, teachers representing over three dozen schools in South Florida have submitted 60 lesson plans on topics including the Minamata disease, human rights abuses against women and children, the arrival of Commodore Perry's "Black Ships," and *Tako* (Japanese kites).

One of the many highlights was the involvement of two science professors, Joerg Reinhold (associate professor of physics) and Gene Rosenberg (associate chairman of biology), who have both traveled and researched extensively in Japan. During the second year of the project they presented a lecture on scientific investigation in comparative contexts. *JapaNet* also includes a diverse list of cultural activities sponsored both on and off campus through a network of associations, especially with the Morikami Museum, the Office of the Consul-General of Japan in Miami, and the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership.

Student Essay

**FOREIGN WORKERS IN JAPAN:
A LOOK AT JAPANESE CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES
REGARDING NIKKEIJIN**

*Natali Garcia-Diaz
Florida International University*

The object of this research has been to study the status of Asian and South American immigrants currently residing and working in Japan. Traditionally, Japan has made cultural and racial homogeneity a major element of the nation and has thought negatively of immigration. Japanese officials have not easily granted foreigners the right and opportunity to settle permanently. Thus, Japan has a very low immigration rate and the lowest proportion of foreign residents of any major industrialized country.¹ With the current decline in birthrates, an aging population, and labor shortage, Japan's economic success may depend on foreign residents. Therefore, the issue of arriving foreign workers and their status in society must be addressed.

There is a prevalent concern among experts that xenophobic ideologies behind government policies, strict immigration laws, and negative media images have led to the cultural belief that foreigners are an intrusion on Japanese national identity and a disruption of the social cohesion. This results in problems in the workplace, marginalization, and the maladjustment of arriving immigrants. Foreigners are seen as an intrusion to the national identity because it is believed that they contaminate the race and may cause the nationals to lose their central element of homogeneity. This is not to say that other countries do not want to preserve a homogeneous nation in accordance with their own culture, but the Japanese believe they differ from others due to their unique historical background. Therefore, foreigners are believed to disrupt the social cohesiveness of society because their norms, values, and ethics are different. Many are stereotyped as criminals, troublesome, stupid, or simply lazy. The media frequently overstates crimes committed by foreigners in a way that justifies these stereotypes.

¹ Yoko Sellek, *Migrant Labour in Japan* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), p. 223.

The case of the Nikkeijin has been investigated in order to study the relation between Japanese homogeneity and the problems faced by foreign workers in general. Nikkeijin are people of Japanese descent who were born abroad, mainly in Brazil, but have recently immigrated in large numbers back to Japan to work after the 1990 revision of the Japanese Immigration Control and Refuge Law. The revision of the immigration control law specifically granted second and third generation Nikkeijin unrestricted rights of residence and employment based on the assumption that Japanese blood and culture are associated criteria.² Thus, Japanese descendants would easily adjust in society and be culturally familiar workers, due to their ethnic ties.

However, this was not the case. The Nikkeijin were found to be disturbingly foreign, regarded as aliens, treated as secondary citizens, and placed in “3K” jobs (*kitanai* [dirty], *kitsui* [demanding], and *kiken* [dangerous]). As a result, the Nikkeijin along with other marginalized foreign workers have formed minority groups with transnational identities, linking their place of birth with their place of work, in hopes of one day exiting Japan.³ The difficulties of incorporating foreigners into society have already been illustrated by the experience of the Koreans and the Chinese. Now, the extent to which people of Japanese descent can be fully integrated not only depends on the government, but also on the relationship with the local population. Ultimately, the fundamental issue seems to be the way ethnicity is being perceived.⁴

Methodology

This research will first cover some existing literature and studies to give a brief explanation of the term Nikkeijin and a historical perspective on migration and immigration to and from Japan and Brazil in connection with the significance of racial/ethnic identity, assimilation, and Japanese homogeneity. Next, there will be a discussion on the current social and economic problems facing Japan, the issues concerning residential status,

² Daniela de Carvalho, *Migrants and Identity in Japan and Brazil: The Nikkeijin* (New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003), p. xiii.

³ Mike Douglass and Glenda S. Roberts, eds., *Japan and Global Migration: Foreign Workers and the Advent of a Multicultural Society* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003), pp. 4-7.

⁴ De Carvalho, *Migrants and Identity in Japan and Brazil*, p. xiii.

citizenship, and immigration policies. Previous anthropological research done in the city of Hamamatsu at the Yusumi Motors factory by Joshua Roth and Daniela de Carvalho in Okayama Prefecture will be used to emphasize the role of Nikkeijin and their significant impact on society.

The hierarchy in labor markets will be examined and the marginalization and maladjustment of Asian and South American foreigners in the community will be addressed. Media and crime rates will be reviewed to show significant influences on nationals and the correlation between this and the disruption of social cohesiveness. Finally, all the data gathered will be analyzed and some suggestions will be made regarding the successful integration of foreign workers into Japan. Much of the current literature cited herein recognizes the high demand for foreign labor and the difficult issues of adjustment and assimilation faced by Asian and South American workers. Appropriate recommendations for the effective incorporation of immigrants and the possibility to realize a new multi-ethnic Japan are still being debated.

The Origin of Nikkeijin

What is the meaning of Nikkeijin? As described by anthropologist Joshua Roth, Nikkeijin is composed of Chinese characters that mean “sun line people.” The “sun” refers to the first character of the term for Japan, *Nihon*, which means “the origin of the sun.”⁵ However, it does not refer to ethnically Japanese people, who are referred to as *Nihonjin*. It normally refers to those who are overseas Japanese or members of the Japanese diaspora. As expressed by Daniela de Carvalho, Nikkeijin ethnicity was first created by the process of immigration to Brazil up until the 1970s and then by return migration back to Japan in the 1990s.⁶ During the modernization and industrialization of the Meiji period, Japan was undergoing many socioeconomic problems. Between 1885 and 1923 a half million Japanese left Japan to escape overpopulation, heavy taxes, and poverty.

While migrants soon faced strong resistance in other countries, Brazil had an evident labor shortage and it became the primary destination. In 1907, a contract signed by the president of the state of Sao Paulo, Brazil

⁵ Joshua H. Roth, *Brokered Homeland: Japanese Brazilian Migrants in Japan* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002), p. 23.

⁶ Carvalho, *Migrants and Identity in Japan and Brazil*, p. 66.

and the president of the Japanese Empire Emigration Company officially approved the migration to Brazil. By the 1950s, the Japanese community in Brazil was the largest outside of Japan. Since migration was seen as a means of solving problems for Japan, the Japanese government encouraged it by providing financial, medical, and technical assistance. They established Japanese language schools, newspapers, exchange programs, and other institutions. This resulted in the assumed maintenance of Japanese culture and ethnic ties in Brazil between the descendants and Japan, which will be further discussed.

Immigration and Homogeneity

For Japan, although emigration has been greatly encouraged, immigration has been seen as an intrusion on Japanese national identity and a disruption of social cohesion. Historically, foreign immigrants have been ignored by the island nation due to the fact that Japan had never been colonized, the experience of its two centuries of seclusion from the outside world between 1640 and 1850, and the extremely low number of foreign residents which is estimated at just over 1 percent of the total population.⁷ In addition, the government's belief that foreigners did not deserve the protection of Japanese law because they did not possess Japanese nationality has led to the continual disregard for their existence and the belief that immigration was so insignificant that it was not occurring. This belief was used to justify the idea that Japan consisted of a single race with a single culture and that any immigration is a threat to its racial purity.⁸ This ideology is closely related to the way Japanese people perceive their identity. According to Shumuel Eisenstadt, the Japanese view of immigration rests on their self-image as being part of "a country whose members can trace their lineage to an antique past, with 'Japaneseness' being more than a matter of race, residing in qualities that are inbred, inherent, even divine, and that therefore cannot be acquired by others no matter how long they reside on the Japanese islands."⁹

⁷ Roger Goodman, Ceri Peach, Ayumi Takenaka, and Paul White, *Global Japan: The Experience of Japan's New Immigrant and Overseas Communities* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2003), pp. 1-4.

⁸ Douglass and Roberts, *Japan and Global Migration*, p. 11.

⁹ Sociologist and professor emeritus, Shumuel Eisenstadt, received his doctorate in 1947 from Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His publications

Furthermore, the construction of the state in Japan was based on the idea of the nation as a family. This traces back to the origin myth of Japan, which explains the birth of the nation as the product of the relationship between two sibling gods. From this brother and sister relationship was born the Sun Goddess, from whom the Imperial house is said to descend.¹⁰ Thus, the view of the nation as a family sharing racial and cultural characteristics has always been the dominant ideology. In addition, prominent Japanese scholars have reinforced this ideology because they claim it has been favorable for Japan. Many say the Japanese are *sui generis*, consciously nationalistic, and cannot be understood by others because they are unique, which is assumed to be self-evident. By stressing this uniqueness, the consciousness of Japanese identity is raised along with strong feelings of ethnicity. This is interpreted as a way of recovering from the identity crisis that was generated by their defeat in World War II and Westernization and is associated with Japan's economic success and its connection with national pride. Therefore, government policy and the behavior of society has almost always reflected homogeneity and antipathy towards immigration, despite the evident presence of minority populations.¹¹

The fact is that foreign residents have been a source of cheap unskilled labor and an important part of the economy for decades. The victory over China in the Sino-Japanese War in 1895 and the annexation of Korea in 1910 began a major mobilization of foreign workers, not to mention the many Chinese and Korean immigrants already in Japan before that due to prior commercial and friendship treaties with China and Korea. Many Koreans in particular who were brought to Japan to work, were taught Japanese as a second language, and in many ways assimilated into Japanese society. Annexed people were made to worship at Shinto shrines and adopt Japanese-style names. By the end of World War II, approximately two million Koreans who had been treated previously as Japanese lost their Japanese citizenship with the restoration of Japan's

include *Japanese Civilization: A Comparative View* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996). See quote in Sellek, *Migrant Labour in Japan*, p. 223.

¹⁰ Amaterasu, the Sun Goddess, was born from the incestuous relationship between Izanami and Izanagi, sister and brother gods. See de Carvalho, *Migrants and Identity in Japan and Brazil*, p. 116.

¹¹ De Carvalho, *Migrants and Identity in Japan and Brazil*, pp. 116-118.

independence. As a result, they became Japan's largest foreign minority group. Since then, they along with the other existing minority groups, most of which have been culturally assimilated to speak and behave completely Japanese, have not been fully accepted in the society. They continually are victims of severe discrimination. In numerous cases, they have been excluded from certain sectors of the labor force and ignored by local communities.¹² Thus, many have gone to great lengths to try to hide their ethnicity.

Demographic Changes

For years, most immigrants have been living in a system of highly structured assimilation which leads to a sense of cultural invisibility due to their ostensible "non-existence" while suffering from severe examples of discrimination with no adequate protection under the law. It was not until the 1980s when foreign residents began to actively pursue their rights as members of society that government officials felt it was necessary to make adjustments to immigration laws and resident status. In addition, the drastic economic changes in the 1980s known as the "bubble economy" produced a high demand for foreign labor and increased immigration to Japan, which also caused the need for a change of certain policies. The economic success seen in the 1980s created a highly urbanized Japan. Since then, the average family size has decreased, birthrates have fallen, the population is aging, and low-wage positions are not being filled.¹³ Young Japanese are feeling increasingly affluent, well educated, and unwilling to work for low wages. The United Nations estimated that Japan would need to accept a total of 33.5 million immigrants between 1995 and 2050 to maintain the level of its working age population, ages 15 to 64, and to prevent the total population from declining.¹⁴

The demographic indicators underlie a fundamental crisis in Japan's economy. Domestic consumer markets are likely to shrink, savings rates are expected to plummet, and small and medium size enterprises that are the backbone of the economy and depend on low-wage labor will be unable to survive.¹⁵ Therefore, Japan had to reluctantly turn to foreign labor

¹² Sellek, *Migrant Labour in Japan*, pp. 16-21.

¹³ Douglass and Roberts, *Japan and Global Migration*, pp. 7-9.

¹⁴ Goodman, Peach, Takenaka, and White, *Global Japan*, p. 4.

¹⁵ Douglass and Roberts, *Japan and Global Migration*, p. xiv.

thirty years after Germany, France, and the United Kingdom did so. This significantly increased the number of immigrants allowed to live and find work in Japan, although currently their number remains relatively small compared to other major industrialized countries. In the year 2000, foreign immigrants were estimated at 1.2 percent (or 1.6 million) of the total population in Japan, 3.8 percent (or 2.2 million) of the total population in the United Kingdom, 8.9 percent (or 7.3 million) of the total population in Germany, and 9.8 percent (or 26 million) of the total population in the United States.¹⁶

Government Policies

The sudden increase of immigrants gave rise to the debate about citizenship status, residency, and immigration policy. As previously mentioned, Japanese policy is based on cultural homogeneity related to the origin of Japan, which is indicated by the Nationality Law. It states that citizenship is decided by blood and ancestry. Thus, Japan is a *jus sanguinis* society. All others, even if they are born on Japanese soil, are considered foreign nationals or immigrants. In order to screen the inflow of immigrants, policies have been strictly enforced. There are four main policies that regulate immigration control in Japan: the Alien Registration Law, the Special Law, the Immigration-Control and Refugee-Recognition Act, and the Nationality Law. Under the Alien Registration Law of 1952, foreigners who stay in Japan longer than ninety days are obliged to register. The Special Law, which was enforced in 1991 granted permanent residence to those who had lost Japanese citizenship with the restoration of Japan's independence after the Second World War, primarily of Korean and Taiwanese descent. Although provisional policies were in place to allow these foreigners to live without a condition of residency, it was not until 1991 that their legal status became stable. The Immigration-Control Act and its numerous revisions set the legislative framework for different types of status of residence, re-entry permits, and employment regulation.¹⁷

¹⁶ Goodman, et. al., *Global Japan*, p. 2.

¹⁷ Japanese Ministry of Justice (<http://www.moj.go.jp>, 2004).

Table 1 Government Policies and their Impact on Foreign Workers

Type of Foreign Worker	Policies Responsible for Origin	Policies Responsible for Livelihood	Impact on Foreign Worker	Resulting Abuse
Zaimichi Gaikokujin (Korean, Taiwanese, Chinese)	1939 Labor Mobilization Act, 1944 Korean Conscription Act	1945 Constitution 1945 Election Law 1952 Alien Registration Law 1989 Revised Nationality Law 1990 Revised Immigration Control 1991 Special Law 2000 Revised Immigration Control	No protection of rights, lose rights to vote, became “foreigners,” naturalization requires 3-5 yrs.of residence, depending on status, can legally work as “unskilled labor,” permanent residence to Zaimichi Gaikokujin, visa extensions according to status	Economic and political discrimination, state control and monitoring, racial discrimination
Nikkeijin (Brazilian)	1924-1941 Emigration Policy of the MHA 1953-1973 Emigration Policy of the MOFA 1990 Revised Immigration Control Act			
Asian Workers (Chinese, Filipino, Thai, Indonesian)	1982 Trainee System 1990 Revised Trainee System	1990 Revised Trainee System 1993 Technical Internship Program 1997 Revised Technical Internship Program	“Trainees,” not “workers”, trainees can work 2 years of training, period can be extended to 3 years	No labor protection, no compensation

One of the Immigration-Control Act's latest revisions in 2000 declared that the entry, residence, and departure from Japan depends on the categories of status of residence that are based on the intended activities in which a foreigner is permitted by the Minister of Justice to be engaged. Examples of residential statuses given up to three years include: professor, business manager, doctor, journalist, artist, and spouse or child of a Japanese national or permanent resident. Residential statuses for up to one year include: student, researcher, trainee/unskilled laborer, entertainer, and skilled laborer.¹⁸ Under the Nationality Law, naturalization requires applicants to have resided in Japan for a minimum of 5 years. As can be seen above, this leaves only the residents with permanent residence status eligible to apply. However, in the case of foreigners with resident status of spouse or child of a Japanese national, their residence requirement is reduced to three years.¹⁹

Nikkeijin as Unrestricted Residents?

The visible occurrence of new minorities in the society started a heated debate in the early 1990s over whether or not Japan should continue to receive large amounts of foreign workers, referred to as the *kaikoku* (open country) versus the *sakoku* (closed society) debate. Supporters of better treatment and protection of the rights of foreign workers argued that such workers would solve demographic problems, internationalize the society, and fulfill Japan's international responsibilities. Those who spoke against them were worried that foreigners would not assimilate, be difficult to incorporate fully into mainstream society, disrupt social cohesion, and cause consequences for the notion of nationhood. In addition, foreigners were a problem due to the country's economic costs of supporting them. The media, as will be shown later, heavily influences many of these prejudices.

The problem remained: How would Japan find a compromise in solving its demographic problems with its cultural homogeneity? To resolve this, the Nikkeijin were brought in.²⁰ According to the 1990 revision of the Immigration-Control Act, only foreign nationals of Japanese descent born abroad up to the third generation, or the spouses of such people, are

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Goodman, et. al., *Global Japan*, p. 4.

permitted to reside in Japan without legal or employment restrictions. The official explanation for granting the formal status of residence to them is that they can come to Japan to see the country where their ancestors grew up and visit their relatives. But since it will cost them money to stay with relatives, the government should allow them to work in order to recover the costs of their visit.²¹

The revision was consistent with Japan's idea of racial and cultural homogeneity and the assumption was that migrants of Japanese descent would help eliminate the labor shortage and because of their "ethnic ties," they would easily adjust and be accepted by society.²² However, studies suggest that this was not the case. At first the numbers of Nikkeijin were insignificant, but since then their population has grown to be one of the largest ethnic groups in the country and the one that has had the most impact. Although the government legally accepts them, it seems they have not, as with the case of other foreigners, been fully accepted or incorporated into mainstream society.

The Formal Arrival of Nikkeijin

As previously discussed, the Japanese descendants living in Brazil throughout the 1900s assumed that they had been keeping close ties with Japanese culture. Because of the economic problems they faced in Brazil, many Nikkeijin have taken advantage of their new preferred visa status in Japan as a solution, and by returning to their homeland have also gained an understanding of self-identity. Most Nikkeijin have been recruited to Japan by job brokering agencies in both Japan and Brazil that offer lifetime work benefits and identification with Japanese ideals. These agencies make profits of up to \$20 million per month. The migrants depend on the agencies not only for job placement but also to obtain the required documentation. Rates vary according to the agency. Some charge excessive fees, and many of the recruits arrive in Japan with considerable debt as a consequence of brokers' charges.

Many complaints and cases of exploitation by brokers have been reported. A frequent complaint is that the working and living conditions in Japan are different from those previously agreed upon in Brazil. Once they arrive in Japan, the majority are employed in factories and as general

²¹ Sellek, *Migrant Labour in Japan*, p. 75.

²² De Carvalho, *Migrants and Identity in Japan and Brazil*, pp. 93-99.

workers, regardless of their educational or professional backgrounds. They tend to work for small to medium sized enterprises and are hired by subcontractors processing work for larger firms in the construction, metallurgy, manufacturing, auto and electrical industries. The Nikkeijin, like most migrants, take jobs unwanted by locals. They are contracted on a yearly basis. In many cases they cannot read the contract because it is written in Japanese, and it is not clear how salaries are calculated. At times, there are no written contracts at all. As temporary workers, they are not usually paid the bonuses that Japanese workers receive; however, other benefits might be offered. Although their wages are low, they are still about four times higher than those in Brazil.²³

Working Conditions

Although it seems the Nikkeijin are obligated to work long hours, they usually volunteer and compete amongst themselves for overtime. On average many work from 15 to 19 hours a day, with 5-minute rest breaks twice a day. They are estimated to do about 145 hours of overtime per month, and many go unpaid. According to their legal status, the Nikkeijin are entitled to employment insurance, accident compensation insurance, and national health and pension insurance. But despite these entitlements, many remain uninsured. Either the employers fail to make the necessary contributions or the workers themselves object to the contributions being deducted from their wages. Lack of knowledge and dependency on brokers are also responsible for this situation.

The Nikkeijin also tend to have more accidents at work than the Japanese. The main causes of accidents are said to be the lack of training and knowledge of safety rules, exhaustion due to long working hours, manipulation of dangerous machinery, and communication problems due to their lack of proficiency in Japanese. Although under the law workers are required to receive work-related accident insurance, the majority of job brokers do not pay this type of insurance, leaving the workers with little or no compensation at all. The majority of work-related accidents are cases of bone fractures, amputation of limbs or fingers, and burns. Many who do suffer these accidents cannot find a job afterwards because of their disability.

²³ De Carvalho, *Migrants and Identity in Japan and Brazil*, pp. 93-99.

Living and Working in Hamamatsu

According to Roth's study conducted in the city of Hamamatsu at Yusumi Motors auto plant, in terms of employment, the Nikkeijin were put in a distinctly marginal position in relation to Japanese workers. They were hired for semi-skilled manufacturing jobs with the understanding that most of them would last no more than a few years. This served to give the firm a way to have a high proportion of workers at low wages, and to screen out less dedicated workers before they earned seniority. Japanese managers and co-workers expected them to behave and speak like Japanese, but they soon realized that the Nikkeijin were not the Japanese they had expected. The Nikkeijin could not speak the language and did not conform to Japanese practices and customs. They were categorized as foreigners, hired on short-term contracts, housed in separate dormitories, given different uniforms, segregated in bathing arrangements, and many were verbally abused.

These arrangements symbolically reinforced their marginal position within the firm and the larger labor market. Their marginalization simultaneously reflected and created feelings of distinction that Japanese workers held in relation to them. The Japanese often criticized the Nikkeijin as sloppy, irresponsible, rude, unwilling to assimilate, and lacking in gratitude and loyalty toward the firm. The stereotype of Nikkeijin's self-interest helped the bureaucracy, managers, and academics justify their marginal position in the employment system and the lack of effort to enforce labor regulations such as health and accident insurance. People whose medical conditions could have been treated effectively at an early stage were often denied professional care until their conditions became much more serious. Thus, the informal employment system in Hamamatsu denied Nikkeijin a feeling of belonging within the workplace and did indeed cause lack of gratitude and loyalty amongst them.²⁴

Divided Identity and Stratified Labor Market

Due to Japan's economic recession during the late 1990s, many Nikkeijin workers increasingly left the factories. When the workplaces fail them by not fulfilling the minimal criteria of community – respect and dignity – they turn not only toward transnational identifications with Brazil, but also toward the formation of their own local communities. They have recently developed social networks that have made their lives within

²⁴ Roth, *Brokered Homeland*, pp. 37-76.

Brazilian ethnic communities in Japan sufficiently fulfilling to extend their stays through the long recession that decreased overtime work and reduced wages. Many travel back and forth between Japan and Brazil. Some have returned permanently to Brazil. Others have settled in Japan, while maintaining their identification with Brazilian ideals. Therefore, the Nikkeijin have discovered a sense of self in Japan that is based on differences rather than identification with Japaneseness.²⁵

Another result of the Nikkeijin influx was the development of stratification in the labor market based on foreign legal status. Through government policy, Japan has organized its labor markets for foreign workers hierarchically according to race or nationality, regardless of the foreigner's talent, skill, or experience. This is due to the view that certain races and nationalities are uniquely qualified for certain kinds of labor, which determines the privileges granted and legal rights given to workers. Thus, it is the government's control over foreigners that determines their situation.

At the top of the foreign hierarchical scale are the Korean special residents or *zainichi gaikokujin*. They are considered to be "sociological Japanese" because they behave and speak like Japanese. Though they are free to live and work in Japan and receive government benefits, they cannot vote in national elections or work in civil services, nor can they participate in welfare commissions, human rights commissions, or school boards. Next in line are the Nikkeijin, although they are considered to be "ethnically Japanese," as discussed above, they act extremely foreign and few can actually speak Japanese fluently. They can also work legally and are entitled to certain benefits, but because they are underrepresented and go through brokers to find jobs, most who get injured do not receive compensation, in addition to being denied the same rights that are denied to the *zainichi gaikokujin*. Their main advantage has been the ability to openly change employers without fear of deportation. Then at the bottom end of the scale are all the other foreign workers considered to be illegal, unskilled, or "non-Japanese trainees," such as those from Thailand, the Philippines, and Indonesia. They are not protected under law and usually work under the worst possible conditions with little chance of changing employment.²⁶

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Apichai W. Shipper, "The Political Construction of Foreign Workers in Japan," *Critical Asian Studies* 34/1 (2002): 41-45.

Table 2 Asian Foreign Workers in Japan ²⁷

Type of Foreigner	Sociological Type	Sociological Traits	Occupation	Type of Legal Doc.	Discrimination
Zainichi Gaikokujin (Korean, Chinese)	“Sociological Japanese”	Born in Japan; different blood	Restaurants, pachinko parlors, self-employed	Permanent resident	Employment, housing, marginalization
Nikkeijin (Brazilian)	“Ethnic Japanese”	Born/raised abroad; same blood	Manufacturing, auto/electrical industries	Long-term resident/spouse or child of national	Employment, housing, exploitation, marginalization
Asian Workers (Chinese, Thai, Filipino, Indonesian)	“Non-Japanese”	Similar racial descent and culture	Manufacturing, entertainment	Trainee visa, entertainment visa	Employment, housing, exploitation, marginalization

2004 Foreign Ministry Panel Report

A recent article in *The Japan Times* reported the expressed concerns that Kazuo Kumagai, who recently headed a Foreign Ministry panel in Japan in October 2004, had over the various problems that foreigners such as Chinese, Brazilians, Filipinos and Peruvians face in their daily lives.²⁸ The panel report called these foreigners “newcomers,” as opposed to the Koreans in Japan, who while making up the largest group are gradually shrinking in number. According to Kumagai, the newcomers are often exploited, suffering from poor working conditions and unpaid wages, and are usually excluded from the nationwide health care and pension systems. Statistics compiled by municipalities with a high

²⁷ Ibid., p. 43.

²⁸ Kanako Takahara, “Japan Must Open Door to Foreign Workers, Panel Head Says,” *The Japan Times* (October 11, 2004).

concentration of these foreigners show that about 20 to 30 percent of school age children of such parents do not go to school and become delinquent. Among the council members was Yasuyuki Kitawaki, mayor of Hamamatsu, Shizuoka Prefecture, where Roth conducted his studies and where about 4 percent of the population is non-Japanese. "Kitawaki's input during the council meetings provided firsthand accounts of the realities surrounding foreigners in Japan," Kumagai said. "Japan cannot avoid these issues when mapping out a future vision of the nation," he stressed. "The government needs to face them with a firm resolve."²⁹

Does the Media Reinforce Ethnic Stereotypes?

This study now turns to the influence of media coverage in Japan. According to previous media studies, the Japanese watch an average of three and a half hours of television a day. That is one more hour than the average for Americans. In addition, 56 percent of the Japanese public expressed strong confidence in the credibility of television programming, compared with less than 20 percent in the United States. Another study found that executives in a variety of organizations rank the media as the most influential institution in Japan. Japan's public broadcasting corporation, NHK (Nippon Hōsō Kyōkai), is the second largest in the world and is the most trusted in Japanese society. Thus, media coverage of immigrants has a significant effect on public opinion and attitudes. After the 1990 revision of the Immigration Law, Nikkeijin have attracted a huge amount of media attention, which has placed them noticeably into public awareness. As a result, even though many Japanese nationals have not personally encountered Nikkeijin, they already have presupposed perceptions of them.³⁰

Throughout the 1990s several news reports began to establish notions now commonly held towards foreigners. Although there was considerable diversity in news coverage of Nikkeijin, the media generally legitimated and reinforced ethnic stereotypes and cultural attitudes about them.³¹ The cultural foreignness of Nikkeijin was very often explicitly emphasized. Many reports depicted them as strange and ethnic anomalies.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Takeyuki Tsuda, "Domesticating the Immigrant Other: Japanese Media Images of Nikkeijin Return Migrants," *Ethnology* 42/4 (2003), p. 289.

³¹ Ibid.

In 1991, NHK attempted to explain the life of Nikkeijin by featuring them engaged in Brazilian activities, such as dancing samba, reading Portuguese newspapers, and playing soccer. It emphasized how Nikkei children did not speak Japanese because they were born and raised abroad.³²

In a TBS program, a street reporter asked two men waiting at a bus stop what they thought of the foreigners in their neighborhood. After an awkward moment, one of them said in English, "We not speak in Japanese." When asked where they were from, the man replied in Portuguese, "Brasil," eliciting surprise from the reporter. Because commercial networks are concerned with the popular appeal of their shows, they seize upon common Japanese reactions by exoticizing culturally foreign Nikkeijin in order to amuse and entertain their audiences.³³ A news report on Terebi News in 1998 expressed the views that Japanese housewives had towards immigrants. According to the report, the housewives described them as nosy people who did not dispose of their garbage properly.³⁴

In recent years, news of crimes committed by foreigners has been increasingly publicized. Since criminal records are based on arrests rather than convictions and non-Japanese are more likely to be arrested on suspicion of crimes than are Japanese, it appears that crimes by foreigners are rising. Close analysis of the arrests indicates that more than half of the penal code offences involve immigration and visa violations.³⁵ A recent article in *The Japan Times* reported that foreigners were involved in a "record" 47,124 criminal cases in 2004, according to the National Police Agency.³⁶ Police arrested or sent papers to prosecutors on a record 21,842 foreigners, up 9.2 percent from a year earlier for the fourth consecutive year of increase. In total, including Japanese nationals, there were 667,620 criminal cases reported. Cases involving foreigners accounted for only

³² NHK "Taminzoku kyoju jidai" (The Age of Multiethnic Co-existence), (1991), see in Tsuda "Domesticating the Immigrant Other," p. 294.

³³ TBS (Tokyo Broadcasting System), "Anata no machi no gaijin rōdōshatachi" (Foreign Workers in Your Neighborhood), (n.d.) see in Tsuda "Domesticating the Immigrant Other," p. 297.

³⁴ Terebi News, (1998), in de Carvalho, *Migrants and Identity in Japan and Brazil*, p. 128.

³⁵ Douglass and Roberts, *Japan and Global Migration*, pp. 24-25.

³⁶ "Foreigners Tied to Record 47,124 Crime Cases in 2004," *The Japan Times* (February 25, 2005).

about 7 percent of this total. 389,027 people were arrested or the cases were sent to prosecutors for violations of the Penal Code. Foreigners accounted for only 2.3 percent of this total. Among the foreigners linked to crime rates, the Chinese accounted for 42.4 percent of the total number. South Koreans were second at 9.5 percent, followed by Filipinos, Brazilians, Thais, and Vietnamese.³⁷

Table 3 2004 Crime Rates in Relation to Foreigners³⁸

Type of Crime	Forgery	Burglary	Robbery	Car Theft	All Crimes
Total number of Criminals	384	13,548	4,154	3,823	667,620
Percentage of Foreign Criminals	58.6%	4.2%	8.1%	4%	7%

Results and Analyses

This study has clearly illustrated the xenophobic ideology behind government policies, immigration laws, and the media that has led to the cultural belief that foreigners are an intrusion to Japanese national identity and a disruption to social cohesion, which has caused problems in the workplace, marginalization, and the maladjustment of Nikkeijin and other Asian and South American immigrants. First, when looking at Japanese government policies and immigration laws, there is a direct indication that the government reinforces lineage as the basis for Japanese nationality and is following policies that are in opposition with those of other advanced nations. The combination of Japan's fictive origin and the uniquely homogenous culture that has resulted from its natural and voluntary isolation is used as the means of justification for those policies.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

In order to attend to demographic problems and uphold cultural homogeneity, two major policies were devised to bring in, but strictly screen immigrants: the 1990 revision of the Immigration-Control Law which brought the influx of Nikkeijin, and the 2000 revision which defined the screening process for all foreigners. With regard to the Nikkeijin, the idea of allowing people of Japanese descent to work legally and excluding all others of those benefits is obvious discrimination based on race and shows preference given to those with Japanese blood. With regard to the 2000 revision, the determining of entry, residence, and departure from Japan based on intended activities has not only been discriminatory but has led to unintended problems. Skilled foreigners are permitted residential status for only three years, while legal unskilled foreigners are allowed in the country for only one year.

As a result, though Japan has turned to foreign labor for economic support, the number of foreigners still remains relatively low. In addition, since residential statuses are so short-lived and working wages remain higher than in developing nations, the number of overstayers has dramatically increased. Due to the high demand for cheap labor, most overstayers tend to be illegal unskilled workers, which have caused much concern to citizens and legal residents alike. Therefore, the government's preference for descendants and efforts to screen out foreigners has not only maintained, but also reinforced the idea that immigrants are a threat to "Japaneseness" and justifies discrimination within the labor force and local communities.

In terms of the media, there is barely any doubt that reports of immigrants have a significant effect on public opinion and attitudes. As Tsuda explains, "Japanese perspectives about Nikkeijin are based almost exclusively on television and newspapers because the Japanese Brazilians remain a minute fraction of Japan's population and very few Japanese have encounters with them."³⁹ Unfortunately, media coverage up until now has emphasized the fact that Nikkeijin are in many ways different from the Japanese, and have had difficulties assimilating to Japanese lifestyle. In addition, the media has also been increasingly reporting crimes committed by all foreigners. The public is then left with images of Nikkeijin and foreigners as strange people who commit crimes and disrupt society's cohesiveness. The fact is that although foreigners may racially and

³⁹ Tsuda, "Domesticating the Immigrant Other," p. 300.

culturally differ from the Japanese, they are not exclusively the ones causing harm to society. When analyzing crime rates, one can see that out of 667,620 criminal cases reported, cases involving foreigners accounted for only 7 percent. Out of the 389,027 people who were actually arrested, only 2.3 percent were foreigners. The media does an excellent job of overestimating immigrants' probabilities of committing crimes.

The studies conducted by de Carvalho, Roth, and Apichai Shipper indicate that exploitation, marginalization, and maladjustment of Asian and South American immigrants in the workplace and in society is evident. In reference to this research, it must be noted that although discrimination towards foreigners in general does exist, the extent of that discrimination may vary according to individual differences. Due to length of time and setting limitations, factors such as age, gender, personality, and personal background that may vary the degrees of injustice experienced were not specified. However, overall findings do suggest that ethnic stereotypes of Nikkeijin and foreigners have helped the bureaucracy, managers, and academics justify their marginal position in the employment system and the lack of effort to enforce labor regulations. The fact that Nikkeijin have developed their own social networks, formed their own local communities, and turned to transnational identification with Brazil also suggests that they have not adjusted to or been fully accepted by the local Japanese population.

Dealing with Globalization

As can be seen, there are several problems with the way the Japanese government has tried to handle demographic changes and incorporate foreigners into the labor force. With the coming of the global age, not only does Japan have to continue facing its own demographic changes, but it also has to deal with a global migration that is no longer tied to certain nations. As explained by Mike Douglass and Glenda Roberts, "migration to Japan is not necessarily for the purposes of sustaining Japan's competitive position, but is more accurately a part of an emerging international labor system that spans national space and is as concerned with supplying labor for domestic services as it is with production for export."⁴⁰ Japan must inevitably face the challenge of co-existing with the presence of what is likely to be millions of additional immigrant workers.

⁴⁰ Douglass and Roberts, *Japan and Global Migration*, p. 28.

In order to face this challenge and solve its own problems, Japan must welcome foreigners as individuals with full human rights and not treat them as just a source of temporary labor. In accordance with global processes, many immigrant workers and their families tend to settle down and remain in their host countries, as with the case of the Nikkeijin in Japan. Coming to terms with globalization requires Japan to rethink citizenship and all the rights and benefits that come along with it. Are laws such as the Nationality Law, the Special Law, and Immigration-Control Law really justifiable even though they reinforce ethnocentrism? Although discrimination of foreigners will to some extent always exist in any society, the government should reform their current laws and try to uphold and implement equality of foreign residents to the highest degree. Because Japan has had such a unique past in dealing with immigrants in comparison with other nations, it will take much more effort from the government and the Japanese people to overcome difficult situations.

Integration of Foreigners in the Labor Force

As suggested by Haruo Shimada, the best course of action for the smoother integration of foreigners into the labor force is to reform the employment system.⁴¹ All legal workers must be guaranteed the same eligibility for residential status and length of time, the right to receive proper compensation for accidents at work, proper training, working conditions, medical insurance, unemployment benefits, the right not to be discriminated against either at work or socially, the right to a pension, the right to education (such as for improving Japanese language skills), and the right to vote. The government should see that all these institutional rights are strictly enforced. Once the government demonstrates an effort to make significant changes within the society, the media will pick up the increased sense of national concern. When foreigners have the full backing of both the government and the media, the Japanese population most likely will be encouraged to give the same support. In return, foreign workers may express signs of gratitude and loyalty towards their employers as well as produce more efficient work. This is not to say that the Japanese people will automatically adjust psychologically to the idea of social equity and a

⁴¹ Haruo Shimada, *Japan's Guest Workers: Issues and Public Policies* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1994), pp. 3-11.

multicultural society, but it is the start to a journey that, wanted or unwanted, has already begun.

What Exactly Does It Mean To Be Japanese?

In conclusion, the ideological significance of this research is the fundamental issue of perceived ethnicity. This new relationship between the Japanese nationals and the Nikkeijin should provide an opportunity for the Japanese government to rethink exactly what it means to be Japanese. If Japanese lineage gives the image of someone that speaks, acts, thinks, and looks Japanese, then the Nikkeijin contradict Japanese fundamental ideology altogether. The Koreans who have lived there most of their lives assimilate more to Japanese culture than the Nikkeijin, and they obviously do not have Japanese blood. As Yoko Sellek explains, “The traditional dichotomy of Japanese versus non-Japanese is no longer applicable or useful for understanding the current situation where there is a whole spectrum of categorizations to be considered ranging from so-called ‘indigenous Japanese’ to so-called ‘non-Japanese.’ In this sense, the way in which Japanese society treats over 245,000 Nikkeijin is adding further contradictions to Japan’s long-standing assumption of one nation and one ethnicity.”⁴²

⁴² Sellek, *Migrant Labour in Japan*, p. 82.

BOOK REVIEWS

Harald Fuess, *Divorce in Japan: Family, Gender, and the State - 1600-2000*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004. 226 pp. ISBN: 0-8047-4357-6 (hbk), \$48.

Reviewed by Bernice J. deGannes Scott

With the support of an extensive list of Japanese-language and Western-language historical and contemporary sources, Harald Fuess documents and analyzes four hundred years of the history of divorce (*rikon*) in Japan. The work spans 1600 to 2000, covering several significant periods in Japan's history including the Edo (1600-1868) and Meiji (1868-1912) eras and the American Occupation of 1944 to 1952. Fuess strictly adheres to the research perspectives of "Family, Gender, and the State," providing evidence throughout the text of the roles of these three entities in Japanese divorce history.

One of the most significant bits of information Fuess brings to us is the probability that "unknown to many, including most Japanese, is the fact that Japan traditionally had a high divorce rate until the turn of the twentieth century" (p. 1). From the Edo period through early Meiji Japan, we are told, the Japanese held a very casual attitude toward marriage. With court mediation not a requirement for divorce, and a society-at-large that did not regard a failed marriage as a "personal moral failure" (p. 98), divorce in Japan was easy, as was remarriage. Western observers criticized the Japanese, citing casual polygamy among the men, the simplicity of the divorce procedure, and the ease of remarriage as factors that contributed to the high rates of divorce, and they went as far as to propose Christianity as the answer to this dilemma (p. 141).

While some prominent Japanese intellectuals defended the norm, others criticized divorce as a national disgrace. The Meiji Civil Code of 1898 legislated the registration of marriages and divorce, and this development, together with the new attitude of the Japanese – namely, acceptance of the sanctity of marriage and the disgrace of divorce – precipitated a remarkable decline in the divorce rate. According to Fuess, this phenomenon "may have been one of history's greatest moments of instant social engineering" (p. 3).

Though not explicitly stated, I detect an East-West contest for moral superiority, which becomes deadlocked, as Japan's divorce rates gradually decline in the first four decades of the twentieth century and are on par with those of Europe by the post-World War II period (p. 144). Around 1963, divorce rates began to slowly creep upward, a trend that continued until 1983. From 1983 to 1988, the rates leveled off, suddenly shooting up in 1988 and reverting to the high rates of the Edo and early Meiji periods by 2002. An important difference between the high divorce rates of the early and contemporary periods was that while in the early period women were generally perceived as victims who were arbitrarily disposed of through divorce, in the contemporary era "husbands are being restructured out of marriage by their wives" (p. 165).

The book artfully presents the interconnectedness among the sub-themes of family, gender and the state. Also incorporated in the text, are the related issues of social class, urban-rural location, and region. For example, divorce generally cut across social classes, location and region; however, in the Edo and Meiji periods, divorce was most likely to take place among the lower classes, in rural areas, and in eastern Japan as opposed to the western part of the country (p. 60). Nevertheless, regional divorce rates converged as time progressed.

The New Civil Code of 1948 replaced the 1898 Meiji Civil Code during the American Occupation. The new code legislated equal rights for both spouses in divorce, retained consensual divorce laws, and placed marriage and divorce decisions firmly in the hands of the couple, effectively eliminating any role for the family. The family court system was also established during the American Occupation to provide a means of mediation beyond courts of law. As in the past, use of the legal system for divorce was marginal.

This work is well-researched, well-organized, comprehensive and interesting. A historical piece, it includes anecdotal information, yet it poses the hard questions, and is highly analytical and objective. In one particularly striking paragraph, Fuess is frank about the politicization of divorce in Japan, reporting on actions taken by the Japanese Ministry of Education in 1997 to rewrite history and reinvent tradition by rejecting "four new domestic science textbooks for high school students because they allegedly overemphasized rising divorce rates" (p. 6). Also of interest is the information regarding the right of women to initiate divorce under the consensual divorce legislation (p. 115).

Though not quite said, it is implied that as “access to wage labor by married women rose, making them financially more independent of their families and husbands” (p. 152), women sought to divorce their husbands, resulting in the observed increase in the divorce rates in the 1960s and beyond. This raises the question of the possible connection between divorce and the economic independence of Japanese women. Fuess documents that from 1955 on, the country’s high economic growth led to an accelerated demand for female labor (p. 155). This begs the response that women have traditionally contributed to the Japanese economy (household and national) through work – they labored on farms in the pre-industrial period; they outnumbered males in light industry, especially in textiles, in the Meiji Period; they replaced men in the heavy machinery and chemical industries during World War II; and they supported the post-World War II economic recovery. However, in spite of the 1946 Constitution that promoted gender equality, by 1975 gender discrimination was being openly practiced in the Japanese labor market.¹

Today, labor market discrimination against women still exists, and is manifested in low job status and gender stereotyping of men and women in the workplace as “warriors and flowers.”² Further, Japanese women are postponing marriage and childbearing, or are deciding to not marry at all in

¹ See, for example, Yoshio Higuchi, “Trends in Japanese Labour Markets,” in Mari Sako and Hiroki Sako, eds., *Japanese Labour and Management in Transition – Diversity, Flexibility and Participation* (London: Routledge, 1977); Kathleen S. Uno, “Women and Changes in the Household Division of Labour,” in Gail Lee Bernstein, ed., *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 17-41; Sharon H. Nolte and Sally Ann Hastings Nolte, “The Meiji State’s Policy Toward Women, 1890-1910,” in Gail Lee Bernstein, ed., *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 151-174; and The Center for the Advancement of Working Women (CAWW), “Working Women in Japan, 1868-1999” (Tokyo: CAWW Museum, 2003).

² See Kiyoko Kamio Knapp, “Still Office Flowers – Japanese Women Betrayed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Law,” in Adrien Katherine Wing, ed., *Global Critical Race: Feminism – An International Reader* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), pp. 409-423.

order to keep their freedom.³ Perhaps, the key factor in the decision to marry and divorce is personal freedom, which is being rightfully claimed by the modern Japanese woman.

In sum, this book can serve as a useful addition to the reading list of courses in sociology, women's studies, and history that focus on Japan. As one who teaches from an interdisciplinary perspective, I would list it as recommended reading for economics, as well.

Emily S. Rosenberg, *A Date Which Will Live: Pearl Harbor in American Memory*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003. 248 pp. ISBN: 0-8223-3206-X (hbk), \$24.95.

Reviewed by John Hickman

United States political history is punctuated by moments of intense drama which serve as the raw material for narrative explanations with near-term and long-term implications for the way that Americans understand their place in the world. This interesting and readable cultural history interrogates the multiple meanings of what has long been accepted as the most important such event: the December 7, 1941 surprise attack by the Japanese Imperial Fleet on the U.S. Naval base at Pearl Harbor and U.S. Army Air Corps base at Hickam Field. The first half of the text surveys the wartime and immediate post-war representations of Pearl Harbor. The second half of the text surveys representations of Pearl Harbor beginning with its 50-year anniversary in 1991 and continuing through the 1990s, interpretations which influenced representations of the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon.

The familiar words of the book's title are from President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's brief but electrifying speech to Congress delivered the day after the event. Rather than offer a justification for war against Japan to save China, civilization or democracy from militarist aggression, Roosevelt articulated a rationale for war which emphasized the treachery of the enemy. The author explains that this narrative theme was consistent with a long historical tradition of regenerative violence which had been used to

³ See Michael A. Lev, "Japanese Women Have More Freedom, and Fewer Children – Plunging Birthrate Changing Centuries of Male-Dominated Society," *Chicago Tribune* (April 1, 1998).

justify the Texas War of Independence, the military campaigns waged on the Great Plains before the closing of the frontier, and the Spanish-American War. Thus, rather than propose a pious Wilsonian crusade, Roosevelt asserted the necessity for a war fought to punish acts of deception and betrayal.

Roosevelt's message was made even simpler by deemphasizing the simultaneous attack on United States military forces in the Philippines, its strategically significant colony in the Eastern Pacific. Effective persuasion of groups requires simple messages, and the decision to focus public attention on an attack on sovereign American territory was less likely to alert public attention to the complexities of the geo-political interests of Great Powers. Roosevelt's references to the attack on the Philippines fell in a series of references to attacks on Malaya and Hong Kong – without mentioning that these were British possessions – and attacks on Guam, Wake Island and Midway Island. One need not fall prey to the presentist temptation of assuming that the American public of the 1940s was as ignorant of world geography as the contemporary American public to grasp the political calculation in this relative emphasis and deemphasis.

Some of the most interesting material in the book charts American popular and academic representations of national character and motivation during the Second World War and the post-war decades. Remembering Pearl Harbor as a treacherous surprise attack was the dominant theme throughout the war years, a theme consistently reinforced by representations of Japanese national character as compulsive, suspicious, and devious in popular publications such as *Time*, *Life* and *Reader's Digest* (p. 55).

The beginning of the Cold War was marked by the reconstruction of the popular image of Japan and the Japanese as “noble enemy-turned-worthy ally.” At the same moment, revisionist historians revived wartime conspiracist explanations for the conflict current among pre-war isolationist conservative Republicans. By implication, the United States should have accommodated rather than resisted Japanese territorial expansion in Manchuria and north China, a perspective made more appealing following the 1949 Communist victory in China. Although conspiracist narratives have never fallen entirely out of the favor among conservative intellectuals, they have never achieved dominance in mainstream American public opinion. Assigning ultimate responsibility for the war to the Roosevelt administration does not fit the uncritical military patriotism that surrounds most popular narratives of the event.

In Chapter 5 and Chapter 6, the author examines the various disputes emerging during and after the 1991 commemoration which muddied what would otherwise have been a simple narrative of successful post-war bilateral relations between the United States and Japan expressed through reconciliation among veterans of the war in the Pacific. Among these disputes were controversy about the content of the new film to be shown at the U.S.S. Arizona Memorial, renewed scholarly attention to Japanese war crimes in China prompted by the publication of Iris Chang's successful 1997 *Rape of Nanking*, demands for compensation from Japan by wartime sex slaves and Allied POWs, the 2001 collision and sinking of the training ship Ehime Maru by the U.S.S. Greeneville, and nostalgia in the United States for the seeming moral certainties of "The Good War" among both the wartime generation and baby boomers.

The author saves what is perhaps the best material for the penultimate and final chapters. In Chapter 9, she offers an amusing description of the attempt to resurrect conspiracist explanations of Pearl Harbor with tabloid style popular histories before proceeding to pillory the film *Pearl Harbor*. Sailing past the controversies identified in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 by avoiding most of the historical context, the 2001 blockbuster offered viewers a simple old fashioned love triangle and the kind of special effects spectacle that Hollywood so often delivers in the place of plausible plots and compelling dialogue.

In Chapter 10, the author explores the parallels between the narratives offered for the December 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor and the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. Popular cultural understandings of Pearl Harbor were an inescapable element in interpreting September 11. "Whether endorsing, critiquing, or moralizing..." she observes, "...commentators seemed unable to escape writing about the September 11 attacks in the shadow of Pearl Harbor memories. As ever, the icon of Pearl Harbor provided rich rhetorical resources for experiencing and interpreting the present" (p. 178). Controversy about the World Trade Center memorial echoed the controversies about the new film at the U.S.S. Arizona and the Enola Gay exhibit at the Smithsonian Museum. The suspicion surrounding Arab men following September 11, 2001 to an extent echoed the mass internment of Japanese Americans during the Second World War. Concerns about intelligence failures and the attribution of political responsibility after September 11 mirror those after Pearl Harbor. "The ubiquity of the Pearl Harbor frame on September 11 shaped memories of both events" (p. 186).

Given the relevance of these parallels, this slim volume could be a valuable text for any undergraduate course on postwar American history or Asian Studies.

John Nathan, *Japan Unbound: A Volatile Nation's Quest for Pride and Purpose*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2004. v + 273 pp. ISBN: 0-618-13894-3 (hbk), \$25.

Reviewed by Don R. McCreary

John Nathan, the translator of several of Kenzaburo Oe's novels, and one of Yukio Mishima's, as well as the author of a biography on Mishima, has written an illuminating book on contemporary Japanese culture. At the time of writing this review in the spring of 2005, violent riots in China were ongoing, protesting the revisions of the Japanese high school history textbooks regarding the Nanking Massacre and other events surrounding World War II. For those readers who want to keep abreast of contemporary cultural trends, Nathan's book highlights the underlying cultural shift inside Japan that sustains and promotes the ongoing revision of Japan's role in World War II. The theme of this book is anomie or social alienation that Japanese perceive, which is narrowed to alienation from a national political identity. According to several interviewees in the book, this alienation, connected to lingering guilt about Japan's role in the war, is the root cause for many of Japan's social problems. One of the perceived problems within Japan is that the people have no sense of national self, which has been exacerbated by economic decline since 1991 that has heightened social problems. The reader will find much fresh material to bolster the concept of alienation in Japan, thanks to Nathan's fluency in Japanese, his political connections, his interviewing skills, and his keen ear for the language.

Alienation can be seen in the popular press, in interpretations of historical figures, and in contemporary political figures. In the introduction, we learn from "Voice of the People," the well known opinion column in *Asahi Shinbun*, that "something is missing from our full sense of being Japanese" (p. 20). The theme of Nathan's book then follows: "a central argument...of this book...is that much of current Japanese thinking and behavior is colored by an urgently felt need to regain first consciousness...by connecting, or reconnecting, to native culture...as it

resides as a memory in the imagination, before it was alloyed by ‘foreign’ elements in the process of modernization” (p. 21). Nathan explores the historical background behind the sense of national alienation and traces it to the notion of *Wakon-Yōsai*, “literally Japanese sensibility, Western knowledge,” (p. 8) which was promoted by the founder of Keio University, Yukichi Fukuzawa. Nathan states that “the tension between these two elements has never been resolved” (p. 8). Over 100 years after Fukuzawa, we learn that an emerging nationalism in popular culture is being promoted by Yoshinori Kobayashi, a popular cartoonist, who has written a number of “*arro-procs*” (arrogant proclamations) and by Shintaro Ishihara, the governor of Tokyo, who co-authored *The Japan That Can Say ‘No.’*

Following a fascinating introduction (pp. 1-23) relating Nathan’s own experience with alienation as a *gaijin* in Japan in the 1960s, the outline of the book at first glance supports the theme of alienation. The first two chapters, “Monsters in the House: Japan’s Bewildered Children” (pp. 25-44) and “Family Crisis” (pp. 45-70) highlight social decay in Japan, including school dropouts, crime in schools, especially violence by junior high boys, followed by alienation at home, the ever increasing suicide rate, the breakdown of the traditional family structure, and the effect of the collapse of the bubble economy on individual families. The next two chapters, “Culture of Arithmetic” (pp. 71-98) and “The Entrepreneurs” (pp. 99-118) veer away from the theme to some degree by addressing the business world and focus on successful individuals that Nathan interviewed. In the first of these chapters on business, Nathan interviews the head of Nissan, Carlos Ghosn, and his CEO, Yoshikazu Hanawa. Much of the chapter concerns *ristora* (restructuring), a euphemism for layoffs in Japan. An executive placement agency, “Right Way Station,” and the description of its training practices for laid off executives demonstrate the difficulties that long term employees have joining a new company with its own distinct culture. In the chapter on entrepreneurs, Nathan interviews younger entrepreneurs who are self-reliant, very creative, and wildly successful. Nathan focuses on businessmen who have developed new ideas in the business world and have made a success of themselves despite the difficult economy. It is the least interesting chapter in this book because it highlights individuals, no doubt idiosyncratic mavericks, who are flourishing outside established routes for success, which departs somewhat from the theme of social alienation as a negative factor in the culture. “The Entrepreneurs” seems by comparison with the rest of the book to be appended to the other chapters in an attempt to be more even-handed. However, it must be said

that these successful businessmen point the way to a brighter economic future for segments of the economy, although it is still unclear if this would lessen the sense of national alienation connected to Japan's past.

The next two chapters return to the theme of alienation. In chapter five, "In Search of a Phantom" (pp. 119-138), Nathan describes and explains the work of the "demagogue cartoonist" Yoshinori Kobayashi and his *Arrogant-ism* (arrogance) *Proclamations*. Kobayashi has a revisionist ultra-conservative perspective on WWII. The title of the chapter is a reference to the phantom-like idea that Japan's entry in the war was a response to Western colonialism, leading to the liberation of the colonized peoples of Southeast Asia, with the resulting honor that accrues to Japanese war heroes. In Kobayashi's 1998 book, *A Theory of War*, the hero states: "The truth is the Great East Asian War is an epic poem that exposed the full range of our Japanese spirit... Let us express our thanks to those brave heroes who transcended themselves on our behalf" (p. 131). In Nathan's interview with Kobayashi, the cartoonist states, "since the U.S. occupation, we've been taught one lesson only: war guilt" (p. 134). As an instructive corollary, the German people are able to embrace their guilt and engage in dialogue regarding the wounds felt by their neighbors. Witness the positive reaction to the new holocaust memorial in Berlin honoring the victims at the hands of Germans. In Japan, the guilt regarding the past and its impact on their sense of national identity seems by comparison to be repressed, even rejected, thus prohibiting a similar memorial in Tokyo. Kobayashi intends to explore the militaristic past and revise the old messages so that, instead of creating guilt, they convey a sense of honor and righteous purpose in order to forge a new prideful identity in the twenty-first century. Kobayashi also explores the painful emotions still attached to the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, using this trauma as a reason to dispel any war guilt. The cartoon protagonist in *A Theory of War* states, "Pride and confidence are functions of identity." In this chapter and the next, Nathan has done a service for the reader by translating key passages of this book-sized *manga* that promotes revisionist history and a new brand of nationalism.

The next chapter, "The New Nationalism II: Institutionalizing Tradition" (pp. 139-168), provides the background to the history textbook controversy between China and Japan over the depiction of events before and during World War II. Nathan explains the movement to end the "masochistic version of history" (p. 139) with before-and-after translations of the revisions made to history texts regarding two events, the Nanjing Incident (Nanking Massacre) and the comfort women attached to Japanese

army camps. Nathan quotes and translates a Tokyo University professor: “The truth is that comfort women were simply prostitutes...making Japan’s imperial army the exclusive object of outrage was tantamount to applying a double standard: When American soldiers occupied Sicily in 1943, they inherited...the comfort women who had been working there” (pp. 144-145). The effect of the controversy on multiple revisions in several different texts is also highlighted, resulting in the deletion of events such as biological experiments in Manchuria and “the scorched earth policy, known as kill all, burn all, loot all in Chinese texts” (p. 151). “The textbook controversy, the polemic and often hysterical debate about Nanking, and the political explosiveness of official visits to Yasukuni are manifestations of an ongoing tension between contrition about the war and abject apology on the one hand and the urgent need to look to the past for a source of pride and self certainty on the other...The neonationalists [argue] that it is the United States who owes Japan an official apology” (p. 156). Based on this analysis, Nathan seems to suggest that conservative opinion, in its endurance and resistance to change, is slowly having an impact on the nation at large, erasing or at the very least whitewashing the public knowledge about Japanese wartime actions.

In chapters seven and eight, Nathan highlights the careers of two politicians, Ishihara Shintarō, the Governor of Tokyo, and Tanaka Yasuo, the governor of Nagano Prefecture. In “Shintarō Ishihara: The Sun King” (pp. 169-202) and “Yasuo Tanaka: The Trickster” (pp. 203-230), he interviews these political figures to reveal something of their characters, their struggles with the entrenched bureaucracies, and their views of the future of Japan. The nationalistic sentiments of Ishihara, bordering on fascism, are connected by Nathan to the loss of cultural identity. The populist sentiments of Tanaka, clearly based on materialism and even hedonism, are connected by Nathan to the reaction by the voters in Nagano, based on their feelings of disenfranchisement by the stifling bureaucracy and out-of-touch traditional politicians. In these chapters, it seemed that Nathan relied too much on rehashing old political and economic news, although it must be noted that he translated passages of learned monthly journals such as *Bungei Shunju* to flesh out his perspective, and he also included a section on Mishima’s work and explained its effect on Ishihara’s attitude.

In the epilogue (pp. 231-253), Nathan describes the shift away from American culture among Japanese youth. We note some excellent examples of *schadenfreude* (taking pleasure in the pain of others) including

Beat Takeshi's insulting TV shows. A variation of "This is Your Life," the "Takeshi Comedy Ultra Quiz Show," and "What's Wrong with Japan," a show featuring foreign residents in Japan. Takeshi's brand of xenophobic sadism comes to the fore on this show featuring *gaijin* in Japan and their sundry complaints about Japan accompanied by Takeshi's mocking of their foreign accents, "intended to make a laughingstock of foreigners in general" (p. 242). In this final chapter, Nathan returns to the *arro-procs* comic books by Kobayashi and the blustering of Ishihara, such as "referring to the United States as 'the second Mongol Empire'" (p. 243). The author also returns to the two novelists, Oe and Mishima, whose work he has translated. The final section reprises the theme of alienation in this book in the words of Oe: "Our identity as Japanese has withered away. From the European and American vantage, we appear to be Japanese. But inside ourselves, who are we?... We are confused and lost. The response to that lostness is nationalism. People like Ishihara gather around them those who have no basis for identity and entice them with the power of the state... The state becomes a crutch for those who are no longer able to stand alone...." (pp. 250-251). The reader then sees the anxiety of those who would prefer that nationalism be kept in check.

This very accessible and worthwhile explanation of the *zeitgeist* of twenty first century Japan is well worth the reader's time. Its explanations of contemporary alienation and its attendant neo-nationalism are well informed by Nathan's readings and interpretations of popular adult *manga*, books, scholarly monthlies, and the Japanese press, and his insightful interviews of leading political and cultural figures.

Lu Yan, *Re-Understanding Japan: Chinese Perspectives, 1895-1945*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004. xiii + 339 pp. ISBN: 0-8248-2730-9 (hbk), \$52.

Reviewed by Yuki Takatori

Throughout the month of April 2005, angry Chinese citizens, in response to Prime Minister Koizumi's declaration that he would continue his annual visits to Yasukuni Shrine, took to the streets of Beijing and Shanghai and hurled rocks at Japanese consulates and private businesses. Nine months earlier, the shocking raw footage of the pandemonium at a soccer stadium in Chongqing, where Japanese supporters, shielded by

security guards from outraged Chinese fans, quietly rooted for their home team, had dominated prime time news coverage. The near riot against his fellow citizens at a Chinese sports arena prompted Ishihara Shintarō, the ultra right-wing governor of Tokyo, to call for the boycott of the 2008 Beijing Olympics. In the wake of the anti-Japan demonstrations and the tit-for-tat calls for retaliation, many cultural exchange events and sightseeing tours have been cancelled, and business talks have come to a standstill. It is perhaps fortuitous that *Re-Understanding Japan*, by Lu Yan, a professor of history at the University of New Hampshire, should be published in this time of crisis in the Sino-Japanese relationship, for readers on both sides of this inter-Asian row could profit from knowing of the enthusiasm and receptive cast of mind of four Chinese men who crossed the East China Sea nearly a century ago to learn from Japan's success in modernizing rapidly without discarding its distinctive national identity, and to "bridge the best of two worlds in the shortest possible time so that China would not perish" (p. 20).

Japan's stunning victories over China in 1895 and Russia in 1905 recast the Japanese, in the estimation of many Chinese, from eastern barbarians into the "cardinal force" that would lead China to a "social, political, and cultural reconstruction" (p. 3). Soon, many a student rushed to study in Japan; among them were Jiang Baili, Zhou Zuoren, Dai Jitao, and Guo Moruo. Although their career paths seldom crossed, the four men, keenly aware of China's structural weaknesses, were united in their resolve to rejuvenate their beloved homeland. All of them mastered Japanese quickly and, freed from China's institutional restraints and their noisy, distracting relatives, absorbed everything useful in their new environment, like trees transplanted into more fertile soil. All of them met Japanese women who would later become their mates, legal or otherwise.

Jiang, the author of *The Japanese: A Foreigner's Analysis*, graduated first in his class from the infantry department of Japan's Army Officers Academy, an achievement which reveals the openness of Japan at that time. [Imagine the likelihood today of the National Defense Academy (*Bōei Daigakukō*), which still accepts foreign students, conferring upon one of them its highest honor.] Convinced that only military power could save China from foreign domination, he set out, as the first president of the first military school in modern Chinese history, the Baoding Military Academy, to transform the traditionally despised profession of soldiery into a well-regarded one. Dai, a journalist turned Guomintang member, and later a translator for and trusted secretary to Sun Yat-sen, became an advocate of

Sun's cause, putting a unique Confucian spin on his political theories. It was Dai who made possible a peaceful transition of Guomintang leadership to Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek) after Sun's death. Zhou, a scholar of Chinese literature and the author of *Re-Understanding Japan*, an essay from which the title of this book was taken, was a fluent reader of Classical Greek and translator of various Western authors, such as Henryk Sienkiewicz, Edgar Allan Poe, Guy de Maupassant, and Anton Chekhov. An equally prolific writer, and a co-founder of China's Creation Society, Guo had originally come to Japan to become a medical doctor, but never abandoned his passion for literature and history; his academic achievements cover a wide spectrum, from a study of the oldest writing on oracle bones to a translation of Goethe. Through their writings, these four men helped to deepen their understanding and to eliminate the contempt for Japan, much of it founded on clichés and stereotypes common among their countrymen.

The years they spent in Japan shaped and gave impetus to their careers, but they also had to live with their host country's irrational hatred and scorn for the Chinese, as exemplified by the Japanese government's infamous "Twenty One Demands" (which prompted the rise of patriotic feeling among Chinese of all classes in the May Fourth Movement), and demonstrated by the harsh discrimination and unkind words, looks, and deeds they were subject to in their daily encounters with ordinary people. Their outrage at this shabby treatment was expressed with particular bitterness (and with an echo of Disraeli's famous response to the Irish nationalist, Daniel O'Connell, concerning the former's Jewish identity) in the following passage by Guo:

Japanese, Japanese! You ungrateful Japanese! What does our China owe to you to despise us so?... Ah, do you understand the origin of these words "Shi-na"? When it was the time of the "Chin" Dynasty, you were... still living on coconuts in the South Sea!... Ah, you arrogant Japanese!... Do repent! Do repent!

But, it was to be more than racism that would push them, over the years, far from their initial pro-Japanese stance – a series of events on the continent, starting with the annexation of Korea, and continuing through the Manchurian Incident and July 7th (Marco Polo Bridge) Incident ineluctably led to an eight-year long war with Japan. Underestimating China's nationalism, and ever striving to augment its false sense of power and

control over what it thought was a second-class nation incapable of uniting itself, Japan kept pursuing the chimera of bringing China to its knees with one final blow. Thus, disappointed and saddened by Japan's sinister side, the four men felt their ambivalence toward their "second home" gradually evolve into a position unmistakably anti-Japanese in its sentiments. Though Jiang did not live to witness Japanese imperialism stymied by the soldiers he had instructed, having died of a heart attack not long after shots were fired near the Marco Polo Bridge, Guo and Dai were able to stand up against their adopted country as a Communist and a Guomintang member, respectively. Zhou became a minister of Japan's puppet government led by Wang Jingwei, as a result of which he was given that most disgraceful appellation, *hanjian* (traitor).

Lu makes occasional references to Japanese military leaders of the era, several quite notorious, but, unlike some Chinese writers who have employed inflammatory language to refer to these generals, she describes them in terms that are completely free of malice or vindictive bias. Perhaps it is this disinclination to portray unnecessarily the Japanese in a bad light that keeps her from mentioning the family feud between Zhou's spendthrift wife, Habuto Nobuko, and his brother, Lu Xun, the father of modern Chinese literature, which contributed, more than their ideological differences, to the brothers' estrangement.

Lu is possessed of so adept a narrative style and has such a riveting story to tell that I would not hesitate to call *Re-Understanding Japan* a page-turner, in the best sense of the term. [Though I must confess that, in my first reading of the book, so immersed was I in the lives of the subjects that I slowed at times, reluctant to see their stories end.] Even those readers who have only a rudimentary knowledge of the modern history of East Asia will find the going easier than they might expect, particularly since the author has helpfully outlined key concepts as well as pivotal events and their actors (although she errs in her inclusion of Itō Hirobumi, the resident-general of Korea, among those who fell to the bullets of extreme militarists, for he was gunned down by a Korean nationalist) (p. 231). Furthermore, many students of Asian studies will find much that is of value in Lu's examination of the ideas put forth by Zhou and the others. For instance, Zhou's criticism of Confucian theory could furnish an interesting point of view to classroom discussions on ancient Chinese philosophers (pp. 233-239), and although Guo's linguistic speculations regarding a possible connection between the Japanese and the Cantonese languages on the basis of "their characteristic labial sounds" (of which Lu only discusses /m/, to

the exclusion of other labials such as /p b f/), are utterly unconvincing, they do not detract at all significantly from his otherwise scholarly, and often insightful, remarks on Japanese culture (p. 191).

I should also add that, although Lu gives Jiang's *The Japanese: A Foreigner's Analysis* the attention it is due, devoting a section of a chapter to it, she fails to mention one significant aspect of this masterpiece predating Ruth Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* by five years. It was the very first work to note, on the basis of the author's first-hand experiences and observations, the contradictory, dual nature of the Japanese mind, and, in that sense, it deserves at least the same recognition as Benedict's piece as a classic work on Japanese culture, a culture whose values have remained unaltered through the changes of the postwar period (pp. 210-214).

Surely, it is not too much to hope that Japanese intellectuals (and Chinese, as well) who encounter this book will be so enlightened by it that they will help build the foundations for a more peaceful and more vibrant Sino-Japanese relationship. As of 2000, Japan was hosting over 25,000 students from China. *Re-Understanding Japan* sends a strong message that Japan must not disappoint them, again, and that they, in turn, need to cultivate forbearance to avoid being disappointed.

Martha Chaiklin, *Cultural Commerce and Dutch Commercial Culture: The Influence of European Material Culture on Japan, 1700-1850*. Studies in Overseas History 5. Leiden: CNWS, 2003. 276 pp. ISBN: 90-5789-086-0 (pbk), £30.

Reviewed by Laura Nenzi

In *Cultural Commerce and Dutch Commercial Culture*, Martha Chaiklin sets out to evaluate the diffusion and impact of European material culture on early modern Japan by looking at specific objects and at the trajectories they took once imported by the Dutch onto Japanese soil. Such objects include clocks, scientific instruments, glassware, and firearms. For the sake of conciseness, Chaiklin chooses not to discuss other equally relevant imports such as textiles (p. 2), "maps and globes, jackscrews, musical instruments, candles and chandeliers, rugs, and jewelry" (p. 177).

Her sources include the voluminous trade records of the Dutch East India Company (VOC, see p. 211 for a detailed breakdown) and on the

Japanese side, criminal records, memoirs of foreign envoys and traders in Japan as well as Japanese eyewitnesses, Edo period literature, archaeological findings, and the material objects themselves.

Thanks to this book we find out that while in eighteenth and nineteenth century Europe the love for things Eastern swept across artistic and cultural circles (think of *Chinoiserie* and *Japonisme*), a similar curiosity for Western oddities was brewing in Japan. Chaiklin contends that not only did such curiosity exist, but also that “many Western things were completely acculturated, absorbed, and internalized, losing any connection with their foreign roots” (p. 5). Attention to and desire for foreign (European) merchandise was at an all time high in the Edo period, and the repercussions of commercial exchanges between Dutch traders and government officials reached far beyond the foreign entrepôt of Nagasaki and the circles of officialdom, all the way to the world of commoners.

After a brief introduction (Chapter 1), *Cultural Commerce and Dutch Commercial Culture* moves on to explain how the exchanges occurred along legal but also extra-legal avenues: theft, smuggling, and the spontaneous offering of gifts between foreign guests and Japanese hosts are the centerpieces of Chapters 2 and 3. In her analysis of presents, in particular, Chaiklin accurately details the differences between official gifts and informal/personal ones, and does not fail to take into account the all important issues of reciprocity and obligation. As she argues, personal gifts carried a particular significance because “far more people came into contact with them in a way that increased awareness about European objects,” thus generating a cycle of demand and supply (p. 48).

Such a cycle is the focus of Chapter 4, where Chaiklin presents a gallery of government officials (from the shogun at the top to the interpreters at the lower levels) who sent in requests for gifts. The scope and variety of their requests – from ostriches to fire engines, from bottled caimans to rosemary bushes – reveals the extent to which the representatives of officialdom strove to acquire technology and oddities from the outside world. In the second half of the chapter, Chaiklin moves on to exploring the “far-reaching cultural effects” of imported foreign goods (p. 64). It is not always easy to make a convincing case for the direct influence of one on the other, as she herself admits, “but there is a great deal of circumstance” (p. 45). Such is the case for the fire engine, one of the examples provided: while Chaiklin cannot offer unquestionable evidence for its serving as a model for the Japanese *ryūdosui* pump, she suggests that the Japanese had “motive, opportunity, and technical ability” (p. 66) to

create one on the basis of the other. The reader will ultimately have to decide whether this type of circumstantial evidence is sufficient, but to Chaiklin's credit she is very careful not to overstate her case. Never does she claim that imported foreign goods revolutionized life in the floating world – rather, “the influence was more subtle” (p. 49).

Chapter 5 continues the discussion opened in Chapter 4 and looks at the role of the marketplace (in and outside Nagasaki) in the circulation of foreign items. Chaiklin follows the distribution of goods along the major trade networks, taking the reader to the markets of Osaka, Kyoto, and Edo, and offering a peek of the activities of foreign goods traders. Again, she is faced with the challenge and inherent limits of sources, as very few documents “itemize the specifics of what each wholesaler carried” (p. 78). One resulting problem is that it is not always possible to distinguish between European and other foreign merchandise (especially from China). What Chaiklin is able to assess, however, is that European goods did not come cheap: among the common folks, only the wealthy merchants could, and did, collect such Western oddities. The general populace was nevertheless aware of their existence thanks to the promotional effects of printed literature.

In Chapter 6, the focus narrows to clocks and watches (and, by extension, musical boxes and astronomical instruments) as case studies for technological transfer. Chaiklin contextualizes her discussion by providing first and foremost a review of traditional Japanese timekeeping methods. The core of her argument here is that “the first clocks produced by the Japanese were based on clocks imported by the Dutch” (p. 90) – she doubts there was any previous relevant influence on the part of the Jesuits. She provides a number of examples of technological imitation and adaptation, and even indicates how some of this technology touched the general population. Clock and watch ownership became increasingly ubiquitous (p. 103), and few among the townspeople were unfamiliar with automata (*karakuri ningyō*), an offspring of clockwork technology frequently displayed at fairs and festivals.

Yet another case study for technological and cultural hybridization is that of glassmaking, discussed in Chapter 7. While glassmaking technology already existed in Japan, Chaiklin contends that the encounter with the Dutch inspired the Japanese “to find better ways to make glass” (p. 116). Not only scientific interest but also a taste for exotica prompted the Japanese at all social levels to acquire bottles, thermometers, and mirrors. Of all the imports Chaiklin deals with, telescopes and eyeglasses were

possibly the most widespread and well known, as attested, among other things, by their numerous appearances in popular woodblock prints and works of fiction (pp. 133, 136). The interested reader may also want to consult Timon Screech's *The Lens Within the Heart*, which deals with many of the same topics: glassmaking and lenses, automata and mechanics. The two books in fact complement each other very well.

In Chapter 8, Chaiklin discusses firearms. Though the Dutch were not the ones who introduced them to Japan first, she still credits them for bringing in new types of weapons (p. 156), for teaching the Japanese how to fill bombs, use artillery, and cast cannons (pp. 159, 163), and possibly even for introducing fireworks to Japan (p. 168).

In her conclusion (Chapter 9), Chaiklin warns us not to limit our understanding of Japan's interest in things European to the quest for exotica of "Hollandophiles" and "eccentric crackpots" (p. 176). While the point is well taken, the issue of reception and awareness remains a hard one to tackle. The voices cited here are more often than not those of government officials (Matsudaira Sadanobu and Arai Hakuseki among others), of *rangakusha* and intellectuals (Shiba Kōkan), or of commercial authors (Ihara Saikaku, Shikitei Sanba, Jippensha Ikku) interested in things Western. How the ordinary Saburō or Goemon on the street acquired, processed, and retained knowledge about foreign glassmaking, clockworking, or cannon casting is much harder to assess. Martha Chaiklin ought to be commended not only for trying to include the entire social spectrum but also for trying, whenever possible, to give a voice to Saburō and Goemon.

Another risk Chaiklin takes with this book is that some readers may see her arguments as Eurocentric: Japan lay dormant until the spark of Western technology fueled technological advances and cultural changes. I do not believe that is her intention, but the line she walks is, at times, a fine one.

Historiographically, *Cultural Commerce and Dutch Commercial Culture* contributes to the vast body of literature on the "East-West" encounter in the early modern period and on the extent of international relations on the part of Japan in what has often been (and sometimes still is) referred to as the era of the "closed country" (*sakoku*). Two decades ago, Ronald P. Toby's seminal monograph (*State and Diplomacy in Early Modern Japan: Asia in the Development of the Tokugawa Bakufu*. Stanford University Press, 1984) dispelled once and for all the myth according to which Tokugawa Japan shut its doors and rejected any contact with the

outside world. Toby's monograph is not cited in this work, and Chaiklin, while admitting that Edo period Japan was far from closed (pp. 3-4, 6), also uses the controversial term *sakoku* (pp. 21, 75, 107, 125, 138, 154, 156). In the end, however, this book still makes a great case for the door being plenty open, and does so through the angle of commercial culture.

Scholars interested in the diplomatic history of Japan, in East/West relations, in the history of technology, and in material culture will find *Cultural Commerce and Dutch Commercial Culture* useful and fascinating. Many of the anecdotes and examples cited therein lend themselves to inclusion in lectures for undergraduate classes as well, as they effectively and poignantly make a case for curiosity toward the exotic Other in the early modern period.

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