

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the fourteenth 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. 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. This issue includes articles, essays, and book reviews covering a variety of topics in Japanese studies.

Seven articles are included in this issue. "Specters of Modernity: Japanese Horror Uncovers Anxiety for a Post-Bubble America" by Michael J. Blouin scrutinizes the Japanese horror film genre and compares and contrasts it with American films, contending that both countries' postmodern national identities manifest themselves in popular cinema.

The next article "Brewing Spirits, Brewing Songs: Saké, *Haikai*, and the Aestheticization of Suburban Space in Edo Period Itami" written by W. Puck Brecher challenges the belief that rural areas in Japan were culturally dependent on cities by using Itami, a small village which became a center for *haikai* poets through the use and production of Saké, as a contradictory example.

Following this is Ronald E. Hall's "Beauty and the Breck: The Psychology of Idealized Light Skin Vis-à-Vis Asian Women," which presents a theory for the Eurocentric ideal standards of beauty that can be found in Asian countries.

On a different note is "Jack London's First Encounter with Japan: The Voyage of the *Sophie Sutherland* and his First Asian Writing," written by Daniel A. Métraux. This article recaps London's trip to Japan in 1893 and how this inspired his first literary efforts.

In "Varieties of Corporate Finance in Japanese Industrialization," Yumiko Morii writes about the differences between pre- and post-war corporate finance of railroads, electric utilities, and the cotton-spinning industry, and how these financial practices varied from industry to industry.

In "Sweet Music from a Strange Country: Japanese Women Poets as 'Other,'" Bern Mulvey examines the poetic works of Japanese women and disputes the conventional that their poetry is non-confrontational and indirect.

The last article, "Bob Dylan's Zen Garden: Cross-Cultural Currents in His Approach to Religiosity" by Steven Heine focuses on Bob

Dylan's first tour of Japan in 1978 where he was exposed to Zen Buddhist temples, and analyzes affinities between the philosophy of Zen and Dylan's multifaceted lyrics throughout various stages in his career.

Included in this year's issue are two featured essays. The first is "Japanese Portrayal in Chinese Martial Arts Films: Heroes & Villains of The East: A Comparison of the Portrayal of the Japanese in Chinese and Hong Kong Martial Arts Cinema in the 1970s and 1990s" by Ian Nathaniel Cohen, who examines the portrayal of the typical Chinese villain in Japanese Martial Arts films. "What Skills Should the Student Possess After Courses in Business Japanese?" by Yuki Matsuda discusses the proficiency skills in language and culture that a student demonstrates after taking a course in Japanese for business.

Lastly, this volume includes four book reviews. Daniel A. Métraux reviews Takeshi Matsuda's in-depth examination of Japanese-American relations in *Soft Power and Its Perils: U.S. Cultural Policy in Early Postwar Japan and Permanent Dependency*. John Hickman reviews Frances McCall Rosenbluth's examination of low fertility rates in Japan in *The Political Economy of Japan's Low Fertility*. Métraux also reviews Peter Pagnamento and Momoko Williams' historically rich love story, *Sword and Blossom: A British Officer's Enduring Love for a Japanese Woman*. Finally, Kelly M. Foreman's analysis of geisha in *The Gei of Geisha: Music, Identity and Meaning* is reviewed by Jan Bardsley.

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Re: Submissions, Subscriptions, and Comments

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

Annual subscriptions are \$25.00 (US). Please send a check or money order payable to *Florida International University* to:

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Visit our website at <http://asian.fiu.edu/jsr> versions of past volumes are available online.

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

ISSN: 1550-0713