

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the twenty-first volume of the *Japan Studies Review* (JSR), an annual peer-reviewed journal sponsored by the Asian Studies Program at Florida International University. JSR remains an outlet for publications related to Southern Japan Seminar events that encourages submissions from a wide range of scholars in the field. The 2017 issue includes research articles covering varied interdisciplinary topics and a special section featuring a bibliographical essay plus additional essays and book reviews

Appearing in this issue are four articles dealing with a variety of topics on Japanese society and culture. The first article is by Ben Van Overmeire, who analyzes Zen Buddhism in the twentieth century in terms of “frame-stories” from Daisetz Teitarō Suzuki’s book *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism* in relation to Janwillem Van de Wetering’s *The Empty Mirror*. The second article, by Rebecca Richko, presents a study of Japan’s low birth rate and the role of women in contemporary society. The next article is by Shiho Futugami and Marilyn M. Helms, who explore the underlying factors behind employment challenges in Japan by reviewing current policies for work involving age and gender equality. The fourth article, by Bernice J. deGannes Scott, presents an economic analysis of the United States-Japan automobile trade conflict of the 1980s.

The special section in this year’s issue contains a biographical essay by Steven Heine with assistance from Katrina Ankrum. It provides a detailed overview of compilations of traditional Sōtō Zen commentaries, primarily from the Edo period but also including some medieval and modern examples. These manifold works, with more than eighty examples, examine the content of Eihei Dōgen’s masterwork, the *Shōbōgenzō*, as well as the factors that led to the formation of the 95-Fascicle Honzan Edition first published in 1906.

This issue includes two additional essays. The first one by Junko Baba is a discussion on the military government’s food policies in World War II Japan. The second essay is by Cassandra Atherton, who focuses her analysis of “ocean plain” (*wata no hara*) imagery in the animated film *Gake no Ue no Ponyo* directed by Hayao Miyazaki.

Furthermore, this volume contains three book reviews of recent publications on Japanese studies. Daniel A. Métraux reviews a book by Janice P. Nimura, *Daughters of the Samurai: A Journey from East to West and Back*, and a volume by Richard Reeves titled *Infamy: The Shocking Story of Japanese Internment in World War II*. Finally, Yuichi Tamura reviews a book by Peter Cave titled *Schooling Selves: Autonomy, Interdependence, and Reform in Japanese Junior High Education*.

Re: Submissions, Subscriptions, and Comments

Submissions for publication, whether articles, essays, translations or book reviews, should be made in electronic formats, preferably Word for Windows via email attachment (please inquire about other formats). The editor and members of the editorial board will referee all submissions.

Annual subscriptions are \$35.00 (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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