

## EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the twenty-third 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 2019 issue features five articles branching into different aspects of Japanese studies. Janusz Mytko provides a thorough study in the “Analysis of the Military Plot against Saionji Kinmochi’s Second Cabinet” regarding a conspiracy during the *Taishō Seihen* crisis in order to provide insight into the political process in pre-World War I Japan. In “Literary Litations: The *Ubume* in Early Monstrous Maternity Narratives,” Michaela Leah Prostack presents a literary analysis of various religious and secular aspects of the *ubume*, a figure in Japanese folklore of a woman who died during either pregnancy or childbirth. The next article by Peter Mauch, “‘Our Islands Are Being Violated One After the Other’: Hirohito’s Prayerful Reports to His Imperial Ancestors, October 1937 – August 1945,” enables readers to see for themselves the texts and translations of the World War II-era prayers that Japan’s Showa Emperor delivered to his imperial ancestors.

The last two articles are written or translated by Lorenzo Marinucci, beginning with an informative introductory essay, “Following the Footsteps of Wind: Some Remarks on Kuki Shūzō’s Philosophy of Aesthetics.” Then, in “A Translation of Kuki Shūzō’s ‘Reflections on Poetic Spirit’ (*Fūryū ni kansuru ikkōsatsu*),” Marinucci offers a work by Kuki from 1937 that gives us a deeper understanding of the renowned Japanese philosopher’s uniquely creative modern approach to the meaning of key aspects of traditional Japanese culture.

This year’s issue also includes three essays. In “Wakamatsu Farm and the Birth of Japanese America,” Daniel A. Métraux explores the emblematic history of Japanese American immigration represented in the Wakamatsu Tea & Silk Farm Colony of 1869 located in California. Next, “Japanese Studies in Israel: A Response to Meron Medzini’s ‘From Alienation to Partnership: Israel-Japan Relation’ in the *Contemporary Review of the Middle East*” by Christopher L. Schilling clarifies Medzini’s shortcomings and criticizes certain anti-Semitic tendencies. The last essay by Kinko Ito, “*Golden Kamuy*: Can the Popular Manga Contribute to the Ainu Studies?” uses a content analysis based on the popular Japanese manga produced by Shueisha that has created interest within the Ainu community.

There are three book reviews. Jakobina K. Arch’s *Bringing Whales Ashore: Oceans and the Environment of Early Modern Japan* is reviewed by W. Puck Brecher; Emily T. Metzgar’s *The JET Program and the U.S.–Japan Relationship: Goodwill Goldmine* is reviewed by Gabriela Izaguirre; and Yoneyuki Sugita’s *Japan’s Shifting Status in the World and the Development of Japan’s Medical Insurance Systems* is reviewed by Carmen E. Schmidt.

**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 \$45.00 (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>. PDF versions of past volumes are available online.

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

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