

Editorial Foreword

OUR COVER

Alan Thomas offers a view to complement the treatment of Japanese popular culture found in this issue with his photograph, Tokyo, 2009. A selection of Alan Thomas's other photographs from Japanese urban centers may be found at www.alan-thomas.com.

ASIA BEYOND THE HEADLINES

This issue contains the fourth entry in this newest of *Journal of Asian Studies* genres. Written by CHRISTINE R. YANO of the University of Hawaii, it shares some important characteristics with the essay that inaugurated the feature in our February issue, Duncan McCargo's "Thai Politics as Reality TV" (68.1), as well as the two that appeared in May: Pranab Bardhan's "India and China: Governance Issues and Development" (68.2), and Stanley Rosen's "Contemporary Chinese Youth and the State" (68.2). Called "Wink on Pink: Interpreting Japanese Cute as It Grabs the Global Spotlight," Yano's contribution, like its predecessors, is informed by scholarly expertise, yet it is shorter than a typical article in a journal such as this one, comes with minimal academic apparatus, deals with a timely subject, and is written in an accessible style—in this case, fittingly, a playful one at times. Yano's "Wink on Pink" also takes the feature in new directions, and not just stylistically. It reminds readers that it is not just phenomena such as protest and economic developments that can thrust an Asian country into the international headlines—many other things, including trends in popular culture, can do this as well.

This piece also expands—and further expansion certainly will take place in the future—the disciplines from which our "Asia Beyond the Headlines" authors have been drawn: Whereas McCargo and Rosen are specialists in politics and Bardhan an economist, Yano is an anthropologist. After finishing her wide-ranging essay, I knew that I would never look at "Hello Kitty," a globally familiar icon who turns thirty-five this year, in quite the same way again, and I expect the same will be true for many readers of *JAS*. They also may be left with a clearer sense of how complex the intersections between consumer culture, soft power, and transnational flows of products and symbols can be. Yano's essay is a particularly appropriate opening for an issue in which each of the articles, despite dealing with multiple countries, engages in some fashion with Japan. In some cases, they do so only through consideration of domestic concerns, but in most instances, they address, as Yano does, the country's impact on other nations, albeit an impact that is much harder-edged and linked to more disturbing forms of international influence than the "pink globalization" of images, memorabilia, toys, and kitsch that Yano describes.

WRITING ACROSS BORDERS

The articles in this section, as the title suggests, all deal with more than just Japanese internal developments. We begin with University of Sheffield historian MARJORIE DRYBURGH's essay "Rewriting Collaboration: China, Japan, and Self in the Diaries of Bai Jianwu," which uses a very personal document to provide an intriguing new perspective on a very public act. Though her focus is on a Chinese man who collaborated with Japanese invaders, rather than soldiers who came from Japan to take part in that invasion, it makes a good companion not just to other articles in this issue, but also to Aaron William Moore's "The Chimera of Privacy: Reading and Self-Discipline in Japanese Diaries from the Second World War (1937–1945)," which appeared in a recent *JAS* issue (68.1).

The second piece in the section, by literary specialist MARGARET HILLENBRAND of London's School of Oriental and African Studies, takes us into a different period (the very recent past and the present day) and highlights a radically different kind of encounter between China and Japan—Chinese reactions to the work of a Japanese writer. Titled "Murakami Haruki in Greater China: Creative Responses and the Quest for Cosmopolitanism," the essay looks at varied responses to the writings of a man who has been hailed as one of the world's leading novelists, has worked in many genres, and has made his mark as a translator. Whereas Dryburgh uses a little-known figure's private writing to shed new light on a period when violence spilled across Asian borders, Hillenbrand offers an illuminating look at the process by which a famous figure's public writings take on new meanings as they move across geographic divides in an era when, as Yano's commentary stresses, new connections between different parts of East Asia are being formed by the movement among nations of ideas, objects, and texts.

The last article in the section moves us back in time to the early 1900s, and focuses on a period of much more constrained flows of communication. The author, KAREN L. THORNBURGH, is another literary scholar—she teaches in Harvard University's Comparative Literature Department—who is interested in the influence of Japanese writings beyond Japan. Unlike Hillenbrand and Dryburgh, each of whom works mostly on China, Thornburgh's primary area of specialization is Japanese studies. But her insightful contribution here is nothing if not transnational and multilingual, as shown by her very title: "Early Twentieth-Century Intra-East Asian Literary Contact Nebulae: Censored Japanese Literature in Chinese and Korean."

GENDER AND POLITICS

In this section, it is Japan's internal history that is the focus, though in each case, we see aspects of the domestic past that were influenced by international developments. This is most obvious in the case of the first article, University of Florida historian SARAH KOVNER's "Base Cultures: Sex Workers and Servicemen in Occupied Japan," which begins with the author noting that the "influx of

British and American” soldiers altered a “market for sex services” that the World War II victors “did not close”—General MacArthur’s proclamations on the matter notwithstanding—but “merely deregulated.” Kovner combines discussion of the local and global image of Japanese sex workers during the occupation period with an analysis of diverse texts that help us understand the complex motivations of the women involved, making the article a story about agency as well as exploitation.

The next article in the section, by UCLA anthropologist MARIKO ASANO TAMANOI, brings together early twentieth-century Japanese discourses on two very different issues: democracy and waste control. The connecting thread that runs through her sophisticated piece is the involvement of suffragist women, who were, of course, influenced by international intellectual and political currents of the time, in debates on these topics. Tamanoi’s specific focus in “Suffragist Women, Corrupt Officials, and Waste Control in Prewar Japan: Two Plays by Kaneko Shigeri” is a pair of dramatic works whose titles she translates as “Women’s Suffrage Is the Key” and “Miss Oharu’s Dream,” respectively. Subjects that come up in passing range from the history of Tokyo neighborhoods to the many-faceted nature of ideas about hygiene and its links to national strength and modernity in Japan circa 1930.

COLONIAL CONTEXTS

The issue concludes with a trio of articles dealing with territories that were either formal parts of the Japanese empire or at least had leaders who were heavily influenced by Tokyo. The first of these, “Politics and Pageantry in Protectorate Korea (1905–10): The Imperial Progresses of Sunjong,” is written by historian CHRISTINE KIM, of Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service. It offers a nuanced look at an important ritual, modeled on nation-building techniques used successfully in Meiji Japan, that had unintended effects when transposed to Korea. The aim of the imperial progresses was to use the charisma of Korea’s royal house to facilitate Japanese rule, but instead, they provoked what the author describes as an “upswell of nationalism” that “fortified Korean resistance” to the “system of informal empire” into which Japan was trying to integrate the country.

The section’s second article, by University of Southern California literary scholar SUNYOUNG PARK, also concentrates on Korea, but this time near the end of its period as a Japanese colony as opposed to a protectorate. Her aim is to explicate the meaning of the works of a single, complex, and hard-to-pigeon-hole author, who has been characterized by some as a realist and by others as a modernist and was, Park claims, “one of the most accomplished leftist writers in Korea” and someone who distinguished himself through his “critical acumen” and “a rare aesthetic inventiveness.” In her “Everyday Life as Critique in Late Colonial Korea: Kim Namch’ŏn’s Literary Experiments, 1934–43,” Park discusses topics such as the writer’s shifting view of Marxism and the ways in which pan-Asianism influenced his work.

Closing out this section and the segment of the issue devoted to articles, which is followed as usual by a large complement of book reviews that is always an integral part of the journal, is University of North Texas historian ANDREW HALL's intriguing look at differences between the educational strategies pursued in Manchukuo as opposed to other territories that were part of either Japan's formal or informal empire. Titled "The Word Is Mightier than the Throne: Bucking Colonial Education Trends in Manchukuo," his essay begins by stressing that, from 1931 on, "Japanese officials on the scene spoke of creating a new 'Manchurian' national consciousness among the Han Chinese" in the region, as opposed to simply inculcating reverence for Japan. The author uses textbooks from the 1930s and early 1940s, as well as education journals and postwar memoirs, to recreate the mind-set of what he calls "reform optimists," defined as colonial educators who developed a distinctive pedagogic philosophy that they hoped would "solve the contradiction between the Manchukuo founding ideal of ethnic equality and the reality of Japanese domination, and who disdained the use of strong pro-Japanese and nationalistic messages in the schools."

—JNW

Forthcoming Articles in *JAS* 68:4 (November 2009)

Asia Beyond the Headlines

To Be Determined

Presidential Address

Korean Buddhism in the East Asian Context

ROBERT BUSWELL

Political Activism

Reconciliation and Revitalization: The Resurgence of Tradition in Postconflict Tobelo, North Maluku, Eastern Indonesia

CHRIS DUNCAN

Hot Potatoes: Chinese Complaint Systems from Early Times to the Late Qing

QIANG FANG

Political and Economic Reform

Forestry Reform and the Transformation of State Capacity in Fin-de-Siècle China

JULIA STRAUSS

The Political Economy of Financial Services Reform in India

LAWRENCE SAEZ

Symbolic Systems in Asian Studies

Getting across the Walls of Discourse: “Character Fetishization” in Chinese Studies

EDWARD McDONALD

Clifford Geertz, Cultural Portraits, and Southeast Asia

ARAM A. YENGOYAN
