

Editor's Note

How to feature the unique aspects of Japanese life while constructively attending to the universally relevant elements of the nation's society is quite a demanding intellectual challenge. In this volume, we picked for the issue's special topic the social politics of emotion to demonstrate how Japan's culturally distinctive mindset and institutions can be perceptively highlighted in relation to more universal themes and concerns. It is, of course, well-known that Japanese society places immense value on education, and that many Japanese people expose themselves to this education-credential society and dare to face the apparently unlimited range of competition within. In this context, Nam Sang-wook, by exploring popular novels and manga, touches upon the deep inequality and human vulnerability that persist beyond the reach of the apparently increased range of educational opportunities within contemporary Japan. In another featured article on Japanese life today, Park Seung-hyun conceptualizes Japanese society after the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of an anxiety-suppression society. By analyzing the Japanese government's response and public discourse during the pandemic, Park focuses on how the practice of self-restraint is rooted in communal solidarity, and charts how the Japanese public suppress their anxiety and maintain daily lives as usual, which represents the politics of emotion. Lee Jee-hyung's piece examines the dynamics of disgust as portrayed in the works of Inoue Mitsuharu. Lee defines atomic bomb fiction as dystopian literature, which implies that human efforts at order and reason are disturbed and subverted to the extent that human liberty and the diversity of lived experience comes to be negated. Inoue's atomic bomb fiction lays out the processes and structures by which disgust feeds into social discrimination. In this essay, Lee sheds light on the reality of disgust most harshly felt by women.

Other featured articles here also focus on the hidden or not-so-openly disclosed aspects of Japanese social and cultural practices. Oh Eunjeong explores the case of NPO Mothers' Radiation Lab Fukushima that attempted to measure the extent of the radiation permeating everything around them after the Fukushima disaster. Through an analysis of the lab's activities, Oh emphasizes

the marginalization and exclusion of women's voices from public discourse in Japan following the Fukushima nuclear disaster. Oh Seunghee compares the process of ROK-Japan normalization in 1965 with that of PRC-Japan normalization in 1972. While the PRC forwent demands for war reparations, ROK focused on economic cooperation. In the process, she traces out the complicated processes of how international disputes have been handled between Japan and its sovereign neighbors, which she identifies in terms of distinct diplomatic approaches of shelving, layering, demarcation, and iridescence. Yim Joon-Gyu illuminates the hidden aspects of the collective movements in Korea during the period of Japanese colonial domination. He focuses on the 1931 anti-Chinese riot in colonial Korea, a notable historical event defined by ethnic conflict. He addresses the riot from the perspective of the compulsory nature of crowd participation which stemmed from the perceived legitimacy of their grievances with the Chinese nation. An article by Yang Jihye also focuses on the colonial period. She looks at the process of building a Japanese settler community in the city of Hŭngnam, where the Japanese company Nitchitsu played a crucial role in developing the area. According to her, Nitchitsu planned, constructed, and ruled the city of Hŭngnam, through an organizational process that rendered the city an effective modern day fortress, or "kingdom" of Nitchitsu. Here, Yang offers an innovative analysis of the unusual process of city construction during the colonial period. Finally, Lee Jungeun goes further into the past to show the impact of Korean envoys to Japan, or *Chōsen tsūshinshi* (*Chosŏn t'ongsinsa*). She focuses on the visualization of the Korean envoy procession, an event which was received throughout Japan as representative of an alien parade or a festivity. Her study broadens this scope to also consider the temporary exhibition of Buddhist temple objects and community festivals to show the secondary and tertiary transformation of interpretation.

All these articles are based on original scholarly insights and meticulous investigations of reality, based on the clear awareness that Japanese society needs to be interpreted through deep and lively research. I hope the readers of these articles can also acquire a deeply enriched sense of modern and contemporary Japan, as the *SJJS* always aspires to be a journal that maintains a global perspective relative to a clear local focus.

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