

Emperor, Freedom, and Order

Princess Masako's Ordeal and the Crisis of Japanese Imperial House: Gender and the Emperor System in Postwar Japan | KWEON Sug In

Taking Princess Masako's prolonged 'ordeal' as a vantage point, this article explores the gender issues involved in the postwar emperor system of Japan. Even though many Japanese wanted to see the marriage of Masako and Crown Prince Naruhito as signaling "the beginning of a new era for the imperial house," Masako's first and foremost duty was giving birth to a baby-son who will succeed the imperial throne. And Masako's difficulties of and eventual failure in fulfilling this duty lie at the core of her post-nuptial hardship. This 'hardcore' logic of a patrilineal dynasty defies all the social changes, and it is not simply the ultimate cause of Masako's suffering but also the causes of current 'crisis' of the imperial house and emperor system. Additionally, fundamental vulnerabilities of the 'symbolic' emperor system which functions as a sort of 'theater state' as well as the conservative group's adamant 'belief' in the "emperor's unbroken descent line for ages eternal" also challenge the emperor system, bringing about discords and conflicts in various realms of Japanese society. In this regard, Princess Masako's suffering is merely a symptom of the crisis that surrounds the imperial household, and reflecting on her 'ordeal' leads to the question of how the Japanese emperor system is to survive in the future.

• **Keywords:** symbolic emperor system, women and the dynasty, Princess Masako, female emperor, female descent emperor, theater state, institutional body, natural body, Gender-equal Society

The Representation of Japanese Emperors in Fictional Films | KANG Tae Woong

This article aims to investigate how Japanese emperor has been depicted in Japanese fictional films. In prewar Japan, no movie existed in which 'a mere actor' played the role of the emperor. It was after 1945 that this trend began to change. Yet film-makers in Japan could only produce those movies under certain restrictions. The production of film was only permitted when it presented the emperor as a sublime figure. The focus of this article is to investigate the formula as well as the convention of the films.

The very first trilogy in which Meiji emperor was the protagonist was made in the 1950s.

The protagonist was dressed up just like how Meiji emperor appears in his 'Goshinei', or the emperor's portrait, and played the role with very little movement. Although numerous films on World War II have been made in Japan, there are very few in which Showa emperor was played by an actor. Even in those films, his movements were limited and the acting was kept at minimum. The peculiarities of the representation of the emperor become more comprehensible when they are compared with a 2005 film <The Sun> by a Russian director. <The Sun> so vividly portrayed the private life of Showa emperor that it shocked the Japanese people. This study uncovers that, until recently, playing the role of the emperor has been considered a taboo in Japan, and there exists implicit norms to avoid fictional representations of the emperor.

• **Keywords:** Tennō (Japanese Emperor), Japanese Film, The Sun, Arashi Kanjuro, Aleksandr Sokurov

Imperial Diplomacy in the Era of Globalization | PARK Soon Ae

This article considers an aspect of Japanese Imperial diplomacy of the Heisei period and the political use of Imperial diplomacy since the 1990s. Under the symbolic emperor system, Imperial diplomacy is considered as state affairs and it is also a public matter under the provision of Japanese constitution. In other words, the acceptance of foreign ambassadors and ministers is state affairs, while interviews with high foreign officials, welcoming events for state visitors, hosting of Imperial Court banquet, and formal visits to foreign countries are considered public acts. The Cabinet bears responsibility for such public acts and makes political decisions at cabinet meetings, which are required for the execution of Imperial activities. Originally, the purpose of Imperial diplomacy is to enhance international goodwill; however, Imperial diplomacy, particularly the official visits to foreign countries by the Imperial Family, is highly colored by the political judgment which reflects the interest of each government. This study shows that the Imperial diplomacy of the 1960s was used in relevance to the issues surrounding U.S.-Japan Security Treaty; In the 1980s, it was utilized for the acquisition of natural resources in the Third World; And in the 1990s, the Imperial diplomacy became tinged with economic diplomacy reflecting the expansion of the Chinese market. In terms of the political use of Imperial diplomacy, it is possible to draw a conclusion that it was indeed successful. And yet, even though Korea-Japan Normalization negotiation took place more than 30 years ago, the Japanese Emperor's visit to Korea is still a pending issue, as the postwar handling of the consequences of the aggressive war remains controversial.

• **Keywords:** imperial diplomacy, Heisei Emperor, globalization, the emperor-as-a symbol system

The Politics of Soul: Where Emperor System and Memorial Service of the Deceased Meet | YI Chan Su

Shinto is a Japanese religion that prays for the gods' blessings in order to guarantee abundance

in their lives, through the memorial services which sublimate *mononoke*, vindictive spirits not yet consoled by living humans, into gods of forefathers.

This paper addresses the process in which the Meiji government (1868-1912) finds its way to gain legitimacy and unity as the government, and how it uses the believers as the control system of the nation. In addition, this paper further discusses the relationship between the religious segment of the process and the creation of new religions in Japan.

Nationalization of *Shinto*, initiated by the government, considered filial behaviors as an extension of memorial services. The government publicized the worship of *Amaterasu*, a mythical origin of Japan, leading to the worship of the Japanese emperor who was believed to be the descendent of *Amaterasu*. The whole process of nationalization of *Shinto* was politically carried out in order to establish Japan as an emperor-centered nation. Therefore, this paper uses the term “The Politics of Soul” which designates the system through which the government strengthened the people’s patriotism and unified their cognizance, by mandating memorial services in which the people consoled the souls of the war dead.

The Meiji government established orders and hierarchies within families by promoting Japanese people’s ideas and discourse with respect to invisible souls. Also, the compulsory emperor worship enabled the government to generate unity that worked on the national level. The Meiji government explained that these processes are part of Japan’s long-term customs, having nothing to do with the government’s deliberate performance of religious actions. Through these processes, the government externally granted freedom of religion to the people, allowing them to perfunctorily believe in such institutionalized religions as Christianity and Buddhism. In the meantime, it became ordinary for Japanese people to perform religious actions in order to console the souls of the dead and to worship their ancestors. Because these deeds were considered customary in Japanese society, the people grew blind to the religiosity of their own behaviors.

This process and the norm of the people it created had influences on new religions in Japan. “The Politics of Souls” attempted by the Meiji government left a great impact on the formation and maintenance of the newly appearing religions, because a large number of newborn Japanese religions are fundamentally based on the people’s religious mindset that builds relationships with souls of the dead.

Moreover, some revolutionary new religions, such as *Tenrikyo*, construct self-sustaining religious groups in order to make a strong stand against the government-steered plans such as the nationalization of *Shinto*. New buddhist religions, such as *Rissho Koseikai*, respect the idea of separation of state and religion in order for the individuals to have religious rights and identities. A large number of new religions in Japan seek modernity as they resist against the atmosphere of State *Shinto*. Nonetheless, the new religions are established upon the tradition of the souls of the dead and worshiping of their forefathers, both of which were reinforced by the Emperor system. For these reasons, the new religions, regardless of denominations, cannot

be explained without understanding *Shinto* and its influence on them.

• **Keywords:** emperor system, memorial service, the politics of soul, new religion, *Rissho Koseikai*

Nishida Kitarō's Political Philosophy: State and the Emperor | LAM Wing Keung

This paper attempts to examine Nishida Kitarō's political philosophy in line with the notions of "state" (*kokka*) and "emperor" (*tennō*), and explores its significance to modern Japan and modern Japanese philosophy. In respect to the scholarships on Nishida's theory of nation, issues like nationalism, reasons for the existence of states, the national polity, the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity, etc. have been widely discussed, while less can be found on the state and the emperor. It is believed that the two notions, are somewhat interrelated, from which the axle of Nishida's political philosophy can be seen. Nishida tries to emphasize the importance of "freedom" (*jiyū*) as he analyzes the state and the emperor. His political philosophy is an inquiry into 'freedom' and 'the good,' or the 'foundation of ethics,' and it was also an attempt to check on the power of authority. Although, what Nishida had addressed was not widely appreciated at the time, it is meaningful to rethink about Nishida's philosophical discourses of the state and the emperor, which is indeed a return to his own definition of philosophy—that is, the problem of life.

• **Keywords:** Nishida Kitarō, political philosophy, state, emperor

ARTICLES

Whereabouts of Japanese War Painting during Asia-Pacific War Era after the War | KIM Yong Cheol

After the end of Second World War, Japanese War painting of Asia-Pacific War period wandered back and forth relative to the relation between the US and Japan. Soon after the war, they were collected as the booty, then transferred to America in 1951, and were returned to Japan after about twenty years. As these paintings were the media of propaganda during the war, GHQ struggled to find an appropriate treatment. While there were demands by Australia and Netherlands for their acquisitions, the paintings reached America at the end. The transfer of those war paintings to America reflects the fact that painters, who created the paintings, did not want them open to the public.

Even though Japanese war paintings, which had been divided and stored by the US Army and Air Force, were found by the Japanese people in the 1960s, it took several years for them to be returned to Japan, and behind this was the US-Japan Alliance. It is important to note that, the return of these paintings changed public awareness as if these paintings were 'historical records' or 'masterpiece of war paintings'. Even though it has been forty years since the

paintings were returned to Japan further research on remains to be done these paintings still.

• **Keywords:** Asia-Pacific War Era, Japanese War Painting, propaganda, booty, return, GHQ

***Gakushuin* and the 'Politicization' of Japanese Imperial Court | KIM Hyung Jin**

This article is a study about *gakushuin* [学習院], the educational institution for the nobles of the Japanese imperial court established in 1847. The existing research has uncovered that *gakushuin* played a crucial role for the political emerging of the imperial court at the dawn of Japan's modernization.

The role of *gakushuin* within the context of 'politicization' of imperial court can be divided into two parts. First, the academic activities in the *gakushuin* aroused 'political consciousness' among court nobles. Second, its 'space' was used as the stage for politics. Yet at least the former role of *gakushuin* as the medium for the 'politicization' of the imperial court has only been uniformly and vaguely evaluated, and it lacks detailed examination of its cause and the process. The *gakushuin* was founded in order to 'reform the morals [風儀]' of young middle- and lower class nobles. Therefore, the policy of 'personality education' whose disciplines were based especially on Confucianism was strongly reinforced. But because many of the educators at *gakushuin* were heavily influenced by a vigorous *Sonnō* ideology like that of Asami Keisai, in the actual course of study, the 'political consciousness' of young court nobles did not reflect the initial purpose of the court education. In addition, since the leaders of the court in the 1840s had also been deeply influenced by *Sonnō* ideology, they were not particularly alarmed by this growing trend in court education.

As a consequence, *gakushuin* overstepped the early goal of court leaders, and eventually led to the revolt against 'early modern imperial court system' by the middle- and lower class nobles when an issue came to light regarding 1858 US-Japan Treaty of Amity and Commerce.

Keywords: *Gakushuin*, Japanese Imperial Court, court nobles (*Kuge*), Emperor of Japan (*Tennō*), *Bakumatsu*, *Sonnō* ideology