

einfache oder eindimensionale Annahmen zu problematisieren. Das gelingt diesem Begleiter durch die Anthropologie Japans vortrefflich.

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Mikael S. ADOLPHSON / Edward KAMENS / Stacie MATSUMOTO (eds.): *Heian Japan, Centers and Peripheries*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press 2007. 450 pp. ISBN 978-0-8248-3013-7. US-\$ 50,00.

*Heian Japan, Centers and Peripheries* is a collection of fourteen essays which cut across disciplinary boundaries to tackle long-term paradigms and previously unexplored issues concerning the first three centuries of Heian-period Japan. In the introductory chapter ("Between and Beyond Centers and Peripheries"), Mikael Adolphson and Edward Kamens provide an outline of the four main themes running through this volume: the institutional and political transformations at court; the notion that the Heian capital was not the only core of power; the misconception that decentralization equaled loss of power; and finally, the shift from official titles to "privatization" in terms of exerting authority.

In the first part of the volume, the relationship between center and periphery is investigated in terms of political control. In "From Female Sovereign to Mother of the Nation: Women and Government in the Heian Period", Fukutô Sanae (with Takeshi Watanabe) argues against the view that Heian women were very active in literature and the arts, but not in politics. Through an analysis of the changes in the political role and standing of women at court from the seventh until tenth century, Sanae clearly shows that although women no longer occupied a central position of authority as empresses and disappeared to the periphery in the ninth century, they remained powerful behind the scenes as *kokumo*, "mother of the nation". Not only did these *kokumo* have power over court appointments, they were extremely influential in shaping the imperial lineage through the selection of crown princes and consorts.

In the second essay ("Court and Provinces under Regent Fujiwara no Tadahira"), Joan Piggott investigates central authority over provincial administration during the regency of Fujiwara no Tadahira (880–949). Piggott argues against the old view of a regent "too alienated from and uninterested in the provinces to involve himself in their governance" (p.35). Instead she presents a picture of Tadahira being involved with the provinces both as a government official (the bureaucratic level) as through his household (the patrimonial level).

Cameron Hurst's essay ("*Kugyô* and *Zuryô*: Center and Periphery in the Era of Fujiwara no Michinaga"), is centered on another political heavy-weight of the mid-Heian period in order to investigate how the flow of resources from periphery to center was guaranteed. Focusing on the human elements rather than on institutional aspects, Hurst examines the interaction between the central government and the provinces and defines the relationship between center and periphery as one of mutual dependency between the ranking nobles (*kugyô*) and the custodians (*zuryô*).

The second part of the volume looks at the arts and literature produced during the Heian period. Ivo Smits's "The Way of the Literati: Chinese Learning and Literary Practice in Mid-Heian Japan" deals with the notion that the center of Heian literature is

usually considered to have been works written in Japanese by women, whereas the production of *kanbun* texts is seen as the periphery. Smits, however, argues in favor of the importance of *kanbun* for the study of Heian Japan. While the article is concentrated on poetry, Smits also dedicates a few pages to eroticist parody in which established *kanbun* genres were used to write about seedy topics.

In “Terrains of Text in Mid-Heian Court Culture”, Edward Kamens reconsiders text and gender interrelationships in the Heian period through an examination of the œuvre of Fujiwara no Tadanobu (967–1035), a ranking noble, man of letters, and poet at the Heian court. Kamens's assessment of the subject matter shows that women such as Sei Shônagon (966? – after 1017) and her contemporaries were actively participating in the various settings for which *kanbun* was produced, counter to the view that women were deterred or even barred from encounters with “Chinese texts”.

In the final essay of this section, the technical, iconographic, and geographic transformation of statues of Eleven-Headed Kannon during the early Heian period is considered in the context of changes in religious practice. “The Buddhist Transformation of Japan in the Ninth Century: The Case of Eleven-Headed Kannon” by Samuel Morse thus provides an insight into how Buddhism was experienced in the periphery, that is, by the majority of the people. While Tendai and Shingon were important in the Heian period, these schools were only accessible to a culturally privileged, literate, male minority with close connections to the court. However, through an analysis of some less-known statues of Kannon, Morse shows that popular Buddhist beliefs were very different.

Although part three is entitled “Establishing New Religious Spheres”, it is in fact a reconsideration of three topics dealing with Buddhism. The section begins with an essay by Ryûichi Abé. In “Scholasticism, Exegesis, and Ritual Practice: On Renovation in the History of Buddhist writing in the Early Heian Period”, Abé examines “Buddhist writing against the broader background of early Heian textual production” (p. 179) to demonstrate that ritual language, peripheral until then, became central in Buddhist intellectual discourse and text production. He further illustrates this shift from doctrinal issues to (esoteric) ritual practices in the production of Japanese Buddhist texts in the early Heian period by comparing two commentaries, one by Chikô (709–781) and one by Kûkai (774–835), on the *Hannya shingyô* (the *Prajñâ-pâramitâ Heart Sûtra*).

Mikael Adolphson's contribution (“Institutional Diversity and Religious Integration: The Establishment of Temple Networks in the Heian Age”) addresses the question of how influence over local temples was exerted. Adolphson shows that within the context of the rise of esoteric Buddhism and of the loss of institutional control by the government and the Nara Schools, the state network of *jôgakuji* (officially sanctioned temples) was gradually replaced by networks of *betsuin* (detached cloisters) and *matsuji* (branch temples).

The final article in part three – Max Moerman's “The Archaeology of Anxiety: An Underground History of Heian Religion” – acknowledges the importance of archaeology in Heian-period research. Moerman reexamines a religious practice commonly cited as evidence of *mappô* consciousness: the interment of copies of Buddhist scriptures at sacred mountains, shrines and temples. From his analysis, one cannot but conclude that the contents, the locations, as well as the motivations for *sûtra* burial were much more diverse than commonly accepted.

In part four, which discusses domestic peripheries, attention is first focused on the life of the agricultural population in William Farris's “Famine, Climate, and Farming in

Japan, 670–1100”. Although there is little information about food shortages in primary sources from the tenth century onward, Farris convincingly argues that famines continued to occur frequently. He thus paints a grim picture of the living circumstances of the farmers and the lack of government concern for and response to their perilous plight.

The essay by Charlotte von Verschuer (“Life of Commoners in the Provinces: The *Owari no Gebumi* of 988”), too, moves away from the Kyôto elite and sheds light on the life of the local population in the provinces. By means of an analysis of the *Owari no Gebumi*, a text about abuse by the governor of Owari province, von Verschuer discusses not only the contemporary tax, transportation, and communication systems, but also the ordinary people behind the petition.

Karl Friday concludes this section on domestic peripheries with “Lordship Interdicted: Taira no Tadatsune and the Limited Horizons of Warrior Ambition”. Friday provides a new explanation of the reasons behind and the objectives of the attack by Taira no Tadatsune (967–1031) on the provincial government compound in Awa, leading him to control the Bôsô peninsula for approximately three years in the early eleventh century. Through his reexamination of the facts, it becomes clear that the elites of the centre (the courtiers) and of the provinces (the warriors) did not occupy different worlds but remained closely connected.

In the final part, Heian Japan is placed in the broader context of the Asian world. This section contains two articles: Bruce Batten’s “Cross-border Traffic on the Kyushu Coast, 794–1086” and Robert Borgen’s “Jôjin’s Travels from Center to Center (with Some Periphery in between)”. Batten investigates the changing relationship between the central government and frontier administration in Kyûshû – from tight control to delegation – and demonstrates why Hakata remained the main international port even when central control was lost.

With Borgen’s essay on the monk Jôjin the book concludes with another Buddhist theme. However, by means of Jôjin’s diary which describes his journey to and through China in the second half of the eleventh century, two more clichés of Heian Japan are tackled: that of a semi-isolated country after the discontinuance of diplomatic contacts with China, and that of a country composed of a sophisticated and literate center surrounded by an uncivilized, backward periphery.

Although a work like this can never be comprehensive – surely there must be similar lines of research in fields like architecture or Shinto studies – every effort has been made to turn *Heian Japan, Centers and Peripheries* into a coherent volume with several essays referring to others. As each of the contributions challenges at least one traditional paradigm, the reader is presented with a much more multi-faceted picture of Heian period Japan. One can only hope that this trend of steering toward new directions of research will be passed on the entire field of Japanese studies.

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