

stigmatise its citizens for at least several decades.”<sup>8</sup> Post-Chernobyl nuclear disaster, and now post-Fukushima disaster, it is imperative for humanity to pause and consider whether is still willing to take the risks posed by accidents in the production and use of nuclear energy. The decision hopefully will not cost us the planet where we thrive.

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*Osaka Modern: The City in the Japanese Imaginary.*

By Michael P. Cronin. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017. Pp. xiii + 232. ISBN 10: 0674975189; ISBN 13: 978-0674975187.

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Compared to Tokyo, literature on Osaka is substantially absent. Considering Osaka’s historical importance within and outside Japan as well as its current status as a mega-city, the scarcity of literature deprives us of opportunities for learning more of Japan’s rich variety of urban structures from researchers of Japanese history. Michael P. Cronin challenges this academic bias towards Tokyo and calls attention to the defining moments in Osaka’s modernity and its distinct geography. In the introduction, Osaka is presented as an idea of a “treasonous city” excelling in excess and outsider status against central authority during the control economy of Japan’s transwar period. This status was reversed under the country’s militarization project that sought a clear hierarchy in national unity. Throughout the book, this idea is analyzed through a meticulous reading of four local literary masterpieces and some of their (among others) film adaptations. By doing so, the book not only playfully situates Osaka’s position in popular culture and its struggle against national subjugation, but also provides an informative angle into its particular geography, local capitalist structures and changing social relations. In the end, we gain a fresh perspective on Osaka’s modern history as a “Chicago of the East” (a destination and transit point of immigration and trade) and a “Paris of the East” (a producer of traditional as well as modern culture) in addition to the more commonly-known notion of Osaka as the industrial “Manchester of the East”.

Chapter 1 focuses on the narration style of local and national languages in Tanizaki Jun’ichirō’s *Manji* (1928–1930). Contextualized within the language and literature unification movements, local language is presented as supplemental to the nation, which in turn is illustrated by the issue of mastery and authenticity of dialect. The power relation between the local and the national is represented by the use of standard Japanese and the Osaka dialect in the novel. Tanizaki’s mastery of the Osaka dialect is examined through several critiques, among which the notion of *yayakoshisa* (complexity) is used to describe the illusion of one particular Osaka dialect. This discussion in turn relativizes the unitary standard language and is also projected to Osaka’s newly emerging geography at the time. Osaka’s commercial center Senba represents the traditional as well as stubborn merchant class and their trade houses in which the *bonbon*, a rich and spoiled figure who is the direct offspring of the established trade houses, embodies all the impurities challenged by the modern state. We follow the merchant family as they leave the city center for the newly developed suburbs in the

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8 Peter Wynn Kirby, “Is Fukushima doomed to become a dumping ground for toxic waste?” *The Guardian* (2018). Accessed March 25, 2018. URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/mar/16/is-fukushima-doomed-to-become-a-dumping-ground-for-toxic-waste>.

Hanshin-kan (area between Osaka and Kobe), where a new bourgeois culture together with a new dialect developed due to the spatial mixing with Tokyoite households who had escaped the great Kantō Earthquake of 1923. The suburbs are presented as the transcendent space of the merchant past.

In Chapter 2, the *bonbon* becomes the specific point of focus by taking up Oda Sakunosuke's influential novella *Meoto zenzai* (1940), together with Osaka's contested subordination within the national economy and wartime state values. The protagonist couple – the *bonbon* and his geisha girlfriend – represents the counterbalance of un/productivity and im/propriety in relation to fiscal discipline, from which they seek temporary relief through the everyday practice of gourmandise. The Minami Area (the Namba–Shinsaibashi strip) functions as the spatial background of their irrational consumption and place of cheap mass culture. Following the ideals of the expansionist state, the *bonbon* is juxtaposed against the new state discourses of middle-class propriety and respectable lifestyles. This trajectory leads us back to Senba, where the wartime government's tight grip on excessive (merchant) capitalism and unproductive consumption becomes more noticeable and detrimental for the area's economic well-being. In the meanwhile, the bourgeois suburbs had developed their own modern “everyday life” (*nichijō seikatsu*), supported by the pioneering infrastructures provided by Osaka's private railway companies. This rather individualistic lifestyle, however, was soon to be disrupted by the new national economy of mass consumption.

The process of Osaka's submerging into the imperial economy is taken up in Chapter 3 through a close reading of Oda's *Waga machi* (1942). Osaka's interaction between history, geography and modernity is examined through the concept of flows, which take place on different scales, as spaces, populations, institutions and phenomena were redefined into the new imperial order. The novella presents a quest for a locally embedded alternative cosmopolitanism, with its own long networks of modernity, but the context of Pan-Asianism hinders its realization. Osaka is often characterized by its urban flows – the flows of water, traffic and speech, all of which originate in the locality of Osaka's streets, canals and its idiom. Conspicuously lacking throughout the novella's story line are Osaka's numerous migrant and minority communities, who undoubtedly were redefining urban space in their own ways. As a result, it is suggested that Osaka was experiencing its own internal crisis for civic identity. The protagonist, however, also finds himself prone to the global forces of colonial expropriation, with these forces eventually merging into the state's project of mass industrialization.

The decline of transwar Osaka forms the background of Tanizaki's *Sasameyuki* (1943–1948) in Chapter 4. Historically, Senba's merchant capital has often been the object of state discontent, reaching back to the Tokugawa period when the *chōnin*'s economic power was resented by the samurai class. Senba's decline started after the Meiji Restoration, and after a brief commercial revival during World War I, the control economy landed it a decisive blow. The newly emerging mass-industrial capital was accommodated in the Keihin area (Yokohama and Tokyo), which became the postwar center of rapid economic growth. In *Sasameyuki*, this decline is again illustrated through the *bonbon* and even infects the suburbs' cosmopolitanism, thereby contrasting with Tokyo's striving for a futurity based on fiscal discipline. Tanizaki's work offers an implicit critique of mass modernism and tracks how the mercantile urban model of Osaka was forcibly transformed into a corporate national one. Again, these transformations of tradition and modernity are spatialized, gendered, and set against the new social discourses of that time. We see Osaka's suburbs emerging as a transitional space between the traditional and the new modern, in which the concept of household (*katei*) takes root as part of a lifestyle dominated by financial and industrial capital. Bourgeois culture evolves into an austere middle-class culture, ultimately halting the Hanshin-kan's excessive modernity like a withering disease.

Chapter 5 examines postwar Osaka's place in the national imaginary through film adaptations. The recentralization by the central bureaucracy and its hegemony based on rapid economic growth form the recurrent backgrounds. This is elaborated upon through an examination of Yamasaki Toyoko's novel films (especially *Noren*, 1958). Attention is drawn to the totalizing impact of the control

economy. Trade subsumes to (wartime) production and the growth of consumer culture is sustained by the postwar economy. Most films depict a particular Osaka-ness which is embodied by the local star actors *but* in service to a national audience. The *dame-otoko* (no-good guy) surfaces as the modern version of the *bonbon*, representing Osaka (Senba) as an artifice of locality, and himself as otherness that ultimately helps to define Tokyo.

The book concludes with a discussion on the live-action film *Purinsesu Toyotomi* (2011), in which the fictional existence of an independent “Osaka Nation” serves as basis for the plot. Osaka remains anchored in its contradictory (*yayakoshii*) existence but again the migrant communities are excluded, making the city treasonous even to itself. Thus, in the end, we are left wondering what kind of locality Osaka would have been exerting if its minorities were included. To this end, however, the term “inner city” is used somewhat unfortunately, as it refers throughout the book to the central city areas, like Senba, instead of the surrounding areas just located outside of the historic city. Currently located just outside of Osaka’s loop line, these areas have historically been a major destination point for domestic as well as international migration and still occupy an important, yet marginal position in the city’s social imaginary. After all the rich insights provided on Osaka’s mainstream areas, one cannot help but wonder how this particular spatiality would have been rendered visible, especially in comparison, in other novels.

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*The Origin of Modern Shinto in Japan: The Vanquished Gods of Izumo.*

By Yijiang Zhong. Bloomsbury Shinto Studies, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016. Pp. 260.  
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The field of Shinto studies is coming of age. The new Shinto series of Bloomsbury Academic has already four volumes in print at the time of writing, with more in the pipeline. The book under review here, the second volume of this series, fills a prominent hole in the existing literature by addressing the early modern and modern history of Izumo Shrine and its deity.

Zhong does not cover the whole of Izumo’s history but focuses on a time span of just over two centuries, from the 1660s, when the Izumo Shrine was reconfigured as a Shinto site, until the 1870s and 1880s, when Izumo’s priests attempted to secure prominence for their deity Ōkuninushi in the state pantheon of imperial kami. It is in fact around this deity, rather than its shrine, that Zhong builds his history. Much of his book deals with changing conceptualizations of Ōkuninushi and his relationship to Amaterasu; the local affairs of Izumo, its priests, and its patrons tend to recede into the background.

The first three chapters cover developments in the Edo period. In 1665–1667, the temple buildings that dominated the Izumo compound were dismantled and the site was “restored” as a Shinto shrine. This also involved a change of Izumo’s kami, from Susanowo to Ōkuninushi. Izumo developed as a pilgrimage centre of the same type as, say, Ise or Konpira, with a community of *oshi* agents who marketed the site to lay confraternities. The amulets distributed by Izumo’s *oshi* depicted Ōkuninushi as Daikoku, one of the seven gods of good fortune. Izumo’s *oshi* also promoted the idea that all the gods leave their shrines and convene at Izumo in the 10th month to decide who will marry whom in the coming year.