

Introduction: Modern Japan and Korea seen through various media

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This issue discusses cultural aspects of modern Japan and Korea seen through various media. Media in this issue is not simple mass media like newspapers, journals, and TV, but media in a much broader meaning. According to Helen Katz, media has two roles: to inform and to entertain. Newspapers inform but also entertain readers. Literature could also be considered a medium to entertain readers. Autobiographic literature or non-fiction literature informs a kind of reality. Fashion could be also considered a medium for a human being to transmit information (occupation, taste, identity) and entertain (for example, the fashionable style of singers permits them to entertain TV spectators). In this issue, we approach some cultural aspects of modern Japan and Korea as seen through several types of media from popular culture, film, fashion and newspapers to cultural media as a tool of public diplomacy. Our topics are as follows.

In 'Remembering the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki: Collective memory of post-war Japan', Hiroko Okuda examines the way in which Tokyo has exploited the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as a symbolic means of inducing post-war Japanese collective identity by analysing the news coverage in two national daily papers, the *Asahi Shimbun* and the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, on the A-bomb memorial days and raises the question of who is supposed to be an actor of remembering 'Hiroshima' and 'Nagasaki'.

In the paper titled 'Japan as fashion: Contemporary reflections on being fashionable', Noriko Onohara discusses how Japanese contemporary fashion has been accepted globally, especially in the case of London. To reflect upon the statement 'the Japanese are fashionable' as ideology, picking up the globally popular Japanese street fashion magazine *FRUiTS*, the author investigates the double meaning of fashion in the present and also what it means to be fashionable.

Yoshiko Ikeda discusses ‘Godzilla and the Japanese after World War II: From a scapegoat of the Americans to a saviour of the Japanese’. The Godzilla series were inspired by the first American nuclear monster film, *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* (1953). The author takes a historical perspective and shows how the Godzilla characters reflect these attitudes across time, moving from a scapegoat for the Americans to a saviour of the Japanese.

Kyoko Koma examines ‘Acculturation of French fashion in Japan after World War II: Fashion as a device constructing identity’. Modernisation after WWII in terms of Japanese fashion could be described as the localisation of Western fashion. The author discusses how acculturated French fashion has become one device for constructing the identity of a Westernised Japanese women in recent periods through discourse analysis of Japanese fashion magazines.

In the paper titled ‘The haunted culture—Shamanic heroes in the cultural content industry of South Korea’, Jinseok Seo analyses the meaning, function and potential of Korean shamanism in the field of the Korean cultural content industry, which is now gaining a global reputation. The author presents many fruitful achievements in discovering and developing archetypes related with shamanism and its problems in Korean cultural content.

Aurelijus Zykas analyses, in his article ‘Traditional and popular cultural discourses within the post-war development of Japan’s cultural diplomacy’, the development of post-war Japan’s cultural diplomacy since 1945, dividing it into four stages and focusing questions on what government institutions were conducting cultural diplomacy, what the main international challenges were, what tools of communication were used, and what kind of cultural discourses were prevalent during each particular stage.

Laima Juknevičiūtė explores ‘The soft power implications of the new South Korean cinema: Approaching audiences in East Asia and Lithuania’. Focusing on the cinematic aspect of the Korean Wave, she tries to make clear from a historical overview her hypothesis that the phenomenon of the Korean Wave has never been a calculated attempt by the South Korean government to enhance the overall South Korean image worldwide and to thus increase the international might and prestige of South Korea.

This issue is an example of fruitful collaboration between two institutions in Lithuania dealing with Asian studies. The papers were prepared mainly under the coordination of the Centre for Asian Studies of Vytautas Magnus University. We are thankful for the Oriental Studies Centre of Vilnius University for the opportunity to collaborate with them to present our research results in *Acta Orientalia Vilnensia*. We are very grateful to its Editorial Board, which proposed the realisation of this

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We hope that this issue will make some aspects of modern Japanese and Korean culture clear.

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