

## In This Issue

SHELDON GARON seeks to revitalize modernization as a topic in modern Japanese history. He suggests modernization came into vogue as an approach to Japanese history that provided a means of positing a hopeful future for post-war Japan. According to its champions in the 1950s and 1960s (Reischauer, Jansen, Hall, Dore, et al.), Japan had started on the path of modernization in the Meiji and Taishō eras, but strayed under conservative reaction into the dark valley of totalitarianism in the 1930s and 1940s, only to reappear on the correct path following the Pacific War. This modernization school came under attack in the 1970s from scholars (Dower, Najita, Morley, et al.) who argued variously that modernization had obvious linkages with authoritarianism, deliberately overlooked class conflict, or produced declines in real freedom and social justice. Garon argues that historians cannot accept fully this revisionist position and now must reinstate modernization as an important category because it was a concept understood and embraced by the Japanese themselves. He gives examples of how conflict in Japanese cultural questions should be understood as arising out of competing notions of what is modern rather than from conservative reactions to liberal, progressive modernism. He concludes that modernization and modernity must number among the issues demanding serious study in the study of twentieth-century Japanese history.

STEVEN HEINE interprets the double suicides in the plays of Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653–1725) as examples of Pure Land Buddhist millenarianism. For him, lovers' suicides (*shinjū*) are acts of millenarian transcendence rather than the more familiar explanation in which double suicide is described as an extraordinary but unconvincing attempt to resolve conflicts between the lovers' social duty (*giri*) and their human passion (*ninjō*). These plays, based on actual incidents, were tremendously popular in the early eighteenth century and remain some of the most highly prized works of the Japanese literary canon. Heine focuses his attention on the question of what is accomplished through the lovers' suicide. He argues that previous explanations about these suicides have focused on explaining the social-Confucian elements while underplaying Chikamatsu's religious-Buddhist message. He characterizes the lovers in these plays as outcasts who can live neither in the Confucian-dominated Tokugawa social order nor in the anti-establishment "floating world" of the entertainment quarters. For him, the lovers' suicide constitutes a complete break with the prevailing order in which they choose to circumvent all forms of their present identities—both in the Tokugawa duty-bound social order and its opposite, the pleasure-driven "floating world"—to strive for a millenarian transcendence through Pure Land salvation. Heine emphasizes Chikamatsu's *michiyuki* scenes (literally, "traveling along a pathway") as evidence of the underlying millenarian nature of these plays. In these sequences, the lovers' words and actions reflect shamanistic folk practices of Japanese religion and, through recitation of the Buddha's name, accomplish salvation in Pure Land Buddhist terms for the protagonists in these powerful tragic dramas.

ROBERT HEGEL contributes a state-of-the-field article about traditional Chinese fiction commissioned by the China and Inner Asia Council of the Association for Asian Studies. He begins by discussing how fiction is defined within Chinese artistic

theory and goes on to describe the major tools for scholarship—bibliographies, reference works, and textual studies—before venturing his conclusions about literary analysis. He emphasizes that, even though there is an indigenous Chinese style of literary interpretation dating back to the seventeenth century, the canons of Western literary criticism have strongly shaped the field in the past seventy-five years. Finally, he evaluates some of the most important translations into Western languages. The result is a broad and highly useful survey that also manages to retain the flavor of Hegel's own critical viewpoint.

JAMES A. MILLWARD explores the legends surrounding a concubine of the Qianlong emperor, a Uyghur woman who lived in the Qing imperial harem from 1760 until her death in 1788 and was widely said to have been his favorite. Her story has become best known in the guise of the "Fragrant Concubine," an alluring woman of Central Asia whose exoticism bewitches the emperor and unsettles courtiers in Beijing. Millward suggests how her story can be seen as a Chinese parallel to Western Orientalism, wherein sexual tropes are used to confirm colonialist power. He discusses both the historical records concerning this woman and the many fictionalized retellings and reinterpretations of her story, some of which, he shows, can be interpreted as emphasizing Uyghur Muslim resistance to the Qing and succeeding Chinese states.

BRUCE ELLEMAN has conducted careful archival research that puts an entirely new light on Soviet diplomacy in China during 1924–25. The Soviet Union declared in the Karakhan Manifesto of July 1919 that it would return control of the Chinese Eastern Railway to China without requiring any compensation. Further, the Soviets stated they would not engage in secret diplomacy. Elleman has discovered evidence in Chinese archives that shows that in 1924–25 the Soviet Union's ambassador in Beijing, the same Lev Karakhan who made the 1919 declaration, negotiated secret agreements with the Chinese government and with Zhang Zuolin in Manchuria by which the Soviet Union retained control over the Chinese Eastern Railway. Subsequently the Soviet Union negotiated an agreement with Japan demarcating Soviet and Japanese spheres of interest in Manchuria based on the domains associated with their respective railway spheres of influence. Elleman argues that through this secret and duplicitous policy the Soviets were able to reassert imperialist control in Northeast China, while at the same time winning support from Sun Yat-sen and many other Chinese nationalists for their supposed anti-imperialist policies. He believes that if the true nature of the Sino-Soviet diplomacy of 1924 had been known, the popularity of communism in China would have been much diminished.

CHARLES HAMMOND challenges those, like Joseph Needham, who have argued that Chinese elite thought embodied rational approaches compatible with modern science. Basing his argument on Chinese writings about thunder and lightning, Hammond finds that Neo-Confucian writers from the eleventh through the nineteenth centuries accepted popular beliefs that thunder was a force of Heaven that could and did kill. Thus, Chinese thinkers never made the critical distinction between the noise of thunder and the destructive agency of lightning. Hammond finds that most Chinese essayists accepted the popular notion that death and destruction associated with thunder provide evidence of heaven's ability to communicate with the world and was Heaven's means of removing concealed dragons or other evil creatures. He admits that a few Chinese writers saw thunder—in a manner more compatible with

modern science—as an expression of irrational or chance natural phenomena, but even they never made the critical distinction between thunder (*lei*) and lightning (*dian*). Hammond concludes this shows how, in practice, Neo-Confucian thought was indifferent to empirical investigation and accepted popular notions without much questioning, especially if they had an ancient pedigree. Thus, he concludes the Chinese Neo-Confucian thought was less rational than many of its modern interpreters would have us believe and more accepting of popular, supernatural, and superstitious emotive beliefs.