

writing had focused on the notion of “heresy”). These critical interactions are typical of the whole mode of “religious thought” which seeks to seize and bring out the quintessential meaning of a received tradition, Buddhist or any other, thereby handing it on effectively. This is what Repp has in mind when he speaks of *Erneuerung* (renewal), while he realises that the process of renewal itself throws up the questions of consistency and authority, and whether a religiously inspired *selection* really *seizes* the whole or, as its critics suggest, subtracts from it. Religious renewal, which sounds harmless, is therefore always a critical enterprise which forces open all the fundamental questions about the scope and nature of the tradition in question. The parallel with the Christian reformation led by Luther is therefore very instructive and will no doubt continue to exercise specialists in the study of religions for a long time to come. Christian systematic theologians might also find it very instructive to take note of this fine study of the inner workings of an otherwise very different religious tradition. Martin Repp’s approach is informed by his knowledge of Christian theology, though not in any way distorted by it. That means that there is no theological prejudice, while at the same time the proposed comparison is placed firmly on the table. But even without this intellectual thrust, the volume includes a massive factual orientation, together with all the required Sino-Japanese characters for proper nouns and other special terminology. Thus it is a splendid general guide to all of the various elements which are needed for any further studies of Hönen’s religious thought.

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Reinhard Zöllner
Japans Karneval der Krise – Eejanaika und die Meiji-Renovation.
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A widespread assumption is that scholarly and entertaining literature are mutually exclusive. That this must not necessarily be the case is proven in the present publication. The amusement is due to the historical material which the authors makes accessible in a large part of his book. This study treats the *eejanaika* movement in Japan during the years 1867/68. *Eejanaika* was the slogan of crazy mass movements abruptly appearing and quickly vanishing in various regions. The slogan may be rendered as “Isn’t it [the craze] okay?!” or more freely as “anything goes” (p. 352). These events turned the world for brief periods upside-down. For this reason the author uses the Western interpretative term “carnival” in the title and applies it later for heuristic reasons. As the title further indicates, these movements accompanied the drastic transition from the Edo or Tokugawa period to the modernization of the Meiji renovation.

Following the introduction, the book is divided into two parts: The larger, first one provides translations and detailed explanations of a great number of historical documents (ordered according to geographical distribution), including many illustrations and even a score of an *eejanaika* song. (19-348). The second part consists of analyses and interpretations of the subject under scrutiny. (349-453) The expression *eejanaika* first became popular as a refrain in a dance song during a spontaneous festival (called *sunamochi* or “sand carrying”) in Osaka, which is documented for July 1867. (20-24) Another component of what was to be called the *eejanaika* movement is the “fallen” or “dropped amulets ([*o*]fuda)” (*kōsatsu*), which suddenly were found scattered in certain areas. This phenomenon was, according to preserved documents, first recorded in the Chūbu region (between today’s Kantō and Kansai) also in July 1867 (28), and it triggered a spontaneous festival for three days and two nights. According to the author, this may be called the beginning of the *eejanaika* movement which during the subsequent year spread through more than half of Japan’s provinces. (355. 357)

The *eejanaika* movement consists of the following components (cf. 372-389):

1. the discovery of scattered amulets near houses or on roofs;
2. this triggered festivities in the houses nearby: after the *fuda* were enshrined here, house owners and neighbors celebrated the good omens with eating and drinking-bouts;
3. these festivities soon developed into spontaneous communal festivals consisting of wild processions in masquerade and /or exchange of male and female clothes, singing and dancing “as if all were possessed by a fox” (105) (according to another statement, however, “dances of gratitude drive out the devil” (385)), as well as sexual libertinism;
4. finally, these festivals developed into pilgrimages to the shrine or sanctuary from where the *fuda* were believed to have originated, in other words paying homage to the deity which in the form of *fuda* had deigned to descend into the world of ordinary people. This was called *okage mairi* or “pilgrimage of gratitude.” This kind of pilgrimage is distinctively different from the ordinary type when pilgrims travel to a shrine or temple, acquire here a *fuda* (representing a certain deity), and upon return enshrine it at home. (388)

In order to provide an illustration of the *eejanaika* movement, some contemporary sources may be quoted via an English rendering of the author’s German translation. When reading these, however, one should keep in mind the comment by the *Japan Times’ Overland Mail* in its report of *eejanaika* events in January 1868, stating that the “excitement may be ‘better imagined than described.’” (294) First a few quotations expressing certain religio-emotional aspects of the movement. According to a poem we hear:

Amulets of deities descend into the world.

The people’s mood improves and they shout “Thanks!” (57)

A song of female pilgrims is as follows:

We set out for a pilgrimage of gratitude,
the world of eternal bliss (*tokoyo*) is full of harmony! (64)

According to a “Heavenly Letter” (*tenpitsu*) distributed in print, the movement contained also religio-moral admonitions stating, “Men should have compassion and help each other,” and it encouraged that people of the “realm in harmony unitedly pray and be glad” (45)

A song provides some more details, including the hope for better harvests and cheaper prices which indicate the economic background of the movement:

The pilgrimage of gratitude for the descending deities, renewal of the world
(*yo-naoshi*) – prices now will drop, fantastic!

Isn't it nice, the faces of people, drunken from *sake*, all became red
– this I call a nice festival.

Also priests and mountain ascetics, hurrying through town because of
celebrations for the descending gods, enjoy the fall of this rich year.

Deities and buddhas descend, hence everybody is happy. Yes, this is the rich year,
this is renewal of the world! (71)

The following song is more detailed in its portrayal of *eejanaika*:

At one, everybody wants to travel incognito to Ise as quickly as possible,
because of the world renewal (*yo-naoshi*).

At two, if man and woman live together in unity, amulets of the deities descend,
because of the world renewal.

At three, we venerate them in gorgeously embellished, improvised house altars.
because of the world renewal

At four, day and night celebrating, villages are engaged in spontaneous songs,
flute play and drumming, because of the world renewal.

At five, quickly we pound rice for rice cakes and celebrate many times,
because of the world renewal.

At six, freely we distribute money; those who find it distribute it again,
because of the world renewal.

At seven, when waiting and pushing in the crowd, the *sake* donated makes me drunk,
because of the world renewal.

At eight, since each house is celebrating, one doesn't realize the time passing,
because of the world renewal.

At nine, this year's rich harvest is without comparison in ten or hundred years,
because of the world renewal.

At ten, without exception, old people and children are hitting their bellies
because of the sacrificial *sake*. (62 f)

According to the author, this song contains essential elements of *eejanaika*, such as the discovery of amulets and the lunatic festivities. (63) It may be noted that the “world renewal” is perceived here as peace among people, good harvest, equal distribution of money, an abundance of food and *sake*, and forgetting the time while celebrating with music and dance and becoming drunk — in other words, it is like a realization of heaven on earth. Another hope for concrete improvement is expressed as follows: “The world becomes peaceful, and there are no guard-houses and barriers for which permission to pass is needed.” (87)

Also peculiar effects of the movement were recorded, such as the following: “Even people who normally were stingy now enthusiastically distributed money.” (86) When a samurai and his companions from Edo (Tokyo) arrived in Kyoto, they were taken by surprise when encountering *eejanaika*:

Our unit saw this situation and was startled since we had received the urgent command to travel to Kyoto because there was going to be war here; however, there was no trace of war at all, and we were wondering what this crazy bustle was all about. (158)

Such mood is reminiscent of the hippy movement and its slogan “Make love, not war!” a hundred years later in the West. For 1867/68 we hear: “This year the world is drunk.” (121) “This year [1868], world renewal will come, isn’t it all right *eejanaika*?” (263) Kyoto as Japan’s capital seemed to have played a particular significant role in the *eejanaika*’s “pacifist” and hedonistic strategy in face of imminent war: “In provinces and areas many amulets fall down, however, nowhere as many as in Kyoto. Therefore all are dancing frolicsome in Kyoto, isn’t it all right *yोजनािका*?” (184)

Contemporaries observed that amulets conspicuously often fell on houses of the wealthy. (175) Under the pretext of descending amulets and *eejanaika*, rich people and businesses were drained of their capital for the benefit of the “public.” (127. 161 f) On the other hand, however, *eejanaika* achieved not only one of its goals, the equal distribution of goods and riches, but paradoxically also the opposite. Due to sudden rise in demand, for example, the prices for festive clothes rose considerably. One observer ironically summarizes the contradictory developments of market and religion as follows: “amulets fall, though prices raise.” (199) Thus, apart from the documents directly transmitting the enthusiastic atmosphere, there were also sober minded observers of *eejanaika* who were quite critical of it. Some documents state that *eejanaika* hinders business life and is bothersome, (170) and that people being drawn by this movement give up their work, trade or business, at least for the time being. (172. 198) In short, such lunatic behavior is “against all reason.” (170)

Moreover, others voice suspicion of fraud, or report cases of convictions or confessions. (112. 164) In one case, it was discovered that the *fuda* consisted of imported European paper! (166 f) One document tells of a man who, in his desperate wish to receive such a good omen, even contemplated hiring somebody with magical powers to produce *fuda* and then have them carried by favourable winds to his home. (80)

The selfish motives behind the movements varied, such as expectation of gains like money, food and *sake*, or luring pilgrims to sacred places. (427) There was also a

broad variety among those who were suspected of being the agents of these wondrous events. Believers thought, of course, that the blessing was the work of *kami* or buddhas, while those who considered the scattered *fuda* rather a curse suspected the work of Tengu (301), devils (194), or even Christians (143. 174) In many cases, however, the descent of *fuda* was simply a hoax by young people. (425)

We now turn from the descriptive part of the book to its final section which consists of a systematic treatment of the *eejanaika* phenomenon. The author carefully traces the geographical distribution and temporal development of these occurrences. He analyzes its four components of falling amulets, domestic celebrations, public festivals, and the pilgrimages, as well as its real or presumed agents, and the goals. Regarding the consequences of this phenomenon he concludes that *eejanaika* contributed to the Meiji renovation in so far as it spread a mentality which prepared for a new beginning and made the departure from the previous situation easier. (440) The author also discusses various scholarly theories explaining the phenomenon of *eejanaika*. He further provides an interesting comparison with nearly contemporary movements in neighboring countries, the Taiping and the Tonghak movements in China and Korea. (444-447) While sharing some common features, such as economic, social and political factors, *eejanaika* never developed into a revolt, as the Taiping and Tonghak did. Therefore, the author finds a more suitable subject for comparison in carnival, with its similar expressions, such as masquerade, change of male and female roles, procession, etc. (448-451)

Finally, a few critical remarks concerning some details may be voiced. First, in his evaluation of *eejanaika*, the author rejects calling it a “movement” (*Bewegung*) even though he has used the term sometimes before. For such reasoning he relies on a definition by Francesco Alberoni, according to whom movement is “a historical process which starts with the nascent state and ends with the reestablishment of everyday-institutional order.” (447) Since *eejanaika* was never transformed into an organization or institution, the author of the book concludes, it cannot be called a “movement.” I do not agree with such a reading of Alberoni’s quotation (“ends with ...”) because a definition of a movement makes only sense if it is clearly distinguished from routinized social practices or organisational structures. The author does not need such an argument anyhow for distinguishing *eejanaika* from Tonghak and Taiping. On the other hand, the non-movement hypothesis contradicts his subsequent comparison with carnival since the latter became institutionalized while *eejanaika* remained as short-lived movements. However, his comparison with carnival itself is convincing and very illuminating. A historian of religion would extend this line further to the Greek Dionysos cult with its ecstatic and orgiastic character. On the other hand, historically and geographically closer would be a comparison with Japanese *matsuri*. Although they are institutionalized like carnival, they still contain quite a number of similar elements, such as the abundance of food and *sake*, music and dancing, and most of all, much lunatic behavior going “against all reason.” After all, such “irrational” phenomena reveal a lot about the powerful elementary forces of religion.

With this material and his explanations, the author, a Japanologist and historian, provides a rich picture of religiosity and religious practice during the middle of the 19. century. As such the book under review is not only an important contribution to historical research, but also to religious studies. At a few, but significant places, however, a student of religious studies would not be quite satisfied with certain explanations. One is the following sentence:

Bekanntlich ist das shintōistische Idol (*shintai* 神体) (im Gegensatz zur buddhistischen Ikone, die ein magisches Ebenbild der jeweiligen Gottheit darstellt) ein von einer Gottheit beseeltes und darum mit ihrer Wirkkraft versehenes Stück Materie beliebiger Form und Grösse. (30)

In my view, it is problematic to apply the terms “Idol” and “Ikone” in such a context since the former still bears a very negative connotation, while the use of the latter remains better limited to the specific meaning in the Orthodox church. Further, it seems doubtful whether the difference between the two representations is adequately (or sufficiently) characterized by a “magic image” (Buddhist) and “animated piece of material” (Shinto). But to explain this here would take too much space.

Another critical remark concerns the author’s characterization of the relationship between Buddhist and Shinto priests at the time. He acknowledges a functional division between “Buddhism for the soul, Shinto for the community, and Confucianism for morals” during early modern Japan. For 1867/68, however, the author assumes that conflicts began to increase and to deepen. According to him, there was a “powerful fight of competition,” and “*eejanaika* marks the climax of a religious war (*Glaubenskrieg*) by peaceful means.” (412) However, on the one hand, during the previous Japanese history already serious religious conflicts had occurred, though parallel to coexistence and fusions (e.g. *shinbutsu shūgō*). On the other hand, the subsequent Meiji period brought the forced division between Shinto and Buddhism (*shinbutsu bunri*) and especially the persecution of Buddhism, which (if this term should be used at all) more adequately may be called a “religious war.” After all, the author himself quotes a number of vivid examples of rather peaceful coexistence and cooperation, at least between the Buddhas and *kami* in the metaphysical realm (a few are printed above, see also 184. 224 f. 336 f), which indicates that on earth could not have been only war. The contemporary religious situation seems to have been a bit more complex.

Leaving the criticism of details aside, students of Japanese religions will learn a lot from this book. Apart from the rich material of *eejanaika* itself, for example, it also provides some valuable remarks concerning contemporary new religious movements such as Fuji-dō (124-126. 382), Tenri-kyō (153 f) and Kurozumi-kyō (261), or the contemporary image of Christianity (143, etc.). Thus, this study on *eejanaika* can only be highly recommended.

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