Native and Newcomer: Making and Remaking a Japanese City.

Review Author[s]:
William W. Kelly

The American Historical Review, Vol. 98, No. 1 (Feb., 1993), 220.

Stable URL:
http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0002-8762%28199302%2998%3A1%3C220%3ANANMAR%3E2.0.CO%3B2-D

The American Historical Review is currently published by American Historical Association.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at http://www.jstor.org/about/terms.html. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at http://www.jstor.org/journals/aha.html.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is an independent not-for-profit organization dedicated to creating and preserving a digital archive of scholarly journals. For more information regarding JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

http://www.jstor.org/
Mon Jun 28 14:14:08 2004

(1966–76) and its aftermath. But beyond these interesting examples of the expropriation of traditional cultural prestige by these cultural revolutionaries, Kraus demonstrates how, especially for Mao, calligraphy became an important tool for mass mobilization and communication. The unhappy fate of Mao's successor, Hua Guofeng, is also neatly shown through his failed attempt to imprint the authority of his handwriting on China's public monuments and mass media. The short concluding section on "Postrevolutionary Calligraphy" is more tentative about the significance of trends in the 1980s such as the official rehabilitation of old high culture, the emergence of professional calligraphers on the new art market, and the decline of dexterity with the writing brush both among the general population and the new generation of political leaders.

In his final chapter Kraus addresses the larger question of the survival and significance of tradition in modern China. Borrowing from Joseph Levenson, he suggests that tradition has neither disappeared nor survived intact. Rather, some elements that are useful to a new situation survive, such as the cultural and political use of calligraphy, although changing their form and overall significance. This seems to be about as clear and sensible an answer as is now possible. More studies such as this that scrutinize specific elements of cultural tradition in their historical context will help refine this answer while raising new questions about tradition, modernity, and revolution.

RALPH CROIZIER
University of Victoria

JENNIFER ROBERTSON. *Native and Newcomer: Making and Remaking a Japanese City*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. 1991. Pp. xvii, 325.

In the past decade or so, historians and social scientists, especially anthropologists, have developed a sophisticated appreciation of how the poetics and politics of tradition operate in past and present societies. The twentieth-century vicissitudes and present predicament of Japan make it a promising site for such a study and enhance the significance of this book for a wide audience.

The subject of Jennifer Robertson's fascinating study is not the making of Kodaira, a fast-growing suburban city in the Tokyo metropolitan region. Rather, it is the making of "Kodaira," an imagined projection of that city. "Kodaira" is "Native-place" Kodaira (*Furusato* Kodaira), and the process by which this trope has been represented and enacted in the past twenty-five years is part of a national and highly political promotion of local community-building that has emphasized nostalgic renditions and misrememberings of past solidarities.

In the making of Native-place Kodaira, "reclamation" has proven to be a potent metaphor because it links the circumstances of earliest village settlement in the seventeenth century with post–World War II urbanization, and now with the 1980s reclamation from urban sprawl. Robertson's central proposition is that what constitutes Native-place Kodaira is a "dialectic of native and newcomer." There are only a handful of natives among the 150,000 residents, yet it is a sanitized version of the natives' past on which the city administration bases its campaigns to "intertwine 150,000 hearts."

Several ironies are joined in this clash of roots and rootlessness. The images of agrarian village cooperation and pastoral sentiments play on and to the natives, but by extending them as motifs for the whole city the images threaten to marginalize these very natives. Thus, the natives in turn are driven to keep their shrine parishes exclusive, to organize a local history society that keeps newcomers (and visiting anthropologists) at a polite distance, and so on. Newcomers, for their part, are encouraged to feel inside and attached, but they are then given few opportunities to participate fully, as in the annual city parade. And, finally, the legitimacy of this imagined moral community is its historicity—and yet it bears only the most distorted connection to Kodaira of the past.

The "literary portrait" that Robertson aims for evocatively elicits the rhetoric and performances especially of natives' efforts to reclaim their place in this suburban city. Just how an appreciation of "Kodaira" helps in understanding Kodaira, at least for the lives of the vast majority of newcomer residents, is less obvious. One may suppose that there is a political economy as well as a cultural poetics to native place-making, but individual political careers, business interests, citizen demands for green space, and local administrative struggles to capture resources from higher levels of government remain tangential to the book's main focus.

In the end, too much is made of the dialectic of native and newcomer. To be sure, this is paradoxical (p. 109), ironic (p. 191), even contradictory (p. 148), but it is hardly surprising or puzzling. Probing the dialectics of identity and difference is a hallmark of much contemporary analysis, including insightful work by Japan scholars such as Theodore Bestor, Dorinne Kondo, Eyal Ben-Ari, Brian Moeran, and Marilyn Ivy. Unfortunately, Robertson ignores all of them, for it is not the novelty of her project but rather her book's place in this new scholarship that gives it value. Robertson has written an instructive study for anyone concerned with the condensation of past, present, and future into a highly contentious politics of heritage that so often shapes modern identities of place, ethnicity, and nation.

WILLIAM W. KELLY
Yale University