

Widerstand gegen ihn. Ein solcher Fall ereignete sich im Jahre 2000; Johann Nawrocki schreibt darüber.

Die vielen Einzelthemen des Buches ergänzen einander. Die Bibliografien sind ergiebig, die Druckfehler selten (so heißt der Nobelpreisträger Ôe mit Vornamen "Kenzaburô" nicht "Kanzaburô") und die japanischen Zeichen, die man heute so oft wegspart, sind dabei. Kurz, ein für die japanische Geistesgeschichte und Religionssoziologie nützliches Werk.

Carl Steenstrup

Yoshimi Yoshiaki: Comfort Women. Sexual Slavery in the Japanese Military During World War II

New York: Columbia University Press, 2000, 253 S., 29 US\$ (Hardcover) oder 22 US\$ (Paper)

In recent years, Japan has tried to intensify its relationship with neighboring countries, Korea and China. Beside the existing economic and political ties, we can also observe an increasingly cultural approach, as evidenced by the Korean-Japanese joint hosting of the Soccer World Cup 2002. Simultaneously, the debate on a major topic in Japanese-Korean relations during the early '90s — the issue of the "comfort women" — is vanishing in Japanese mass media.

On the contrary, in the English-speaking world, we find that fundamental books on the issue have been published during 2000 and 2002, including *Japan's Comfort Women* by Tanaka Yuki,¹ *Legacies of the Comfort Women of World War II*, edited by Barbara Stetz/Bonnie B.C. Oh,² and Yoshimi Yoshiaki's *Comfort Women*.

While Tanaka Yuki's work also deals with military prostitution in Japan under US occupation and the connections between the two systems, Barbara Stetz's and Bonnie B.C. Oh's book shifts the focus to many aspects of the comfort women issue, from very different perspectives. Topics include the legal responsibility of the government, academic and activist responses as well as the historical and cultural context of the issue. However, the book does not include any documents or interviews with former comfort women or soldiers, which is the foremost important contribution of Yoshimi's work.

Comfort Women is the translation and expansion of Yoshimi's groundbreaking Japanese work, which was first published in 1995 and has since become regarded as required reading on the theme of the comfort women in Japan. Yoshimi Yoshiaki is a professor of Modern Japanese History at Chûô University in Tokyo. He is a leading figure in the scholarly efforts to document Japanese war crimes. His work has been crucial in forcing the Japanese government to admit responsibility for the enslavement of Asian women.

¹ Tanaka Yuki: *Japan's Comfort Women. Sexual Slavery and Prostitution During World War II and the US occupation*, London/New York: Routledge 2002.

² Stetz, Barbara/Oh, Bonnie B.C. (eds.): *Legacies of the Comfort Women of World War II*, Armonk, New York/London: M.E. Sharpe, Inc. 2001.

Yoshimi's book is not simply an investigation into previously unnoticed aspects of the Asia-Pacific War, but part of an ongoing struggle to restore the dignity of these women. Up to now, neither their basic human rights nor the gross violations of those rights during the war have been fully acknowledged and compensated. Moreover, this struggle shows no sign of being resolved in the near future. Yoshimi's work, however, has already transformed the way in which the Asia Pacific War is discussed and remembered in Japan.

The book is both part and product of the above-mentioned struggle. It refutes government and anti-apology arguments and illuminates such broader issues as the social institutions and attitudes that fostered the comfort station system, many of which still persist in Japan today. Yoshimi integrates in-depth interviews with former comfort women, archival research, and an overview of countless memoirs written by former military personnel. The book provides a multifaceted account of the genesis, development, and operation of the comfort station system. At the time of its publication in 1995, this account was unique among the very recent works addressing the issue, in that it drew not only upon the testimonies of victims, but also upon military documents and memoirs written by the perpetrators of the system.

By contrasting the views of the victims of the comfort station system with those of its creators and operators, Yoshimi has been able to explicate the systematic nature of Japan's war crimes. Furthermore, at each stage of his analysis, Yoshimi examines how gender, racial and ethnic discrimination along with imperialist domination combined to facilitate operation of the comfort station system and the victimization of women. Therefore, with respect to the issue of the comfort women, Yoshimi's book should be considered required reading in another countries as well.

Daniela Rechenberger

Hue-Tam Ho Tai (Hrsg.): The Country of Memory, Remaking the Past in Late Socialist Vietnam

Berkeley: UCal Press, 2001, 284 S., 19,95 US\$

Die schlechte Nachricht zuerst: Die in den Geschichtswissenschaften zuletzt ubiquitäre Postmoderne hat sich auch in den amerikanischen Vietnamstudien festgesetzt. Den Anfang machten die 1993 vom Doyen der westlichen Vietnam-Historiker, Keith Taylor, gemeinsam mit John Whitmore herausgegebenen *Essays in die vietnamesischen Vergangenheiten (Essays Into Vietnamese Pasts)*, denen nun Ho Hue Tam mit einem "bescheidenen Beitrag zur gegenwärtigen vietnamesischen Suche nach brauchbaren Vergangenheiten" (S.16) durch einen Band an der Schnittstelle zwischen Geschichte und Erinnerung nachfolgt. Der etwas hoch trabende Buchtitel vereint sieben Aufsätze zur sozialistischen 'Erinnerungspolitik' sowie ein Vor- und Nachwort der Herausgeberin. Die Beiträge entstammen einer Vietnam-Diskussionsrunde der AAS von 1996 und liegen nun, fünf Jahre später, gedruckt vor.

Ho Hue Tams "Faces of Remembrance and Forgetting" bemüht sich, der schimärischen, da irrealen Konstruktion der 'heldenhaften vietnamesischen Mutter', sprich: einer, die eines oder mehrere Kinder auf dem Schlachtfeld verlor, Herr zu werden,