

gen beider Länder befassen und über die allgemeine deskriptive Analyse hinausgehen wollen, ist die Publikation empfehlenswert. Sie ist voller interessanter Fakten, Herangehensweisen und interessanter Schlussfolgerungen. Die Artikel setzen allerdings sehr gute Kenntnisse fortgeschrittener Methoden der Ökonometrie voraus, ohne diese sind die Ergebnisse schwer einzuordnen.

Peter Mayer

Hiromasa Ezoe: Where is the Justice? Media Attacks, Prosecutorial Abuse, and my 13 Years in Japanese Court

Tokio: Kodansha International, 2010. 339 S., USD 24,95

Japan's Recruit scandal which unfolded during the height of the bubble years and terminated dozens of prominent political, administrative and corporate careers, was probably the largest political corruption scandal ever unearthed in the country. It forced the resignation of the Takeshita cabinet and through its crisis of legitimacy triggered the political turmoil of the 1990es.

The author, founder of Recruit, who had built his small advertising agency within three decades into a big diversified publishing, job placement, travel, real estate and finance group, in 1988 aged 51 had decided to retire from operational business and to opt for a career in honorific public functions and even a possible political career. In tune with the times, Ezoe then proceeded to buy himself political influence and sympathies with the conservative political elite by purchasing thousands of political party tickets and offering 162 leading politicians, related top bureaucrats and business leaders a total of 2 million of under-priced shares of Recruit Cosmos, then Japan's second largest condominium developer, prior to their public listing (when they could sell them at a profit with little risk). Both were popular ways of

political financing at the time, which were strictly speaking not illegal.

In 1988 the leftist Asahi Shimbun unearthed evidence, that his transfers to a deputy mayor, to senior civil servants at the ministries of Labour and of Education as well as to senior managers at NTT, however, may have constituted bribes and after relentless reporting and investigations finally the public prosecutors moved into action. The book of course is Ezoe's version of events, who until his death in February 2013 maintained his innocence and claimed to have become a victim of a witchhunt by unscrupulous media, of social envy, brutal prosecutors and an incompetent court system. Hence if one discounts the self-serving nature of these memoirs, they are still interesting – and often frightening – first hand experiences of how it feels to be in the eye of a hostile media storm, to be put into seemingly limitless detention and be grilled by tough prosecutors and finally submitted to a decadelong series of humiliating court trials. In the end, sentenced to three years on probation, the erstwhile poster boy of Japan's emerging post-industrial information society finished in social, familial and financial ruin.

After having become active in the organizations of big businesses (Keidanren, Keizai Doyukai, Nikkeiren), Ezoe in the mid 1980es had started mingling with senior LDP politicians as well. About 1 percent of Recruit profits he donated tax exempt to buy their party tickets, a popular venue of fundraising. In return he was invited to join them occasionally in exclusive ryotei restaurants for networking events or political chatter over an expensive dinner (pp. 50). His accounts offer an interesting insight how senior politicians practiced their networking with corporate sponsors. Ezoe's rationale of his widespread political contributions is somewhat incongruous: He wanted to improve the governance of Japan (p. 28). In distributing the prelisted shares of his subsidiary he had wished to recruit prestigious

shareholders (p. 66; even though most sold quickly afterwards).

Once hauled before the Diet to testify, after the first political and corporate resignations and beleaguered by the press which treated him as a prime criminal, Ezoe collapses both physically and emotionally and seeks admission to hospitals. He also contemplates suicide. His arrest in February 1989 he sees first with relief. However he is quickly subjected to humiliation, being stripped naked, his rectum being examined in public, is given a number, which replaced his name, and then put into an unheated 2 tatami cell. Its small window was without glass. The room, which had only a commode and a toilet as furniture, was hence bitter cold in winter and in early summer, when he was still in detention, was invaded by cockroaches and mosquitos. He is not allowed to receive letters or newspapers, and news are blocked from radio broadcasts. During transports to courthouses and interrogation rooms the prisoners are handcuffed and tied with ropes to each other. During interrogations, which last from early morning into the nights, including on weekends, attorneys are not present (he sees his only twice a week and suspects their conversations to be taped and filmed by the prosecutors (pp. 102)). Japan's court system infamously relies on confessions made during detention which, as proofs are no longer needed, lead to a 99.9 percent conviction rate in courts. Hence the prosecutors put all their energy into extracting signed confessions from the detainees, and operate with a system of promises – of early release and a lighter sentence after having shown remorse and cooperation –, threats – to arrest more friends and colleagues and to prolong the detention for years – as well as to resort to intimidating tactics, like screaming abuse, kicking his chair, or letting the accused stand or kneel (p. 130). In a highly publicized alleged corruption case like Recruit with little evidence that Ezoe or his companies got any tangible benefit out of their largesse, confessions of the intent to bribe were essential to

prosecutors who felt themselves under pressure from the media and their hierarchy to procure the needed confessions.

First they were eager to go after ex-PM Nakasone. With him however Ezoe had only three inconsequential encounters during 1985/87: One in a golf clubhouse for small talk, a discussion of operas and his political succession in the house of a business friend in Karuizawa, and a discussion of educational reform over lunch in the PM residence with tasteless curry rice being served by Mrs Nakasone (p. 167). Since they could not nab the prime minister, the prosecutors then went after his confidant and chief cabinet secretary, Takeo Fujimori, also a recipient of Ezoe's donations. On the basis of a signed "confession" from Ezoe (which the "self-loathing" author then sees as a betrayal of someone innocent (p. 208)), Fujimori is first acquitted, but then after strong media criticism finally sentenced by a High Court on probation for allegedly having moved the date of the civil service examinations in the interest of private business (p. 255). Fujimori's appeals to the Supreme Court subsequently fail and his political career remains ruined.

During the 13 year court trial with its 322 sessions Ezoe and his defence team have to spent most of their time and energy to retract his confessions in trying to prove that they were not made voluntarily but under duress. Finally after some of his associates have been found guilty in separate trials, it is clear that also Ezoe has no chance to be acquitted. In the meantime also the tax authorities are after him and claim a total of 2.6 billion yen of undeclared taxes due to his repurchase of shares, plus penalties. As he appeals, the penalties increase as the taxes remain still unpaid. In the end he loses the tax case as well, with appeals not being admitted to the Supreme Court (p. 246). Fourteen years after the scandal broke, public interest, exhausted by the complications of less than clear cut cases and court proceedings is much diminished. Still the fact, that his case attracted so

much publicity and hence undermined public trust in the political system and the public service (p. 306), is held against him. In the end Ezoë gets a sentence of three years for five years on probation. Exhausted by the longest trial in Japan's legal history both prosecution and defence accept the judgement.

Although his companies and their staff initially survived the ordeal and the negative publicity quite well, with Japan's bubble economies bursting by 1992 the Recruit companies are in financial trouble and Ezoë is forced to sell his remaining stocks. After the Recruit induced resignation of the Takeshita cabinet in 1989, Japan experienced a series of short prime ministerships, which were still overshadowed by the scandal and were too weak to generate the structural reforms needed which they papered over with more spending programmes in the form of series of supplementary deficit financed budgets, the legacy of which still continues to haunt the country and its ruined public finances.

Hence in this volume, as a story of the rise and fall not only of Ezoë and his companies, but also of the bubble economy's system of cosy collusion of Japan's then iron triangle of business, the LDP and the central ministries, there are no heroes, also not among those who destroyed the system: the press, the prosecutors and the judiciary who entertained their own systems of abuses. As such the book, in spite of sometimes tedious detail and repetitiveness offers very interesting, albeit partisan, unique insights.

Albrecht Rothacher

Sonia Ryang: Reading North Korea. An Ethnological Inquiry

Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2012. 230 S., EUR 36,00

Zu Beginn der Rezension der vorliegenden Monographie muss angemerkt werden, dass

der Untertitel „An Ethnological Inquiry“ nicht wirklich zutreffend ist. Das Buch beschäftigt sich primär mit Aspekten der nordkoreanischen Propaganda in der Literatur. Dabei kommen auch ethnologische Untersuchungsmethoden zur Anwendung, im Gesamtbild ist das Werk jedoch eher eine Literaturkritik denn eine ethnologische Studie.

Aus zweierlei Gründen ist das Werk jedoch sehr aufschlussreich. Der erste Grund liegt in der Biographie der Autorin begründet, die als Mitglied der pro-nordkoreanischen Gemeinde Japans bis ins junge Erwachsenenalter der nordkoreanischen Propaganda ausgesetzt war und damit mit der inneren Logik dieser aus eigener Erfahrung bestens vertraut ist, was bei dem gewählten Thema ein nicht zu unterschätzender Vorteil ist. Der zweite Grund ist die inhaltliche Gliederung. Die Propaganda wird nach den drei Themenbereichen „Liebe“, „Krieg“ und „Selbst“ untersucht. Während zur Kriegspropaganda zahlreiche Untersuchungen vorliegen, sind die anderen beiden Aspekte eher ungewöhnlich für die Nordkoreaforschung.

Inhaltlich beschreibt die Autorin anhand 15, z. T. sehr umfangreich zitierter Fallbeispiele, die Entwicklung der Propaganda im Zusammenhang mit dem stetig zunehmenden Führerkult um Kim Il-Sung von der Zeit des Koreakrieges bis Anfang der neunziger Jahre.

Beim Thema „Liebe“ wird aufgezeigt, wie sich die Liebe des „Großen Führers“ Kim Il-sung zum Volk von einer eher väterlichen Liebe zu jedem einzelnen Individuum zu einer göttlichen Güte (Benevolence) wandelt, während parallel dazu sich die Liebe des Volkes zum Großen Führer von einer Art kindlichen Pietät, die bei jungen Frauen auch mit Anzeichen amouröser Erregung gepaart sein kann, hin zu einer Gottesliebe ändert. Besonders beeindruckend ist die Ausarbeitung der Bedeutung dieser göttlichen Liebe für die Beziehung von Mann und Frau, welche letztendlich nur über den Umweg der Liebe zum Großen Führer und nur