

# EDITORIAL

MAY 2003

With the recent war in Iraq, worldwide attention shifted away from the East Asian sphere, only to return to the region once Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) began to spread from China to Southeast Asia and beyond. As the mysterious virus from rural Guangdong province continues to capture headlines, a number of incredibly important issues facing East Asia remain underemphasized in both the press and academia. In this edition we at the *Stanford Journal of East Asian Affairs* have attempted to draw attention to some of these issues. The internal political workings of the Chinese and North Korean leadership present important areas of study as one regime responds to growing pressure for liberalization and the other regime pursues an ideologically-charged policy of isolationism and brinkmanship. Japan and the Southeast Asian nations have faced significant questions over their political and economic roles in the larger region. Within this edition are also articles covering AIDS in China, the radical left Japan, Taiwanese democracy, and the Philippines under Ferdinand Marcos. Maintaining our commitment to include papers beyond the realms of politics, economics, and history, we have also included in this edition an analysis of Chinese tragedy and a discussion of the Japanese masterpiece *Gengi Monogatari*.



All four pieces in the China section seek to shed light on subjects that previously have received little attention. In his article, **Tie Wee Tan** argues against the predominant assumption made by scholars of Taiwan that democracy was the sole end of democratization in Taiwan. Tan illustrates that Lee Teng-hui's attempts to consolidate the separation between Taipei and Beijing through constitutional reform during his presidency. Also looking back on the past, **Jessica Chen Weiss** provides an overview of the destabilizing effects of economic reform in China and seeks to draw attention to the People's Congress system. She argues that while this set of institutions is not particularly highly visible, it is an important way for the Chinese leadership to effectively deal with increasing political demands on the part of disaffected citizens. Meanwhile, **Ian Carmichael** provides a compelling introduction to the crisis of AIDS in rural China, a problem that is increasingly gaining international attention. Finally, in "The Tragic and the Chinese Subject," **Alexander Huang** discards the notion held by some literary critics that Chinese tragedy does not exist and, in turn, illuminates the particular Chinese sense of the tragic – one, he suggests, that focuses on a character whose isolation occurs in the context of a moral community and a web of interpersonal relationships.



JAPAN

The papers featured in this year's section cover a broad period in Japanese history ranging from the Heian era through the East Asian Financial Crisis. In "*Genji Monogatari: A Romance in Three Parts*," **Leslie Inamasu** analyzes the "Tale of Genji" as a social commentary on womanhood in medieval Japanese society. Inamasu argues that *Genji Monogatari* uses three woman protagonists to construct the ideal female life—a combination of passion, motherhood, and spirituality. **Kenji Hasegawa's** "In Search of a New Radical Left: The Rise and Fall of the *Anpo* Bund, 1955-1960" examines the short-lived student movement that spearheaded massive protests against the renewal of the US-Japan Security Treaty (*Anpo*). Hasegawa places the Bund in the larger context of Japan's radical student movement, and explains why the Bund dissolved at the height of the anti-*Anpo* demonstrations. Lastly, **Phillip Lipsy** in "Japan's Asian Monetary Fund Proposal" describes the emergence of the AMF as a Japanese initiative, and explores the motivations that led the Japanese government to propose a new monetary fund at the height of the Asian Financial Crisis. Lipsy also discusses the feasibility of a future AMF. Together, the articles in this year's section provide a wide-ranging examination of premodern, postwar, and contemporary Japan.



KOREA

This issue's Korea paper deals with *Juche* – the North Korean ideology of self-sufficiency and independence. **Grace Lee** considers the origins and philosophical meaning of *Juche*, the ideology responsible for the secrecy and isolation that surround the Stalinist state. Lee argues that an understanding of *Juche* will go a long way towards understanding the North Korean regime itself, at a time when North Korea has claimed the world attention again with the re-opening of its Yongbyong nuclear reactor and admission of nuclear weapons possession.



GE ASIA

As world affairs paint an ambivalent picture for the future of small states, our two contributors reflect on issues of sovereignty and representation. In "The 'ASEAN Way': Non-Intervention and ASEAN's Role in Conflict Management," **Gillian Goh** addresses the collective actions of Southeast Asian nations in regional conflicts in light of a tradition of non-intervention. In particular, she contrasts ASEAN's intervention in Cambodia from the late 1970s to the 1980s with that of the organization of American States (OAS) in Haiti a decade later, examining the potency of international action and questioning the effectiveness of military force. **Kenji Kushida**, meanwhile, tackles the Philippines' apparent exclusion from the Asian economic miracle in "The Political Economy of the Philippines under Marcos." Using theories of Verticle Political Integration, the International Context, and the Stationary Bandit as frameworks, he traces the roots of the Philippines' modern political economy to the "commitment problem" during Ferdinand Marcos's reign.