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Review of *The City as Subject: Seki Hajime and the Reinvention of Modern Osaka*, by Jeffrey E. Hanes

Carola Hein
Bryn Mawr College, chein@brynmawr.edu

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studies, and Taiwanese history. It will certainly stimulate much enthusiastic debate and discussion.

MING-CHENG MIRIAM LO
University of California, Davis

The City as Subject: Seki Hajime and the Reinvention of Modern Osaka. By JEFFREY E. HANES. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002. xii, 348 pp. $45.00 (cloth).

Urban visions are traditionally sparse in Japan, and they rarely influence reality. Some exceptions exist, nonetheless. In *The City as Subject*, Jeffrey E. Hanes brings to the foreground the life and work of Seki Hajime (1873–1935), a political and social economist turned social urban reformer concerned with improving the urban living conditions of the working class. Introducing this outstanding Japanese personality to an English-speaking audience, Hanes places Seki's career in the larger context of modernizing Japan.

In examining Seki's works, Hanes illustrates how the Meiji period commitment to increasing industrial production (*shokusan kōgyō*) influenced the emerging fields of political and social economics as well as urban planning in Japan. Hanes proceeds chronologically and thematically from the introduction through six chapters, taking the reader from Seki's youth to the theoretical works of his early career and to his achievements as vice mayor and later mayor of Osaka.

Refusing to use portraits as decorations, Hanes transforms the biographic introduction into an intriguing view of Seki's formative years. Through the lens of Meiji-era studio photography, he reveals an atypical family that contradicts the assumptions made in the setup and backgrounds of Meiji photography that promoted "a new national imaginary under the public rubric of the family-state (*kazoku kokka*)" (p. 14). Trained at the Tokyo Commercial College, Seki was strongly influenced by his stay in Europe (1898–1901), first in Belgium and then in Germany (chap. 2). Seki, like other Japanese scholars, was well informed on contemporary Western debate in his field. Intent on using their findings in modernizing Japan, Seki's attitude, like that of other Japanese scholars, changed from uncritical acceptance in the early Meiji years to a more selective approach in the 1920s. Influenced by the teachings of the German economist Friedrich List and his students and aware of the writings of Karl Marx and the harsh urban realities produced by industrial capitalism, Seki attempted to combine the seemingly opposite ideas of both thinkers, adopting and adapting them to the Japanese context (p. 50).

Through numerous quotations from primary sources, Hanes examines Seki's evolving particular brand of social urban economics in relation to other leading figures of his time in chapters 3 and 4—clearly the heart of the book—before focusing on Seki's career change from scholar to administrator in the last two chapters. Hanes points out that in the early years of his career as a defender of industrialists and their protection by tariffs, Seki tried to reconceptualize the Japanese economy as a people's national economy (*kokumin keizai*). Interrogating the labor question, he attempted to design a modern moral economy that would enable Japan to sustain economic growth without undermining social stability. Workers' protection, for Seki, was intimately related to urban issues.

Called in as vice mayor of Osaka in 1914, Seki devoted himself to the city's transformation, and under his guidance, as Hanes explains, Osaka displayed cutting-

edge social urban policymaking (p. 203). Seki's central objectives were comprehensive and forward-looking master planning beyond the urbanized areas, residential reform, and the creation of working-class suburbs. Hanes's investigation of Seki's urban work lacks the detailed investigation given to his economic thought in the early chapters, and further analysis of Seki's impact on Japanese urban laws and planning—including the 1919 City Planning Law—and his precise knowledge of foreign discussions remains to be done. Hanes nonetheless clearly demonstrates Seki's intention of transforming Osaka. In unison with European and American critics of the industrial city, Seki particularly asked urban social reformers to confront speculation on the city's outskirts (p. 190).

Seki could not overcome the forces set against him. The leading elites conceived of city planning as a tool for economic development (p. 179–80), concentrating on beautification projects while ignoring the slums. Landowners opposed him as they developed the suburbs in search of profits; the central government refused sufficient support, and the municipal government lacked the financial and political resources needed to realize his plans. In the end, Seki became famous for the opposite of what he had earlier promoted. People today associate his name with the Midosuji Boulevard, an avenue through the heart of Osaka, which Hanes discusses only briefly. Seki's striving for more municipal authority and decentralization of political and financial power, as laid out by Hanes, provides important clues for understanding the functioning of the highly centralized Japanese state today.

In accordance with Seki's work, Hanes concentrates more on theories than on concrete realizations. Although Seki influenced several important laws, his achievements in Osaka appear meager when compared with his visions. In spite of the lack of Seki's tangible achievements, this important book provides an extensive analysis of Seki's thought and work, showing that social progressivism developed in Japan almost simultaneously with and in response to similar movements in Western countries. Hanes thus provides the reader with an important new piece of the yet largely incomplete puzzle of transnational economic and planning history.

CAROLA HEIN
Bryn Mawr College

The Making of Shinkokinshū. By ROBERT N. HUEY. Harvard East Asian Monographs, no. 208. Cambridge: Harvard University Asian Center, 2002. xx, 480 pp. $49.50 (cloth).

For several centuries after its appearance in the early thirteenth century, the *Shinkokinshū* (New *Kokinshū*), eighth of the imperial collections of Japanese poetry, had a dubious reputation among Japanese court poets. Some leaders of the courtly Mikohidari lineage actively discouraged their students from reading it at all, and even those who did not go that far recommended it only to the experienced. Yet as time went on the anthology had its champions, one of whom was the nativist scholar-poet Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801), through whose efforts interest in the marginalized imperial collection was given a boost. In the twentieth century, the philological labor of several generations produced a number of comprehensive commentaries on the poems of the anthology and a host of textual, historical, and critical studies too numerous to mention. As that century fades away, scholars of the anthology can claim that it is still third in status in the traditional poetic canon only to *Kokinshū* (Collection