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and offerings by the bereaved, but it took place at home and so displaced the temple-based funeral. The funeral altar, the centerpiece of these new home-based rites, became what Bernstein calls "a magnet for innovative display." At the top end of the market, it was a fabulously expensive multitiered, flower-bedecked space on which candles were lit, incense burned, and offerings placed, alongside mortuary tablets and photographs of the deceased.

These several innovations of the early decades of the twentieth century endured and finally, in the postwar decades, spread out of urban areas into rural Japan as well. It is really only at the start of the twenty-first century that funeral practice is shifting radically once more. There is a growing trend towards *shizensō*, so-called natural funerals that eschew the use of Buddhist priests and to a large extent undertakers, too. Bernstein acknowledges, perhaps insufficiently, the importance of funeral rites in sustaining the patriline in imperial Japan. In twenty-first century Japan, however, there are signs that death rites are adapting to the disintegration of the traditional family. One example is the emergence of grave plots exclusively for women. Resigned to unhappiness in this life, a small but growing number of women purchase these plots to effect "posthumous divorce." It would be interesting to hear what Bernstein makes of these developments, but they—like state funerals in modern Japan—lie beyond the carefully defined parameters of his book. *Modern Passings* as it stands is an expertly researched and finely written book. It is analytical as any academic book should be, but it is also witty and compassionate.

Neubeginn unter US-amerikanischer Besatzung? Hochschulreform in Japan zwischen Kontinuität und Diskontinuität 1919–1952. Hans Martin Krämer. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2006. 317 pages. €54.80.

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In this well-researched monograph, the title of which may be translated as "Fresh Start under the U.S. Occupation? University Reforms in Japan Between Continuity and Change," Hans Martin Krämer traces the roots of postwar university reforms in Japan to early twentieth-century Japanese debates on education. He thereby revisits the perennial question of the degree to which the Allied Occupation reshaped Japan. Contrary to current notions, especially popular among politicians and scholars in Japan seeking to redress "excessive changes imposed by foreigners," Krämer stresses Japanese agency in conceiving and implementing educational reform after 1945 based on ideas that had circulated in Japan since the 1920s. While one might assume that there would be little left to say on the postwar period after the seminal work of John Dower and Takemae Eiji, Krämer's reminder is well taken. As he points out, situating the Occupation within the larger flow of twentieth-century history diminishes our awe at the impact of Japan's so-called American revolution and reveals substantial prewar-to-postwar continuity in the policy agendas of the Japanese participants in the reform process. Focusing on the issue of continuity and discontinuity, Krämer's core interest in this book, as in some of his previous publications,[1] is on the relationship between the state and university education. The present book consists of four sections: (1) an introduction to the historiographical context, (2) an analysis of the discourse between 1919 and 1945 concerning educational reform, (3) an in-depth examination of American and Japanese postwar proposals regarding education and their subsequent implementation, and (4) a concluding discussion of the influence of the historical legacy.

Providing in the introduction a meticulous and nuanced survey of previous scholarship, Krämer explains how historians in Japan and elsewhere have traditionally used the year 1945 as the turning point for either starting or ending their studies. This bifurcation of the twentieth century has often led to the depiction of a division between a prewar period of state-led authoritarianism and a postwar epoch of liberation and democratization, albeit one later betrayed by the reemergence of conservative elites. In recent decades scholars of economic history, in particular, have paid more attention to prewar or wartime connections, and researchers in other fields have also accepted the characterization of a "1940 system" (a socioeconomic order established under the duress of wartime demands that influenced postwar Japan as well). Krämer, however, draws major theoretical inspiration from the sociologist and historian Yamanouchi Yasushi's idea of a transition from a "class-based society" to a "system society." Similar to the situation in other nations in the 1930s and 1940s, Yamanouchi argues, campaigns for "rationalization" and "modernization" and the aim of using human resources more effectively led to the state's assuming a larger role in mediating social conflicts. In this process, higher education became a crucial means of breaking down class differences as greater access to education helped individuals overcome previously existing social boundaries and older class distinctions became blurred. Reviewing these points in the introduction, Krämer reasserts the usefulness of the analytical term fascism (*Faschismus*) for categorizing the intensive period of militarization and mass mobilization that an older generation of scholars in Japan described by words such as "emperor fascism" (*tennōsei fashizumu*), a practice that once sparked intense debates among American scholars on the appropriateness of applying the notion of fascism to the Japanese as well as German and Italian experience.

The book's long prewar chapter covers the years 1919 to 1945, with focus on educational discourse during the years 1925–1937 and debates in government committees between 1931 and 1942. Proposals for structural reform included abolishing the higher schools, standardization of educational institutions, upgrading of teacher training, permitting women to study at universities, and the issue of administrative decentralization. Except for the promotion of teacher training academies to higher-school status and putting them under the jurisdiction of the central government's Ministry of Education in 1943–1944, none of the above-mentioned reform items were implemented prior to Japan's surrender. Krämer holds that the reform agenda was not instituted more broadly primarily because the key educational committee did not submit its recommendations until 1942, by which point the government was so overwhelmed by the needs of national defense that any further structural reforms in education were postponed until the end of the war.

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[1] See "Just Who Reversed the Course? The Red Purge in Higher Education During the Occupation of Japan," *Social Science Japan Journal* 8:1 (2005), pp. 1–18; *Unterdrückung oder Integration? Die Staatliche Behandlung der katholischen Kirche in Japan, 1932 bis 1945* (Marburg: Förderverein Marburger Japan-Reihe, 2002).

The postwar chapter focuses in detail on the plans and policies of university reform during the Allied Occupation, 1945 to 1952. Owing to more pressing administrative demands, the initial two years saw little progress on university reform issues; nevertheless, reform plans ranged from the famous recommendations of the 1946 U.S. Educational Mission to Japan to various initiatives by the Japanese Ministry of Education. As is well-known today, the prewar system of multitrack schooling, in which the elite higher schools had been a bottleneck to university entry, was replaced by a more uniform system of junior and senior high schools based on the then-current American practice; many professional and private schools (some of which provided courses in teacher training) received the rank of university; and coeducation was extended to the university level. Japanese interests, Krämer argues consistently, determined whether any particular initiative had a chance of success. It was the complete lack of support by Japanese actors, for example, that necessitated withdrawal of the university governance reform championed by the Occupation's Civil Information and Education section.

In his conclusion Krämer summarizes his argument that previous scholarship on the history of education has exaggerated the 1945 divide and discounted Japanese agency in setting agendas. As one important continuity he identifies the belief in the necessity of a strong central government overseeing universities, a notion that went almost unchallenged until the end of the twentieth century. Probably the most innovative element of this study is the revelation of recurrent and lasting tropes of the ideal of an egalitarian society shared by many Japanese proreform advocates, whether they lived under a political regime that was fascist or democratic. Even before the wartime years, intellectuals formulated the ideal of a classless or middle-class society as an antidote to what they saw as a nation torn apart by excessive strife. The actions of the U.S. conquerors may have facilitated equal access to standardized mass education, but such access fulfilled a much older Japanese dream and would never have been realized without its holders' active participation in the reform effort.

Japanese Temple Buddhism: Worldliness in a Religion of Renunciation. By Stephen G. Covell. University of Hawai'i Press, 2005. 330 pages. Hardcover $45.00.

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Japanese Temple Buddhism is essentially a critical assessment in the context of contemporary Japanese society of the "corruption theory" of Japanese institutional Buddhism argued forcefully by the historian Tsuji Zennosuke (1877–1955) in his ten-volume *Nihon bukkyōshi* (History of Japanese Buddhism), published between 1944 and 1955. Tsuji felt that during the Edo period Buddhism substantially degenerated as a by-product of the creation of the *danka*, or parish-membership, system that required all families to publicly affiliate themselves with specific temples and sects. This policy officially ended 150 years ago, and as Stephen Covell's concern is with