

BOOK REVIEWS

Loos, Noel & Takeshi Osanai. 1993. *Indigenous Minorities and Education: Australian and Japanese Perspectives of their Indigenous Peoples, the Ainu, Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders*. Tokyo: Sanyusha. 424pp.

Published to mark the International Year of Indigenous Peoples, this collection of papers by researchers connected with James Cook University of North Queensland and Hokkaido University of Education brings together information and views on the history, current state and future prospects of three groups of indigenous peoples.

Australian Aborigines are familiar to most of us in their incarnation as desert-dwelling nomads with a strong spiritual bond to the land. Many of the authors in this collection, though, are at pains to point out what a disservice this image does to the Aborigine peoples. Resident in Australia for tens of thousands of years, they once inhabited every part of the continent with life-styles as diverse as the land's geographic zones: fishing villages, agricultural settlements and, yes, nomadic hunter-gatherers, too. Their archaeological sites reveal the earliest evidence of human cremation and of ocean-going transport in the world.

Less familiar to many of us are the Torres Strait Islanders. Their islands lie scattered across the channel between the far northern tip of Australia and the southern coast of Papua New Guinea. Ethnically and culturally distinct from Aborigines, the Islanders have, nevertheless, suffered similar hardships since white colonisation and have fought similar battles to regain their rights. It was a group of Islanders who, in 1992, won a historic court decision which undermines the entire legal basis of European colonisation of the islands and the mainland.

Closer to home, the Ainu have long been regarded by mainstream Japanese society as a dying race. This book makes it clear that if the race is indeed dying, it is as a direct result of mainstream Japanese policy. Long the butt of trickery and discrimination, the Ainu people were, at the start of the Meiji period, dispossessed of the land on which they had hunted and gathered for centuries to make room for settlers from other parts of Japan. Since then, various relief measures have been enacted "to smooth the pillow of the dying race" (a resonant phrase originally applied to Aborigine policy but which well reflects official attitudes to all three peoples over the last hundred years).

The book, in a series of independent essays, gives detailed accounts of the history and cultures of these peoples and charts the steps they have taken to reassert their rights against overwhelming official complacency. It provides a wealth of insights into the ways, the problems and the aspirations of the three peoples. The essays are readable, well-translated (in the case of those originally written in Japanese), well-edited so that there is some overlap in content but not enough to be annoying, fascinating accounts by people who know the Ainu, Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders and care deeply about their rights. Most of the authors are academics although some are political or cultural leaders of the people they write about. The approach is eclectic: there are official policy documents, lesson-plans, a post-modernist critique of the naming of colonised people, a case-study, accounts of legal subtleties and socio-cultural descriptions. Throughout the collection, though, there is a strong conviction that these peoples have a right to be heard and to be recognised as distinct peoples.

It is a mystery to me how the word "Education" got into the title. The book is no more about education than it is about archaeology, folklore or court proceedings. All of these elements play an important role in the book but none of them is dominant. The essays which do deal directly with education fall into two groups: those concerned with the education given to the indigenous peoples and those that deal with education about the peoples.

The first group makes painful reading. Education policy was used with deliberation and calculation to destroy Ainu culture and language as viable concerns. Within a generation, these goals were achieved and Ainu children were "integrated" into Wa-jin schools, although dark references are made in several essays to the discrimination and bullying they face there. In Australia, it is the withholding of education which has done most of the damage, with Torres Strait Island schools staffed entirely by untrained teachers as late as the 1970's. This policy has now changed and campaigners have switched to demands for greater input from the indigenous peoples into all levels of education, including the implementation of teaching methods compatible with indigenous learning styles.

The essays which deal with education about indigenous peoples are brimming with ideas for helping students to empathise with the peoples: through dance and song, exploration of the meaning of "hunter-gatherer," and traditional stories. These ideas come from both Australia and Japan. An analysis of the presentation of the Ainu in Ministry-approved textbooks in Japan, however, makes much grimmer reading. Yukio Takegahara is able to analyse every word the textbooks devote to Ainu issues in his 10-page essay, since so little is said about them.

An essay by Anna Shnukal traces the development of bilinguality on the Torres Strait Islands. Another outlines the difficulties of reconstructing dying Aboriginal languages and a third pleads for the revival of the Ainu language. However, this book provides slim pickings for those whose interest is purely linguistic.

This book succeeds admirably in educating the reader about issues confronting its three indigenous peoples and in arguing that they should have the right to function as distinct communities. It is less successful at justifying the decision to treat the indigenous people of Australia and Japan (and only them) together in one book. There are parallels but it is mainly left to the reader to figure them out. Only one essay, the final one, attempts to address the situation in both countries. Even then, it is not clear that the parallels are instructive: do the disparate peoples covered here have lessons to teach each other? I am not sure but I am certainly better informed about each of them than I was before reading the book.

Reviewed by Stephen M. Ryan, Osaka Institute of Technology

Loveday, Leo J. 1996. *Language Contact in Japan: A Socio-linguistic History*. Oxford University Press. 238pp.

The idea that Japan is a culturally and linguistically homogenous nation that until very recently was almost completely isolated from the rest of the world is slowly being revealed to be a myth. *Language Contact in Japan* pushes it one step further towards its eventual demise.

This new work by Leo Loveday, which grew out of the author's Ph.D. thesis, is really two books in one. The first third gives an introduction to the study of language contact, with explanations of the main types of language contact settings, as well as a brief history of Japanese contact with Asian and European languages. Here we learn that language contact has been a major factor in shaping Japanese culture since ancient times, and that at several points in the nation's history, the Japanese elite were bilingual. In the early stages of contact with Chinese culture at the dawn of written Japanese history, the nobility learned not only written but also spoken Chinese, in many cases studying with native speakers. Later, during the Meiji Period, university professors would often give their lectures in a European language, showing that not only they, but also their students, were bilingual. Loveday's accounts of these language contact settings make fascinating reading and easily refute the popular notion that the Japanese are incapable of learning foreign languages.

Having provided this background information, Loveday moves on to the heart of his work: a detailed analysis of language contact in contemporary Japan, as evidenced in the wide-scale use of foreign and loan words--mostly of European origin. Loveday gives special attention to the role of English in advertising and the ubiquitous use of English and/or *romaji* on commercial products, especially in the field of popular entertainment. After analyzing this borrowing on a linguistic level, he goes on to present the results of a large-scale survey he conducted on the use of, understanding of and attitude toward "foreignisms" by the Japanese themselves. Finally, he provides an insightful overview of the social and psychological motivations for using foreignisms and the various social functions that such use fulfills today.

This work offers a wealth of information on a wide range of language contact in Japan, and as such, is a welcome addition to the growing body of research in this field. Loveday mentions in the preface that he has tried to make it accessible to the general reader, and on the whole, he succeeds, although occasionally he gets bogged down in jargon. The writing is rather uneven, though, with passages of smooth-flowing narrative interspersed with rather dense linguistic analysis. While Loveday does a fine job of organizing a tremendous amount of information, occasionally I got the feeling that much of it was second-hand and that he had not made it his own. For example, at one point he recounts the story of one Fukuzawa Yukichi, "a reformer, educator, and writer" who is humiliated when he visits a Western settlement because he does not know English and is therefore not able to communicate. Only 8 pages later, we have an anecdote about frequent codemixing on the part of one "Fukuzawa Yukichi, the found of Keio University." Yet Loveday never points out that these stories are about one and the same man at different points in his life. I was also surprised at a number of Loveday's translations of Japanese words and explanations of certain phenomenon. Another small quibble is that when Loveday gives the history of language contact in Japan, he concentrates too heavily on Chinese and the European languages, at the expense of other languages, including Korean, Ainu and the Ryukyuan languages.

All the same, this work goes a long way in explaining language contact in Japan, and in particular, the widespread use of English and other European languages in ways that many of us have noticed, but probably only shook our heads at.

Reviewed by Mary Goebel Noguchi, Ritsumeikan University

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JALT National Special Interest Group on Bilingualism --

Original Statement of Purpose

The modern Japanese situation holds unique challenges and opportunities for the study of bilingualism. Linguistically, Japanese, because of extensive historical borrowing, shares some surface features with Korean, Chinese and even modern European languages, but it appears to have no clearly traceable linguistic ties to any other major language. Sociologically, it can be argued that, as the most industrialized of the Asian nations, postwar Japan has had an extraordinarily high degree of economic and cultural exchange with the Western nations, but that its adopted Western artifacts are only thinly overlaid on zealously protected traditional culture. Psychologically, local bilingual and bicultural speakers of Japanese and another language live in an environment with unique pressures and potentials. In view of these rich areas for research and of Japan's rising political and economic importance, disappointingly few studies of bilingualism have emanated from Japan to date.

One of the purposes of the National Special Interest Group on Bilingualism is to address the need for high quality research in this uniquely exciting venue. As JALT members and their families comprise a significant portion of the bilinguals available for convenient study, this National Special Interest Group should help to identify an extremely valuable pool of researchers and bilingual subjects willing and able to help each other conduct significant studies, not only in the linguistic arena, but also on the many social and psychological ramifications of bilingualism in this particular society. As educators, JALT members are ultimately dedicated to developing fully-functioning bilinguals. As bilinguals themselves, as the parents or spouses of bilinguals, however, JALT members at the same time recognize that these individuals, minors in particular, are often in need of social and psychological support. A second purpose of the National Special Interest Group on Bilingualism, then, is to provide that support, in the form of disseminating research findings among this network of individuals sharing common pressures, and providing timely information on alternatives and responses to common problems affecting bilinguals in Japan, such as multicultural education, peer acceptance, and legal status.

Accordingly, this Special Interest Group proposes to (1) encourage bilingualism research projects and the wide dissemination of findings by organizing an extensive network of researchers and willing bilingual subjects, (2) promote awareness of current developments of interest to these overlapping communities, and (3) provide a base for mutual support among the group's members.

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