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Preface

On behalf of my editing colleagues, Ina Hein, Rudiger Frank, and Agnes Schick-Chen, I am delighted to introduce the sixth volume of the *Vienna Journal of East Asian Studies*. Each volume of this journal assembles high-quality research articles with a particular focus on the work of emerging scholars. Once a year the editors invite contributions from staff and from only the most distinguished recent graduates of the Department of East Asian Studies at the University of Vienna, providing a platform to disseminate pioneering local scholarship to a worldwide academic audience. In addition, the editors regularly welcome unsolicited submissions from international scholars, which also have to undergo a rigorous review process.

Volume 6 brings together six papers, which, on the one hand, mirror the vast variety of thriving scholarly activity at the Department of East Asian Studies; on the other hand, they share the same qualitative standard based on methodological rigour, sophisticated proficiency in the target language(s), originality, and clear appreciation of the complexity and relevance of East Asia and the processes that take place in its societies. In the first paper, Nadja Drexel discusses the commonalities and differences concerning knowledge creation between Japanese, South Korean, and Austrian new ventures, drawing on a wide range of collected empirical data and the application of the SECI model. Thomas Stephan Eder goes on to expound on Sino-Russian relations through the prism of the Central Asian energy issue, offering intriguing insights into the pertinent Chinese discourse. The third paper by Stefan Fuchs, relying on a comprehensive lyrics content analysis, introduces a largely unknown rock music oriented subcultural phenomenon in Japan, classifiable as a form of ‘right-wing rock’ (*Rechtsrock*). Next, Erich Havranek delineates the contemporary image of Japanese literature as seen through review articles published in German language newspapers. In the fifth paper, Eva Rohrhofer comparatively examines the media systems in China, Japan, and South Korea, outlining similarities and distinctions and revealing the impact of the political context they operate in. Finally, Antonia Strachwitz surveys, assesses, and likens the policies to improve gender equality and overcome discrimination of women adopted by the Chinese and Japanese authorities between 1995 and 2010 in reference to the Beijing Platform for Action.

The editors are indebted to a number of peers who lent their valuable expertise, critically reviewing the contributions and providing perceptive and detailed comments. Their generous efforts greatly improved this volume. Special thanks go to the guest editors Alfred Gerstl and Wolfram Manzenreiter for their insightful and keen observations. Julia Peitl was responsible for the formal editing and layout, a task she mastered skilfully and efficiently. Laura Vollmer adeptly committed to polishing the language of the manuscript. As ever, the kindness and professionalism of Michael

Ritter of Praesens Verlag made the technical side of this publication pleasantly uncomplicated. This volume would not have been possible without the financial support of the Faculty of Philological and Cultural Studies of the University of Vienna and of the Kulturabteilung der Stadt Wien. In this respect, gratitude is also owed to the team of East Asian Economy and Society at the University of Vienna for securing and administering the required core funding.

Volume 7 (2015) is already under preparation, promising once again to offer the finest scholarship based on a rich diversity of approaches and topics that can be brought to the study of East Asia. It is the editors' hope that this and future volumes of the *Vienna Journal of East Asian Studies* continue to be well received within the scholarly community and beyond.

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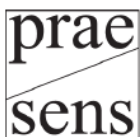
Discrimination Against Women in the People's Republic of China and Japan: A Comparative Analysis of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action 1995–2010

Antonia Strachwitz

Abstract

This paper comparatively examines steps taken to further gender equality and end discrimination against women by Japan and the People's Republic of China (PRC) between 1995 and 2010. The theoretical framework is set by the Beijing Platform for Action, adopted at the United Nations "Fourth World Conference on Women" in 1995, which sought to encompass the full scope of discrimination against women in twelve critical areas of concern. Although universally agreed upon, the platform is not legally binding, which limits its applicability and impact in practice. The results of this analysis show that both states pursued a very similar approach in the implementation of the platform: they developed ambitious national plans and revised domestic laws while failing to address the root causes for gender-based discrimination. Both seem to have understood the document as a non-exhaustive list of suggested priority areas and have addressed important issues insufficiently or not at all. There is a lack of political will, which seems to partially result from cultural stereotypes common to both states. As a result, most women in the PRC and Japan have not benefitted from the selective measures taken in the framework of the platform's national implementation and continue to face discrimination.

Keywords: discrimination against women, Japan, China, Beijing Platform for Action, women's rights



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