

JAPAN NOTES

NOTE 23 WINTER 2010

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2010 is The Year of the Tiger. Peace on Earth?

At the beginning of a new year all Japanese, except babies and toddlers, are well aware of what year it is by the twelve zodiac signs called *eto*. The *eto* are 12 animals; rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, rooster, dog, and boar in this sequence. In Japan those twelve animals are popular characters that appear on New Year's greeting cards.

The year of 2010 is the year of the tiger. Being one of the most attractive yet most feared and revered animals on the earth, the tiger makes a very attractive symbol on your New Year's greeting cards. But perhaps you would not be very comfortable by the zodiac prediction of the year of the tiger because the tiger is not a symbol of peace by all means.

But at any rate, a practical thing about the *eto* animals is that you can stealthily calculate a person's exact age by asking what his or her *eto* is. But of course you must know the sequence of those 12 signs and use the numerical number 12 for the calculation. For example, a person whose *eto* is the tiger was born either in 1938, 1950, 1962, 1974, 1986, 1998 or 2010.

Ladies and gentlemen, perhaps you don't want anybody to know what your *eto* is.



<u>ETO</u>	<u>BIRTH YEAR</u>						
RAT	1936	1948	1960	1972	1984	1996	2008
OX	1937	1949	1961	1973	1985	1997	2009
TIGER	1938	1950	1962	1974	1986	1998	2010
RABBIT	1939	1951	1963	1975	1987	1999	2011
DRAGON	1928	1940	1952	1964	1976	1988	2000
SNAKE	1929	1941	1953	1965	1977	1989	2001
HORSE	1930	1942	1954	1966	1978	1990	2002
SHEEP	1931	1943	1955	1967	1979	1991	2003
MONKEY	1932	1944	1956	1968	1980	1992	2004
ROOSTER	1933	1945	1957	1969	1981	1993	2005
DOG	1934	1946	1958	1970	1982	1994	2006
BOAR	1935	1947	1959	1971	1983	1995	2007

PAST EVENTS 2009

From Calligraphy Workshop



From Japan Robot Night

JAS Past Events in 2009!

- * **January 27:** Japan's Expanding Legal Profession-Speaker Dan Rosen
- * **April 3:** Japanese Speech Contest
- * **June 16:** Sake at Seki
- * **July 20-31:** Japanese Calligraphy Workshop
- * **August 18:** Beer and Yakitori at Seki
- * **September 5-6:** Annual Japanese Festival
- * **September 24:** Benefit Golf Tournament for Japanese Language School for Children
- * **October 3:** Anime at UMSL
- * **October 15:** Japan Robot Night
- * **November 12:** 2009 Annual Dinner

JAS New Events for 2010!

- * **March 1:** Professor Agawa: The culture of High Speed Rail
- * **April 3:** Japanese Speech Meet, (University of Missouri-St. Louis)
- * **April 16 or 17:** Lecture by: Beate Shirota Gordon
- * **June:** Sake at Seki
- * **August:** Beer and Yakitori at Seki
- * **September 4,5,6:** Japanese Festival, (Missouri Botanical Garden)
- * **September:** JAS 2010 Fund Raising Golf Outing for the Japanese Language School for Children, (Pevely Farms)
- * **October:** Business Seminar in Cooperation with JETRO Chicago
- * **November:** Annual Dinner, (Sansui Restaurant)

EVENT SCHEDULE 2010

Japan's Expanding Legal Profession—Speaker Dan Rosen

Professor Rosen, who teaches law at Chuo University Law School in Tokyo, spoke at UMSL on January 27, 2009 on “Japan’s Expanding Legal Profession.” The talk was subtitled, “Challenges and Opportunity for Women.”



The number of lawyers in Japan is quite small relatively speaking, currently only 25,000 or so. That is a surprisingly small number for the second largest economy in the world. By comparison, the number of lawyers in the U.S. is about 1,000,000.

Among Japanese lawyers, the percentage of the women is about 14%, less than half the percentages in the United States, England, Germany and France.

Against this backdrop, Professor Rosen offered some explanations of why access to Japan’s legal profession has remained restricted and provided some examples of the obstacles to its growth.

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In 2004 Japan introduced a system of law schools similar to that of the U.S., with a government promise to increase the number of lawyers, per capita, to about the same ratio as in France.

The promise of significantly opening up access to the profession, however, remains unfulfilled. Bar Associations, which were not enthusiastic about

the expansion plan in the first place, have revived their opposition now that the law school system is in place. As a result, the percentage of law school graduates allowed to pass the bar exam is much smaller than what had been promised.

Unlike bar examinations in the U.S., the number of applicants in Japan who will be allowed to pass the exam is decided in advance. Thus, it is not a test of competence. Rather, it is a sorting process that allows only the highest-scoring applicants to proceed. Even at that, the test measures only a few of the skills that a good lawyer will possess. Like the bar exam given before the start of the law school system, the new exam puts a premium on brute memorization. Thus, it is not at all certain that those who score highest on this particular test are, in fact, the “best” potential lawyers.

Examinees are allowed three chances to take the examination. Those who do not pass will have a very difficult time gaining employment that matches their level of ability and training. That is a loss not only to them but also to society. Especially

with a declining birthrate, Japan cannot afford to push aside many of its brightest and best-educated minds. Yet, that is likely to be the result.





The percentage of successful test-takers, by gender, varies from year to year. Sometimes men do better, and sometimes women do better. However, far fewer women take the bar exam than men. Some women lawyers have complained of a “glass ceiling” in Japanese law firms.

Recent changes in the law now allow more opportunity for Japanese “bengoshi” (lawyers) to work with non-Japanese law firms in Japan. Many women are taking advantage of that opportunity and see the firms from abroad as holding less stereotypical views of what women lawyers should, and should not, be doing.

Although the effect of the law school system is far weaker than originally expected, the number of lawyers in Japan is increasing. However, so long as the government continues to artificially restrict the number of graduates allowed to enter the profession, the prospects are not so encouraging, especially for women.

After the lecture, a lively discussion took place on the question of why women may be less inclined to seek to enter the legal profession and take the bar exam. One possibility presented was that many women may feel psychologically disinclined to spend a large part of their young adulthood in preparation for the bar examination, when the likelihood of passing is low and the possibility of encountering discrimination in the workplace, even for those women who do pass, is high.



AN EASY-TO-REMEMBER JAPANESE PHRASE “HODO HODO”

Ms. Hiroko Tabuchi, a reporter in Tokyo for *Wall Street Journal* wrote about “*hodo hodo zoku*” or “so-so folks” in present day in Japan, an emerging group of young workers in their 20s and early 30s

who reject promotions at work places because they calculate that the usual meager raise that comes



with the promotion does not warrant the greater responsibilities and subsequent head-aches that come with the promotion.

Hodo hodo really means “within bounds” or “in moderation.”

The following are some examples.

- “*Hodo hodo no undo*”- Moderate exercise
- “*Hodo hodo ni shiro*”-Do it in moderation.
- “*Sake wa hodo hodo ni shinasai*”- Don’t drink too much
- “*Jodan mo hodo hodo ni shiro*” – Don’t carry your joke too far.