

# ANNUAL UPDATE

## JAPANESE JOURNAL OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

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*The following is a summary of activities and circulation of the Japanese Journal of Religious Studies during the 2019 academic year. This update includes table of contents for published issues, an overview of online engagement with articles, and notes on present and future plans for the journal.*

The Japanese Journal of Religious Studies (JJRS) is an international, English-language journal publishing research on the study of religion and Japan. The forerunner to the JJRS, *Contemporary Religion in Japan*, was established by the International Institute for the Study of Religions in 1960 to promote a greater understanding of Japanese religions both domestically and abroad. In 1974, David Reid revived the journal after a brief hiatus and renamed it to reflect the expanding body of scholarship on religion in Japan. The JJRS moved to its current home, the Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture, in 1981.

This year Paul L. Swanson, the longest reigning editor of the journal, stepped down after more than thirty years at the helm. On behalf of the JJRS and the field of Japanese Studies, I would like to thank him for his service to the journal and his unparalleled contribution to the study of Japanese religion. Fortunately for us, Paul will continue his residency at the Institute for another year as the Roche Chair for Interreligious Research. We wish him a well-deserved retirement, but hope to keep him on retainer to advise the journal as editor emeritus.

### Activities and Impact

The JJRS uses DOIs (Digital Object Identifiers) to track the distribution of and engagement with our articles across the internet. Many search engines, such as Project Muse and Ebisco Host, include DOI data in their databases. Whenever a link to a DOI is clicked, a tally for the number of “hits” for a specific JJRS article is recorded. From March 2019 to March 2020, there were 44,617 successful

searches for JJRS articles through DOI links. Each month, an average of about half of these searches came from individual users.

The JJRS is also available on JSTOR, which has its own database of academic publications and keeps records of traffic within this database. From April 2019 to April 2020, there were 58,223 JJRS articles viewed on JSTOR. Of the viewed articles, 25,927 were downloaded.

Regular readers of the JJRS access and download articles directly from the NIRC website. These numbers are not reflected in the DOI and JSTOR records. Of course, the readership of print copies of the journal cannot be included in the totals for online engagement. Therefore, we can decisively state that JJRS articles were viewed and downloaded online a minimum of 102,840 times during the 2019 academic year.

In 2019, we published two outstanding collections of articles. Both at-large issues feature a diverse array of topics such as research on Shinto shrines in Hawai'i, Jesuit hospitals in the sixteenth century, Shugendo institutions in the Edo period, and much more. Each issue also includes reviews for recent monographs on Japanese religions. See the table of contents below for details. As an open access journal, all JJRS articles, past and present, can be freely downloaded from the NIRC website.

### Plans for Future JJRS Issues

The JJRS considers manuscripts on a first-come, first-served basis, and, unlike some journals, we do not issue submission deadlines. The journal is currently booked through the spring of 2021. Therefore, any submissions received hereafter will be reviewed and considered for the fall 2021 issue, which as I write this is rapidly filling up.

We are currently editing a special issue. The JJRS reserves on average one publication per year for a special issue focusing on a topic in Japanese religions organized by a guest editor. This year's topic concerns esoteric traditions in medieval Japan and is edited by yours truly. It features articles on esoteric lineages and concepts, and focuses on the problem of defining an orthodox "esoteric Buddhist" tradition in Japan. Another special issue is in the works for 2021, but we are seeking proposals for future issues. If you have any suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Beginning with the current issue, we intend to make all special issues downloadable as a single PDF on the NIRC website. Readers will be able to peruse the issue as a whole, in a similar fashion to an edited volume. We also plan to experiment with creating eBook versions of new issues. We invite you to try these new options for reading future JJRS issues.

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