

*Nissan
Institute
of Japanese
Studies*



Background to the study of Japan at Oxford University

The Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies presently comprises six fellows and seven emeritus fellow whose research is focused on the social science and history of modern Japan. We are housed in the Nissan Institute building which is located in the grounds of St. Antony's College and which also contains the university's collection of books in Japanese and about Japan – the Bodleian Japanese Library. It is an integral part of the University of Oxford and as such promotes the study of modern Japan through teaching and research.



Portrait of a Fukuzawa Yukichi, a member of the 1862 Takenouchi mission

Oxford graduates were not prominent among the many Britons who visited Japan in the second half of the nineteenth century as it opened to the west. The famous mission led by Iwakura Tomomi spent several weeks in Britain in 1871 without visiting Oxford. However his son, Tomotsune, registered as a student in 1873 at Balliol College, the first of a series of young men from Japan's ruling class to study in Oxford. And not just men. Tsuda Umeko, later founder of Tsuda-juku, the first institute of higher education for women in Japan, studied at St. Hilda's in the late 1890s and gave what is possibly the first formal talk about Japan at this university.



Tsuda Umeko



Noh mask

Meanwhile the collection of 18,000 objects donated to the university by General Pitt-Rivers in 1884 included a variety of artefacts from everyday Japanese life plus a collection of 82 Noh masks, the most important such collection in Europe. Some of these are now on permanent display. Later curators of the Pitt Rivers museum have added to the collection of Japanese objects by acquiring collections of photographs of Japanese visitors to Europe in the mid nineteenth century.

Thus at the start of the twentieth century, well before Japan or Japanese was thought of as suitable for academic study, there were Japanese books in the Bodleian library, Japanese artefacts in the Ashmolean and Pitt Rivers museums and Japanese students studying in the colleges of Oxford university.





After WW2 to the late 1970s

The first formal teaching of Japanese language began in 1909 when John Gubbins, formerly of the diplomatic service, was given a three year contract and offered tutorials in Balliol College. However the language was not sufficiently popular among students and his contract was not renewed.

Nevertheless there continued to be a steady flow of Japanese studying in Oxford, several of whom later went on to serve in the diplomatic service but there were others, such as the poet Nishiwaki Junzaburo who studied Middle and Old English in New College between 1923–5.

The key event in the post war development of Japanese studies in Oxford University was the foundation of St. Antony's college in 1948. This was the college that took a lead in the development of area studies within the university. Until the 1980s all the initiatives that supported the development of the study of Japan were driven by individuals from this college. Geoffrey Hudson and Richard Storry, both distinguished historians, served as heads of its Far East Centre which was the focus for Japanese studies until 1981. Meanwhile Geoffrey Bownas (1923–2011), who initially learned Japanese as a soldier in 1943–4, returned to Oxford and was appointed in 1953 initially to a post in Chinese. He introduced Japanese as an option in the BA in Oriental Studies in 1957. From his base in St. Antony's College he promoted the subject such that in 1963 it became possible to do a single subject degree in Japanese.



Brian Powell, also at St. Antony's, began teaching Japanese at Oxford in 1962, following a first degree in Chinese and a doctorate on Japanese theatre. He was joined by James McMullen a specialist in pre-modern Japanese history, who became a fellow at that same college in 1972. These two, supported by a series of Japanese language instructors, were the core faculty who taught the Japanese programme, with Richard Storry continuing to contribute a course in Japanese history. During the 1960s there were no more than ten undergraduates at any one time on the Japanese language degree.

Foundation of the Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies



During the 1970s interest in the study of Japan grew within the UK. The number of undergraduates at the four 'main centres' – Oxford, Cambridge, SOAS and Sheffield – steadily increased and other universities began to include the study of Japan or Japanese into their programmes. Meanwhile several major Japanese corporations were seeking to locate factories in the UK and some of these expressed an interest in supporting the study of Japan here too.

The process that led to the decision by the Nissan Motor Company to support the creation of an institute of Japanese studies was long, complex and is open to rival interpretations. Suffice it to say that as a result of conversations held between 1979–80

Nissan made a substantial donation to the university to establish a benefaction that was to be used to support the creation of an institute that focused on the study of modern Japan. Its first, acting, director was Brian Powell but in January 1982 Professor JAA (Arthur) Stockwin took up his post as the first Nissan Professor of Modern Japanese Studies on his arrival from the Australian National University. Over the course of the next few months Dr Ann Waswo arrived to become the lecturer in modern Japanese history and Dr Jenny Corbett was appointed lecturer in the economic and social development of Japan. During its first decade the institute was located in 1 Church Walk, a short distance from St Antony's College.

Development of the Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies



His Imperial Highness, Prince Naruhito, Crown Prince of Japan, breaking the ground for the new Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies building, 18 September 1991

In 1990 the Nissan Motor Company agreed to make a second major donation. This enabled the institute to develop in two ways. First and most importantly, it funded the construction of a purpose built structure in the grounds of St. Antony's College. The ground-breaking ceremony was carried out by the Crown Prince on 18 September 1991.

The building was completed by the start of 1993 and provided rooms for five permanent fellows, offices for visiting fellows, a seminar room, a 150 seat lecture theatre, and premises for the Bodleian Japanese Library (BJL). Secondly, it provided funding that allowed the institute to increase the number of its full time fellows to include another economist, Mark Rebick, and a social anthropologist, Roger Goodman. Miss Jane Baker, administrator of the Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies, was appointed in 1998.

Arthur Stockwin retired in 2003 and Ann Waswo in 2007 although both of them remain actively involved in the life of the institute. Roger Goodman was appointed to replace Arthur as Nissan Professor and Ian Neary moved from Essex University in 2004 to teach political science within the institute. He succeeded Ann as director in 2006.

The institute celebrated its 25th anniversary during academic year 2005/6 with a special series of lectures and a two-day conference to which all the doctoral students who had studied in the institute were invited. The central anniversary event was a presentation given in our lecture theatre by Carlos Ghosn, then chief executive of the Nissan Motor Company, in which he discussed his experiences working as head of Nissan in Japan. He also announced his decision to provide a third substantial donation to the Benefaction in order to establish a secure financial base and enable us to develop in new directions.

In September 2007 Professor Sho Konishi arrived from Urbana-Champaign to replace Ann Waswo to teach modern history. Later that academic year, thanks to a grant generously provided by the Sasakawa and Nippon Foundations, we were able to appoint two sociologists: Professor Takehiko Kariya from the Department of Education, Tokyo University and Dr Ekaterina Hertog a graduate of Oxford University who works on the sociology of the Japanese family. Mark Rebick and Jenny Corbett retired in 2012 and in 2014 Professor Hugh Whittaker was appointed to replace them.

Over its thirty years fellows at the institute have produced important research about Japan across the spectrum of the social sciences published in books and articles but it has never seen itself as simply a research institute. At the time of its foundation a decision was made that fellows would contribute to the teaching of undergraduates both in the Oriental Institute and in the relevant departments (at first politics, economics and history, later anthropology and sociology) in addition to supervising doctoral students. In 2007 a masters programme was launched which provides students with advanced and intensive language training alongside courses about modern Japan and research methods training. This has established itself as the programme of choice for students seeking advanced training in Japanese studies.

The pioneers of Japanese studies at St. Antony's College had always encouraged eminent Japanese scholars to spend time in Oxford. Maruyama Masao was a visitor on two occasions in the 1960s. The Nissan Institute has inherited this tradition and provides workspace for visiting fellows who want to develop their research on Japan. We continue to welcome up to four visiting researchers each year from Japan, Europe, and the United States. They not only use their time to conduct their own research but they attend and present papers at our seminar series and also on occasion contribute to teaching.



When the Bodleian Japanese Library was established in the new building the university's holdings about Japan and in Japanese were consolidated for the first time. In addition to the funding from the main library a substantial annual grant from the Nissan Benefaction has enabled the library to build up a collection of over 120,000 volumes in Japanese, English and other languages plus a broad range of journals in Japanese and English. The B JL also benefits from the support of the Japanese Friends of the Bodleian. The librarian, Mrs Izumi Tytler, is the custodian of one of the best research collections in Europe.

The institute not only collected books it has also published them. In 1986 we began publication of the Nissan Institute/Routledge Japanese Studies series. Our list has developed so that we are now nearing its 100th book making it the most extensive Japanese studies publication series in the world.



Japanese Studies in Oxford University in 2014 and beyond

While we keep in close touch with our benefactor, the Nissan Motor Company, decisions about our Institute are made by the Director in discussion with the management committee composed entirely of academic members of Oxford University. At Oxford, 24 faculty members teach and do research on Japan and many D.Phil. and Masters' students specialize in Japan across a rich array of disciplines. Our recently retired emeritus fellows specialising in performing arts, politics, modern history, early modern history, and pre-modern literature also continue to play an active role in our Institute. We constitute the broadest community of scholars working on Japan in Europe.

The Nissan Institute continues to play a pivotal role as the hub of Japan-related research activities at Oxford University. There are now so many connections between Japan and the various parts of the University that it would be impossible to list them all here. Ongoing development of a 'self-driving' car at the University, also funded by Nissan Motor Company, is just one example. The Oxford Uehiro Centre for Ethics is another such exciting link. Each member of the Nissan Institute is engaged in their discipline department, embedding the study of Japan there.

Our Institute is also an important hub for Japan related colleagues and students in academia and often from outside academia far beyond the university. Well over 100 colleagues from around the world visit our Institute annually,

and we have established close formal and informal links with a number of institutions in Japan as well. In the Nissan Seminar Series, held each week during term time, we invite scholars from outside Oxford to discuss and examine cutting edge scholarship in various fields from an interdisciplinary lens. In our Japanese History Workshop and in our Graduate Seminar, visiting scholars, graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, and Oxford faculty members participate in frank intellectual dialogue. They present their work in progress, discuss shared readings, and report on new approaches and developments of intellectual interest.

Nissan also organises major international conferences and events. Our most recent event celebrating 400 years of relations between the UK and Japan was held in the University Convocation House. The celebration focused on Oxford Bodleian Library's holding of Tokugawa Ieyasu's original letter Shuinjo, issued in 1613, which was the first agreement allowing England to trade with Japan and English people to reside in Japan. The event was symbolic of the significance of Oxford University's place in Japan studies and in UK-Japan relations at large.

Sho Konishi
Director, Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies
University of Oxford
August 2014

Fellows of the Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies



Professor Roger Goodman is Nissan Professor of Modern Japanese Studies and a Fellow of St. Antony's College. He is Head of the Social Sciences Division. His research interests include the anthropology and sociology of Japan, comparative education and social policy and the anthropology of children. His current research project is on higher education reform in Japan.



Dr Ekaterina Hertog is the Sasakawa Career Development Fellow in the Sociology of Japanese Society. Her research interests lie in the field of Sociology of the Family. She currently studies marriage formation in contemporary Japan and is developing a project on comparative fatherhoods in East Asia.



Professor Takehiko Kariya is Professor in the Sociology of Japanese Society and a Fellow of St. Antony's College. He is Director of Graduate Studies of the masters programmes in Modern Japanese Studies. He has conducted sociological studies of social stratification and social mobility, school-to-work transition, social influences of education policies in Japan and social changes in post-war Japan. He published a book titled, *Education Reform and Social Class in Japan* (Routledge, 2013).



Professor Sho Konishi is the Director of the Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies, and a member of the Faculty of History and the School of Interdisciplinary Area Studies. He studies the intellectual, cultural, and transnational history of Japan from 1700. His current research interests include history of humanitarianism, historical epistemology, the transnational history of the emotions, anarchist natural science and ethnography, and language and translation as intellectual history. His publications include *Anarchist Modernity* (Harvard, 2013); with recent articles appearing in *The American Historical Review* (2014), *Journal of Asian Studies* (2013), and *Modern Asian Studies* (2013).



Professor Ian Neary is Professor of the Politics of Japan, a Fellow of St. Antony's College, and Head of the School of Interdisciplinary Studies until December 2014. His research interests include contemporary Japanese politics, minority groups in Japan and human rights in East Asian societies. His publications include: *Human Rights in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan* (2002), *The State and Politics in Japan* (2002), *The Buraku Issue and Modern Japan – the career of Matsumoto Jiichiro* (2010). He will spend 2015 on sabbatical leave in Japan engaged on a project about the evolution and impact of the Dowa Projects Policy.



Professor Hugh Whittaker is Professor in the Economy of Japan and a Fellow of St. Antony's College. His research interests include entrepreneurship, management of innovation, corporate governance, and employment relations in Japan, as well as political economy and economic development in East Asia. His books include *Comparative Entrepreneurship: The UK, Japan and the Shadow of Silicon Valley* (2009) and (co-edited) *Corporate Governance and Managerial Reform in Japan* (2009). A current research project is on 'compressed development' in East Asia.



Mrs Izumi Tytler, Bodleian Japanese Librarian, was responsible for setting up the Bodleian Japanese Library in 1993 and has been in charge of its operations ever since. The library houses the University's principal collections relating to Japan and was formed by combining the Bodleian's extensive holdings on Japan with the residual collection of the former Nissan Institute Library. Mrs Tytler's research interests include early Japan-Europe relations.



Miss Jane Baker, administrator of the Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies, was appointed in 1998.

Colleagues from the Oriental Institute who contribute to our Master's teaching programme



Dr Linda Flores is an Associate Professor in Modern Japanese Literature at the University of Oxford and a Fellow of Pembroke College, Oxford. She specialises in women's literature, gender theory, and proletarian writing. Her current research project explores the theme of 'transnational subjectivity' through an examination of displaced mothers in modern Japanese literary texts. She is organising an international conference at Oxford on 'Trauma and Narrative in Japan' for 2015.



Professor Bjarke Frellesvig is Professor of Japanese Linguistics, and a Fellow of Hertford College. He currently serves as Chair of the Faculty of Oriental Studies. He is also the Director of the University's Research Centre for Japanese Language and Linguistics (see <http://www.orinst.ox.ac.uk/research/jap-ling/>) and of the Oxford Corpus of Old Japanese (<http://vsarpj.orinst.ox.ac.uk/corpus/>). His research interests include the history of the Japanese language and general historical linguistics.



Ms Junko Hagiwara is a senior instructor in Japanese at the Oriental Institute. Her main responsibility is for the Japanese language courses on the undergraduate's programmes taught at the Oriental Institute but she also contributes to the masters programme.



Mrs Keiko Harada is a Faculty Tutor at the Oriental Institute and a language instructor on the masters courses in Japanese.



Ms Kaori Nishizawa is an instructor in Japanese in the Oriental Institute. She is the instructor with special responsibility for the Japanese language courses on the masters programmes taught within the Nissan Institute.



Emeritus fellows of the institute:

Professor Arthur Stockwin
Dr Ann Waswo
Dr Mark Rebick
Dr Jenny Corbett
Dr James McMullen
Dr Brian Powell
Dr Phillip Harries

Associate members of the institute:

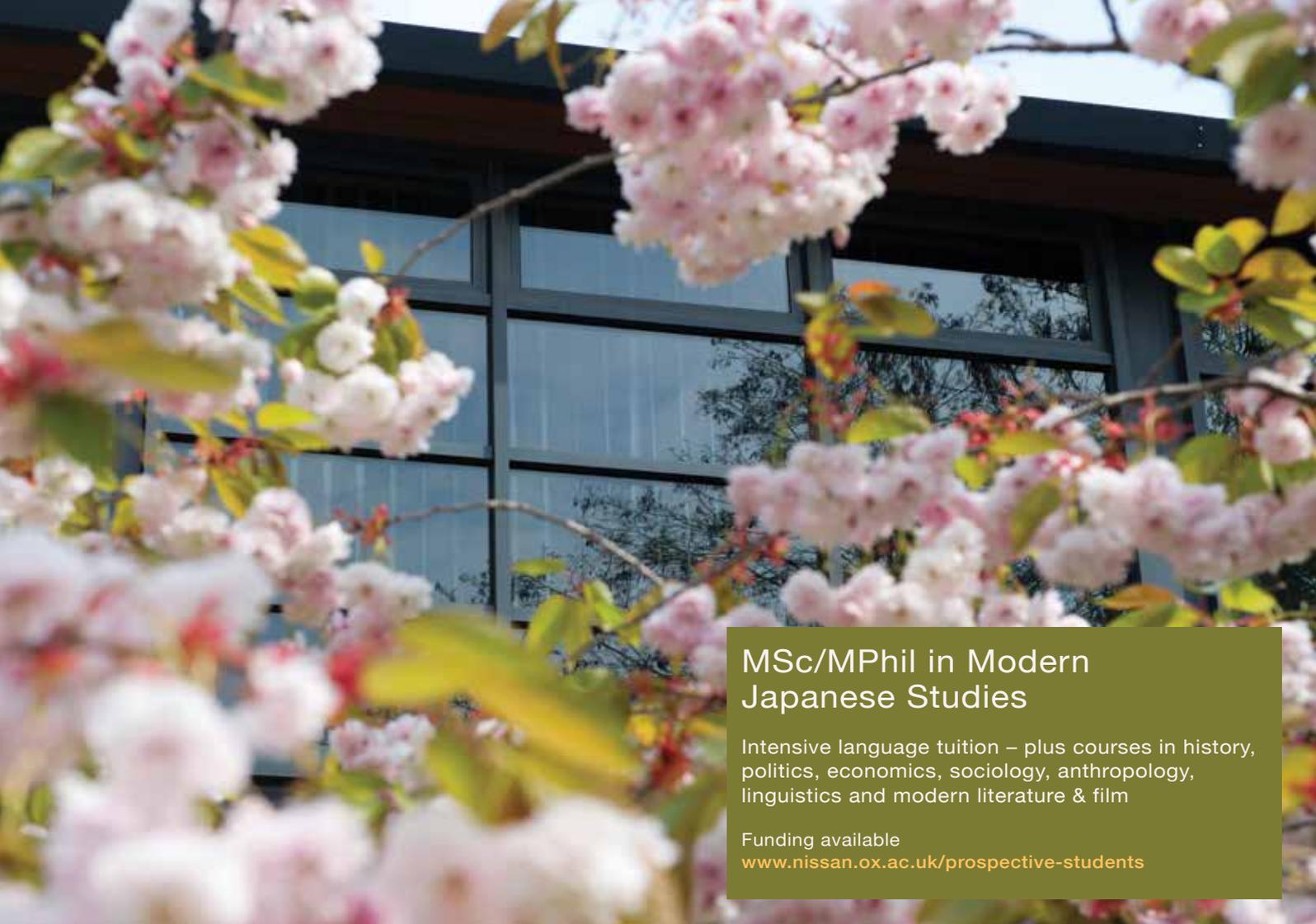
Dr James Lewis (The Oriental Institute)
Dr Clare Pollard (The Ashmolean Museum)
Dr Inge Daniels (Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology)
Professor Mari Sako (Saïd Business School)
Dr Pamela Wace (The Pitt Rivers Museum)

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