

Japanese Studies at Oxford University

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*Nissan
Institute
of Japanese
Studies*



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Background to the study of Japan at Oxford University

The Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies presently comprises seven fellows 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 Yūkichi, a member of the 1862 Takenuchi mission

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.

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.

The Bodleian library received its first Japanese book – a sagabon – in 1629 and a number of other rare and valuable books were collected in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Meanwhile John Tradescant's collection of objects gathered in the early seventeenth century contained items from Japan including a pair of zori ('sandals made of twigs'). When he died the collection passed to Elias Ashmole and subsequently this became the core of the Ashmolean museum.

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.



Tsuda Umeko

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. 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 Dr Sho Konishi arrived from Urbana-Champaign to replace Ann Waswo as lecturer in 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 (and before that the Moscow State University) who works on the sociology of the Japanese family. Thus at the start of 2010 the institute had seven fellows. In the summer of 2012 we made two new appointments. Mark Rebick retired and Hiroaki Matsuura replaced him as our economist and Tuukka Toivonen was appointed to teach and do research on youth policy and social entrepreneurship in Japan.

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 BJL also benefits from the support of the Japanese Friends of the Bodleian. The librarian,



The class of 2012–2013

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 have now published over 88 titles making it the most extensive Japanese studies publication series in the world.

Japanese Studies in Oxford University in 2013 and beyond

The Nissan Institute continues to develop thanks to financial support that still comes mainly from the benefactions provided over the last three decades by the Nissan Motor Company. Although we keep in close touch with our benefactor decisions about our direction of travel are made by the director in discussion with the management committee composed entirely of academic members of the university.

Research and teaching are our core activities but we also seek to promote Japanese studies across the university. We hold the Nissan seminar each week during the university terms and in 2011, 2012, and 2013 we have organised major international conferences on: 'Higher Education in Japan and Europe Compared', 'One Year after 3.11' and 'Engaging with Japanese Studies: revisiting the question of 'why Japan matters''. We now produce an annual newsletter that records some of the range of Japanese Studies at Oxford University.

There are now so many connections between Japan and the various parts of Oxford University that it would be impossible to list them all. On-going research developing a 'self-driving' car, also coincidentally funded by Nissan, is just one example. There are sixteen full time academic colleagues across the university who have a central research and teaching interest in Japan, seven of whom are located within the Nissan Institute. Each of the members of the Nissan Institute is engaged in their discipline department embedding the study of Japan there. Together with the recently retired emeritus fellows who continue to play an active role we constitute the broadest community of scholars working on Japan in Europe.

*Ian Neary
July 2013*



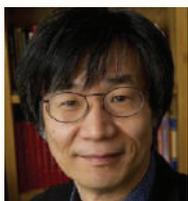
Fellows of the Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies



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. Her book on Japanese unwed mothers 'Tough Choices: Bearing an Illegitimate Child in Contemporary Japan' was published by Stanford University Press in 2009.



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 education, social stratification and social mobility, school-to-work transition, and social influences of education policies in Japan. He recently published a book titled *Education Reform and Social Class in Japan* (Routledge, 2013).



Dr Sho Konishi is the University Lecturer in Modern History of Japan in the Faculty of History, and a Fellow of St Antony's College. 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 emotion, anarchist natural science and ethnography, and language and translation as intellectual history.



Dr Hiroaki Matsuura is Departmental Lecturer in the Economy of Japan and a Junior Research Fellow of St Antony's College. His research interests include health economics, population economics, and economics of comparative law and human rights. His current research project is to estimate the effect of human rights and health and safety laws on health and economic outcomes in Japan and other countries.



Professor Ian Neary is the Head of the School of Interdisciplinary Area Studies at Oxford University and a Faculty Fellow at St Antony's College. He is the Professor in the Politics of Japan and director of the Nissan Institute. His recent 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 is currently starting a project on the evolution and impact of the Dowa Projects Policy.

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



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.



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



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.



Dr Linda Flores is the University Lecturer in Japanese Literature and Tutorial Fellow at Pembroke College. Her research interests include Proletarian Literature, Women's Writing, Gender Theory, Comparative Literature, and Atomic Bomb Writing. She organised the 2008 Kobayashi Takiji Symposium in Oxford at Keble College. Her current projects include research on Takahashi Takako and Mori Reiko.



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 www.orinst.ox.ac.uk/research/jap-ling) and directs a large research project funded by the AHRC on Pre-modern Japanese syntax. His research interests include the history of the Japanese language, Japanese-Korean comparative linguistics, and general historical linguistics.

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)
 Mrs Izumi Tytler (Librarian, Bodleian Japanese Library)



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