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Bringing Japan into the classroom



Nagai Miyuki, Teaching Fellow and Joint Head of Japanese language teaching in the School of East Asian Studies, has just been awarded a £2,000 prize in recognition of her development of a virtual language laboratory.

In recognition of the University of Sheffield's excellence in inquiry-based learning, the Centre for Inquiry-Based Learning in the Arts and Social Sciences (CILASS) was established at the University of Sheffield in October 2005. Since then, CILASS has funded over 100 projects throughout the University, including two within the School of East Asian Studies. One of these has been the development of a virtual language laboratory.

The virtual language laboratory is a database of audio-visual materials aimed at bringing Japan that little bit closer to students, whilst encouraging them to follow their own paths of inquiry.

Miyuki has observed that "in recent years student expectations have changed. The feedback we were receiving was that they wanted more use of audio-visual aids in the classroom. Whilst we did have a small video library of Japanese news and documentaries, it was difficult to obtain up-to-date and relevant materials. So, we were delighted when CILASS gave us the opportunity to establish an online database, providing the means for us to record original interviews with native speakers, both in Japan and the UK, on a range of topics."

The audio and video files are currently being made available to final-year Japanese Studies students via the University portal, My Online Learning Environment (MOLE), with instructions being sent out by email a week before the class. Students can then prepare by logging in and watching the videos in advance. In addition to being asked to make a note of any specialized vocabulary, they are also required to conduct their own research into the

topic, which could be anything from paternity leave to euthanasia.

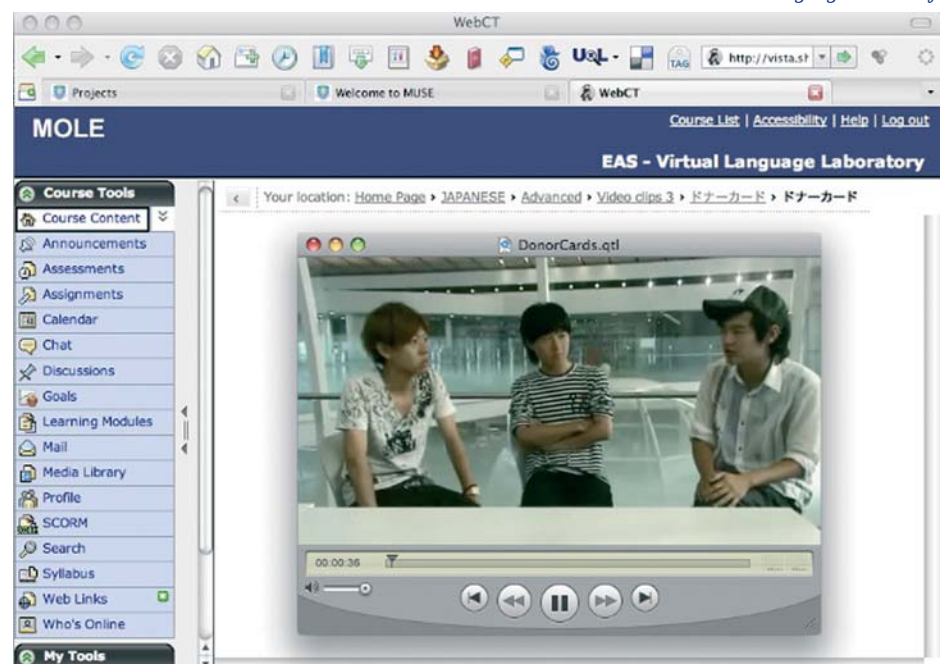
Amelia Cook, a final-year Japanese Studies student, believes that "my goal is to reach a level at which I can discuss controversial topics with Japanese people without causing offence. The laboratory gives me a good idea of how I can express my feelings about such difficult issues in Japanese, as well as how to elicit interesting and honest responses without causing any ill-feeling. Being able to witness the way in which Japanese people discuss such controversial issues is invaluable."

Whilst students have welcomed this new element to their course, Miyuki is not complacent, "we are planning to continue to expand the range of materials we make

available via MOLE, and are currently looking into the feasibility of introducing inquiry-based learning into the curriculum for students at other levels. Additionally, we have a pilot project running with students currently on their year abroad. They will be recording everyday sounds in Japan, which can then be used collaboratively with students back here in Sheffield."

Whilst it is still early days in the development of the laboratory, it is clear that it has already had a positive impact upon students' learning experiences. Language resources in Chinese and Korean have also been digitized and as the collection grows so it is hoped that the distance between Sheffield and East Asia will continue to be bridged.

A screenshot of the virtual language laboratory.



Welcome to Sheffield

The School of East Asian Studies was pleased to welcome Dr Harald Conrad to Sheffield in June. Harald has been appointed as a Sasakawa Lecturer in Japanese Management and Economics in the National Institute of Japanese Studies, part of the White Rose East Asia Centre created in 2006 as a joint consortium between the Universities of Sheffield and Leeds.

Harald received his PhD from the University of Cologne for his thesis on the problems and reform of the Japanese public pension system, which required him to spend three years at Keiō University in Japan conducting research. Thereafter, he remained in Japan for a total of twelve years working first as a Research Fellow and then Deputy Director at the German Institute for Japanese Studies in Tokyo, as well as

in the Faculty of Asia Pacific Studies of Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University as an Associate Professor. Harald now returns to Europe to share his expertise in the study of Japan.

His research interests and numerous publications in English, German and Japanese centre on the reform of Japan's social security systems, human resource management issues and economic aspects of demographic change. His two latest publications – *The Demographic Challenge: A Handbook about Japan and Human Resource Management in Aging Societies: Perspectives from Japan and Germany* – will be available later this year. He is now looking to expand his research to look at the challenges and opportunities for Japanese universities in the rapidly globalizing higher education market.



Postgraduate graduation day

A number of postgraduate students, both in-house and distance learning, from the School of East Asian Studies graduated at a ceremony held on 18 January 2008. The graduating students were accompanied at the ceremony by several members of their families.

In addition to the MA and MSc students, Rebecca Nadin and Yukiko Miyagi received their doctorates. Yukiko is now a Post-Doctoral Research Fellow in the School of Government and International Affairs at the University of Durham. Rebecca is currently working for the British

Council as Assistant Director for Sports and Science in the Cultural and Education Section of the British Embassy in Beijing. The School wishes all its graduates the best of luck for the future.

Dr Sarah Dauncey (third from left) with some of the successful graduates.



Note on names

Following East Asian convention, the family name precedes the given name/s in Chinese, Japanese and Korean names, unless the particular person uses the Western name order (given name followed by family name) in his/her publications and/or everyday life.

Editor's note

The views expressed in the articles are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the School and the University.

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Sheffield's first graduate in Japanese

Angela Davies, the University of Sheffield's first ever graduate in Japanese Studies, tells EastAsia@Sheffield about her interesting and varied career

I can hardly believe it is more than thirty-five years since I first heard that the University of Sheffield was offering a new course in Japanese. I was planning to study languages at university despite the fact that the only career advice was to be either a teacher or an airhostess, neither of which was very appealing. Then Professor Geoffrey Bownas, the University's first professor of Japanese Studies, visited my school and spoke to us about the launch of the University of Sheffield's new and modern approach to teaching Japanese. Encouraged by my late father, who was a far-sighted businessman, I decided to apply.



Angela working in Japan in 1987.

Very little was known about Japan in those days and I knew nothing about the language. Nevertheless, I was interviewed and shown around the then modern language laboratory with its reel-to-reel tape recorders. Although nothing could prepare me for the eccentricities of the written language, it was love at first sound!

At the end of my first year I was fortunate to visit Tokyo for a few weeks on a homestay. It was around the time of the *Bon* festival and my Japanese family took me to the festivities at the local shrine, where I visited a fortune-teller. I was told that my life would be very exciting as I had chosen to learn Japanese. What an accurate prediction!

My career across the years has included working as a personal assistant to the managing director of the London branch of a leading Japanese company, in addition to an extremely exciting and unconventional career in interpretation and translation. I have worked on building sites, production lines, in sewers and even on dairy farms. I also worked for the then Japanese Ministry of Construction when it sponsored a Japanese garden exhibited at the International Garden Festival in Liverpool in 1984, which led to my continued employment by the ministry on a number of other projects. Then I went out to Japan in 1987 as the first Coordinator for International Relations (CIR) on the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme. I went back to Osaka in 1990 to work for the Japanese government at their International Flower and Greenery Expo.

In 1999 I was awarded the International Satō Prize for my work in coordinating and interpreting for

the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew when they needed to restore their replica of the Gateway of the Imperial Messenger and create a surrounding Japanese landscape. In 2004 I was made an honorary "ambassador" to Kagawa Prefecture where I had worked as a CIR. Then last year I received the Japanese Ambassador's award for my work in promoting cultural exchanges between Japan and the UK.

I continue to coordinate joint Anglo-Japanese projects and am currently chair of the Japan Society North West. In July 2008 we will be holding a Japan Day to which everyone is welcome. There will be a range of exhibits, competitions, demonstrations and interesting people. To find out more please visit our website:

<http://www.jsnw.org.uk>

Angela and Prince Charles at the prize-winning Japanese garden at the Chelsea Flower Show in 2001 (image courtesy of the Press Office of the Prince of Wales).





Beijing 2008
Olympic rings logo

The Olympics come to China

All eyes will be on the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games as it is held in China for the first time. Staff and students in SEAS look ahead to this summer's spectacle.



Dr Jeremy Taylor
Lecturer in Chinese Studies

As a UK-based lecturer in Chinese Studies who grew up in Sydney (and who recently returned from a short trip to Atlanta), I have a certain interest in the Olympics and definitely think that Beijing 2008 will be unlike any of the previous Games. I was living in Australia in the lead up to the Sydney Olympics, where there was less focus on the idea of bringing Australia onto "the world stage" via the Games and more public interest in the sporting side of the event. What struck me during a trip I made to Beijing last year was the extent to which the Olympics are seen as much more than a sporting event. My sense is that the Olympics are viewed primarily in terms of national pride in Beijing.

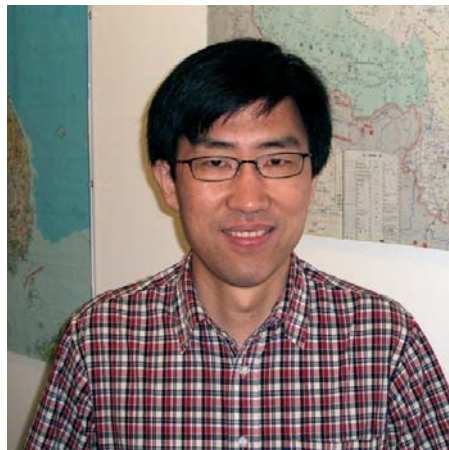
Chinese government is taking a tougher stance on factories that violate anti-pollution laws and heads of China's environmental groups have brought their expertise to the Olympic Committee to help make the Games "greener." Individuals are also increasingly aware of saving energy on a day-to-day basis. These are signs that environmental awareness is becoming firmly established in many sectors of society. Admittedly, these changes are only part of the answer to China's environmental problems but they are a positive start. Beijing 2008 may even inspire a greater effort to clean up London for 2012.

I also hope that the Olympics will continue to encourage China's integration into the international community and accelerate political reform within China. Putting the politics to one side, I am looking forward to sitting glued to my television watching this feast of sporting achievement.



Dr Zhang Mei
Lecturer in Chinese Studies

The 2008 Beijing Olympics is special and occupies a place in the heart of every Chinese citizen. From regenerating a historic area to banning a film, if it is in the name of, or for the sake of, the Beijing Olympics, Chinese people will understand. At the same time the Olympics have turned the world's attention to China in a complicated way. In any case, as a Beijinger, I believe that the 2008 Beijing Olympics will act as a bridge to connect China and the world, bringing not only the sports of the Olympics but also cultural understanding. Welcome to Beijing!



Dr Zhang Zhong
Academic Fellow

The run-up to this summer's Olympic Games in Beijing has attracted a lot of media attention. I can understand why many people went on the streets to demonstrate and am myself unhappy with the current situation in China. However,

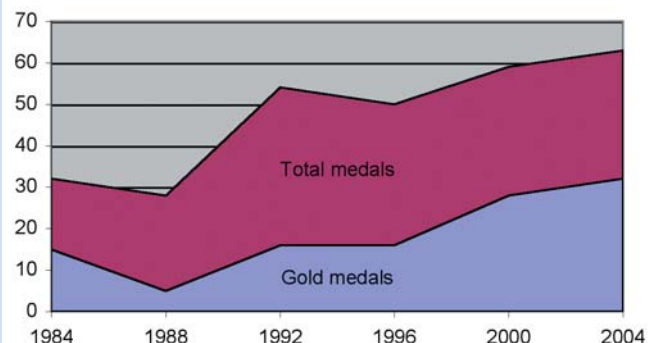


Mark McLeister
MSc in Chinese Business and International Relations

The Olympic Games have inspired developments in several key areas, not least of which is the environment. The

China first participated in the Olympics Games of 1984 and since then has increased its medal tally in fits and starts. Expectations are understandably high that Chinese athletes will make a considerable breakthrough this summer.

China's medal tally since 1984





Truth and reconciliation

Dr Sung-soo Kim was awarded a PhD from the University of Sheffield in 1998. He now works as Head of the International Cooperation Team of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Republic of Korea.

Korean history in the twentieth century witnessed Japanese colonialism, the division of the country between North and South, civil war and military dictatorship. Throughout this troubled century many civilians experienced oppression and abuses of their human rights, but in many ways the families of these victims continued to suffer.

For example, during the Korean War (1950-3), more than 200,000 innocent South Korean civilians were massacred by their own police, military, anti-communist groups and even US soldiers. Yet the bereaved families, guilty by association, continued to be victimized. They were not allowed to get decent jobs or work in the public sector, police tailed them everywhere and their children were bullied at school. Although these victims are now quite old, memories of these human rights abuses are still fresh.

During periods of authoritarian rule, there were also several human rights abuses in the name of national security. People were dragged away by the police and tortured or murdered. Dissidents, demonstrators and many innocent people simply disappeared and those who survived were either enlisted into the army or were permanently disabled as a result of torture. It was only after Korea democratized in the late 1990s that it began to address this past.

In the early 2000s civil society groups began a nationwide campaign to establish a body to deal with these issues. Working alongside these human rights activists and the bereaved families, liberal lawmakers proposed a bill to establish the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Republic of Korea (TRCK) to expose this hidden history and abuses of power from the time

Korea was colonized by the Japanese up to the military dictatorship of the late 1980s.

After considerable debate the bill became law in May 2005 and the TRCK was launched on 1 December 2005. The TRCK is run by fifteen commissioners who are appointed by the president, the parliament and the Supreme Court. It is an independent governmental body, and the scope of its investigations covers the following five areas: the anti-Japanese movement during the colonial period and the history of the Korean diaspora; the massacre of civilians after 1945; human rights abuses by the state; incidents of dubious conviction and suspicious death; and reinvestigation of the above categories and other incidents as determined by the Commission.

I work as the Head of the International Cooperation Team and my duties include publicizing our activities through our website and newsletter, organizing international conferences on relevant historical issues and building connections with similar organizations across the globe.

Since the South Korean government has never dealt with these kind of issues before, the TRCK has been charged with addressing some of the most sensitive and painful events in twentieth-century Korean history. Our truth-finding activities not only assist in resolving the grievances of individual victims, they also function to prevent similar incidents reoccurring. However painful it may be, knowing the truth can help us build a better society in the future. If you are interested in finding out more about our activities, then please visit:

<http://www.jinsil.go.kr/english>



Members of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on a visit to Cambodia (Dr Sung-soo Kim is on the far left).

Japanese speech contest



Joseph gives his speech

On 2 February, twelve finalists from eight UK universities gathered at Imperial College in the University of London for the final round of the Third Japanese Speech Contest for University Students. This annual event, organized by the Japan Foundation in conjunction with the British Association for Teaching Japanese as a Foreign Language, sees students undergo a gruelling selection process. Eventually six successful candidates are chosen to go the final, in which they make a ten-minute speech and field questions in front of an audience of 100 academics, business leaders, students, family members and friends.

Representing the University of Sheffield was Joseph Tame, a final-year Japanese Studies student. With 2008 marking the tenth anniversary of Japan's Non-Profit Organization Law, Joseph chose to speak about the increasingly important role of non-governmental organizations in the development of Japan's civil society. He illustrated his talk with examples taken from his time spent working with Oxfam Japan whilst on his year abroad at Rikkyō University from 2006-7.

Competition for the first prize of a return flight to Japan, £1,000 and a Japan Rail Pass was stiff and the judges commented on how surprised they were by the high quality of all the speeches. Although he didn't win, Joseph felt that "all the hard work paid off and getting to the final was a dream come true. When I first came to Sheffield in 2004, I would never have believed that I could have done something like that. Many thanks to all my tutors!"

"Chinese Bridge" competition 2008

The seventh annual "Chinese Bridge" speech competition was held on 15 March at the London School of Economics. The competition provides an opportunity for students of the Chinese language to showcase their linguistic talent on a national level. The first two winners are automatically selected to participate in this summer's world "Chinese Bridge" competition in Beijing.

As reported in previous editions of *EastAsia@Sheffield*, students from SEAS have a good track record in the competition and this year Alex Barton and Stefan Innerhofer, two third-year Chinese Studies students tied for third place.

The competition is divided into four sections: a personal introduction, a speech on a self-selected topic, a quiz on Chinese culture and a performance related to China.

Alex and Stefan both spoke about their experiences during their year abroad,

the cultural differences they encountered and also the confusing and sometimes embarrassing situations these brought about. For his performance, Alex selected a traditional Chinese story-telling method called *kuaiban* that involves using two flat pieces of bamboo that produce a sharp clacking sound when clapped together. Stefan performed a *dankou xiangsheng*, which is a traditional Chinese comedic performance in the form of a monologue.

Although Alex and Stefan were just shy of an opportunity to return to China for the next round of the competition, they found it to be a valuable and challenging experience.



Stefan (left) and Alex.

Teaching in Europe

As part of an initiative to expand links with European partners, staff from the School of East Asian Studies have been teaching at other European universities. Dr Peter Matanle (left) visited Germany, whilst Dr Hyangjin Lee (right) went to Spain.



“I was lucky enough to visit the Autonomous University of Madrid, one of the most prestigious universities in Europe, during spring in order to give a series of seminars on Korean culture and cinema. I am interested in the different responses amongst European countries to Asian popular culture and this teaching opportunity in Madrid was a good chance to understand Spanish students' thoughts, perceptions and cultural awareness.

My specific interest in the Spanish reception of Korean cinema goes back to 2004 when the Las Palmas de Gran Canaria International Film Festival presented a retrospective season of Korean films and published the first Spanish book on Korean cinema; I was invited to write the preface. More recently my interests have expanded to include the emerging popularity of Korean TV dramas amongst the Spanish-speaking populations in the world.

The students and staff who attended my seminars explained how they are sympathetic to the family ordeals, social turmoil and political corruption depicted in many Korean films. They also appreciated the humour and comedy that exists in some extremely tense scenes. They related a lot of what they saw in Korean films to Spain under Franco and the importance of the family in Spanish life.

Because my interests focus on the transnational flow of culture and identity issues, not only was my teaching in Madrid a stimulating experience that opened up many new avenues for my research and teaching, it was also a great opportunity to understand more about Spain's vibrant culture.”



“Named after the Dutch humanist Erasmus (1466-1536), and founded more than twenty years ago, this programme enables more than 150,000 citizens of the European Union to study or teach in another member country every year. Its purpose is to help build a European identity and society amongst the peoples of our continent by increasing academic mobility.

I travelled to Munich in May to teach for two weeks at Ludwig Maximilians University, one of Germany's leading higher education institutions. In addition to teaching an intensive course on “Work and Society in Japan” to a group of higher level students approaching the end of their degree, I also met with academics and learned about the university and the German system of higher education.

This was a good chance for me to learn about how Japan is understood elsewhere in Europe, and with over twenty-five centres of Japanese Studies, Germany is one of the leaders in the field. The students in Munich impressed me with their relaxed but serious approach to their studies. Their participation in class was intelligent and thoughtful, and their oral presentations in English were excellent. On the last day of class we visited a Munich beer garden and I learned about the students' experiences of working and studying in Japan.

I know that I will personally treasure this experience but I also now appreciate even more how UK universities can benefit from closer cooperation with other European institutions, academics and students.”

Delving into the arc

The University of Sheffield's Library proudly contains a wealth of archival material to East Asia. Jacky Hodgson, Head of Special Collections, introduces some of the



An image of Peking from the Knoop collection.

The Knoop Far Eastern photographic collection

Douglas Knoop was born in 1883 and became one of the first lecturers in the newly established Department of Economics in the University of Sheffield in 1909. He remained in Sheffield until his retirement in 1948.

During the academic year 1913-14, Knoop was elected to the Alfred Kahn Travelling Fellowship and undertook a world tour. This collection captures his travels in East Asia and totals 1,400 images. It includes slides, photographs, negatives and postcards in both colour and black and white. The subject matter of the images covers scenes of nature and everyday urban life, in addition to major events, such as earthquakes, across the region including Singapore, the Dutch East Indies, China, Korea, Japan and the Russian Far East.

The Department of Geography donated the collection to the Library in 1993 and immediately work began on establishing its origins. Dr Marjorie Dryburgh, Lecturer in the School of East Asian Studies, believes that "this is a very rich collection. It shows East Asia at a time of very rapid change and also reveals how travellers build a visual record of a journey through their own photographs and commercial images such as postcards."

The Empson documents

Sir William Empson was born in Yorkshire in 1906 and educated at Cambridge University. He first ventured to East Asia when he was appointed Professor of English Literature at Tokyo University of Literature and Sciences from 1931 to 1934. Thereafter he was appointed Professor of English at Peking University in 1937 – a tumultuous time as the university was forced by the Japanese invasion to relocate from Peking to Kunming.

During the Second World War he returned to the UK and worked for the BBC monitoring department with responsibility for China. It was here that he met his future wife Hetta, a South African artist and political activist. After the war, they returned to China together with their family and Empson was appointed Professor in Western Languages at the National University in Peking. During this time Hetta worked as a journalist for *The Observer* as well as a sculptor. The family remained in Peking until the pressures of the Korean War forced them to return to the UK in 1952. Empson continued his academic career and was appointed Professor of English Literature at the University of Sheffield. He died in 1984 and Hetta in 1996.

The collection of documents includes correspondence between William and Hetta in addition to letters jointly authored by the two of them that describe their experiences in China during the Communist Revolution.



The Goddard papers

Born in 1887 in Australia, Dr William G. Goddard was a missionary, radio broadcaster and scholar who worked as an unofficial spokesperson for Chiang Kai-shek and his Nationalist Chinese government on Taiwan during the 1950s and 1960s. Whilst Goddard's books are relatively well known to students of modern Taiwanese history, less is understood about his career beyond writing.

The Library at the University of Sheffield was honoured to accept a collection of Goddard's papers in 2007 including manuscripts of unpublished books, letters, photographs, medals and honours, lectures, cuttings and Goddard's PhD thesis. These were kindly donated by Goddard's family in New Zealand.

Dr Jeremy Taylor, Lecturer in Chinese Studies in the School of East Asian Studies, is currently conducting research on Goddard's career and helped in securing the collection for the University. He believes that "Goddard's papers shed light not only on the work of a fascinating individual, but also on a much overlooked period in the political history of Taiwan and the wider Chinese-speaking world. There is an increasing academic interest in trying to understand what motivated certain Western intellectuals to side with different Chinese governments throughout the twentieth century, and Goddard's story is an important part of this."

The collection includes not only many examples of Goddard's scholarly work, but also his graduation robe and a Chinese gown inherited by him but believed to have originally belonged to a member of the Imperial Chinese government.

The Townsend papers

Peter Townsend, born in 1919, became one of the UK's leading Sinologists and friend of William Empson (see above). He first went to China in 1941 to assist in the distribution of medical supplies but for most of the 1940s he lived and worked in the impoverished Chinese industrial cooperatives, eventually becoming fluent in the Chinese language and its dialects. At the same time, he came to know the leaders of the Chinese Revolution such as Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai.

With the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, Townsend returned to the UK with his wife and began editing the magazine *China Monthly* and published a book on the revolution entitled *China Phoenix* (1955). Thereafter he became equally known as a leading light in the UK arts world. He died in 2006. The collection of papers at the University of Sheffield includes correspondence, typescript articles and photographs.

The Winnington papers

Alan Winnington was born in 1910 and worked for the Communist Party of Great Britain and its newspaper *The Daily Worker*. He first travelled to China in 1948, on Party instructions, and accompanied the People's Liberation Army on its march to Peking. In 1950 he moved to Korea to report on the war then taking place there and also on its aftermath.

During that conflict Winnington alleged that the Allied forces had used biological warfare against the Communists. In turn, he was accused of having participated in the interrogation of British prisoners of war and attempting to convert them to Communism and consequently was branded a traitor in the British Parliament. As a result, his passport was not renewed until 1968. After leaving East Asia he moved to East Berlin where he continued with his journalism and other writings until his death in 1983.

In addition to his reportage, Winnington produced pamphlets including *I Saw the Truth in Korea* (1950), travel and anthropological research, detective stories, and an autobiography, soon to be reissued, entitled *Breakfast with Mao* (1980).

The papers kept at the University of Sheffield cover much of Winnington's life in East Asia as well as in East Germany and have been used by Professor Colin Holmes of the History Department in his forthcoming authorized biography.

Some of the items in this collection might be subject to restricted access.



Some of these archives and special collections have yet to be catalogued but anyone interested in learning more about them should in the first instance contact Ms Jacky Hodgson at j.d.hodgson@sheffield.ac.uk

Brain training and me

Mark Boyle (MA in Advanced Japanese Studies, 2003-4) has been helping us to train our brains.

Dr Ryūta Kawashima is probably the world's most famous neuroscientist, best known as a cheerful disembodied head bobbing on the screen of Nintendo's DS handheld games console. The man behind the global *Brain Training* craze, Dr Kawashima claims that by regularly doing puzzles that test your verbal dexterity, arithmetic skills and memory, you can shave years off your "brain age" and get a younger brain.

However, some members of the scientific community have questioned whether these puzzles have any real effect on cognitive abilities and whether "brain age" is a meaningful concept. In response, Nintendo stress that this is first and foremost a game and cannot guarantee that it will have a beneficial effect on users' brains. In any case, doubts about the software's efficacy have not prevented it from becoming a best-selling sensation; the two *Brain Training* titles had sold eight million copies in Europe by the start of this year.

I worked on the European localization of *More Brain Training*, the sequel to the original *Brain Training* title. Adapting the software for the European market meant being involved in many aspects of its development. In addition to translation, the more Japan-specific mini-games, such as the *haiku* feature, needed to be completely reworked, and handwriting and voice recognition had to be reworked for the European market. I even lent my vocal talents by intoning a number of everyday words in one of the mini-games.

Playing a small part in a cultural phenomenon that has gone far beyond the traditional gaming world has been rewarding. It's certainly satisfying to spot people engrossed in the game and visibly enjoying the

fruits of your labours. At the same time, it was also salutary to have the shortcomings of the game's localization revealed on the BBC's *Watchdog* programme. It was claimed that Nintendo had taken insufficient care with voice recognition for northern accents as opposed to "posh" southern ones, something that Nintendo has promised to improve in future.

Whether Dr Kawashima plans to work on further titles is unclear at present. He has admirably turned down the chance to become a millionaire many times over by refusing royalties and instead has used all of the profits from the



series to build a number of new laboratories for neurological research. Even if he decides not to remain involved in video games, he has certainly played a positive role in changing public perceptions of them.

Japan Day 2008

Organized and run by the University's own Japan Society, Japan Day 2008 took place on 23 May and once again gave people the opportunity to experience Japanese culture at first hand. Events included live dance and music performances, a fashion show and the opportunity to try Japanese calligraphy, *origami* and *kimono*.

Students perform a Japanese dance known as sōran bushi (image courtesy of Joseph Tame).





On the road and on the run in outlaw China

Alison Watts was awarded an MA in Advanced Japanese Studies by distance learning in January 2003. Since graduation she has put her language skills to use by translating Aya Goda's book **Tao: On the Road and on the Run in Outlaw China** from Japanese to English.

Tao captured my imagination before I'd even read it. One day in the hairdressers I happened to pick up a magazine and read an interview with the author, Aya Goda. Her story struck a chord with me so I tracked down a copy of the book.

It was compelling. Goda recounted the true story of how she had met the larger-than-life Tibet-based Chinese artist, Cao Yong, in Kashgar. She went on to help him escape from China after a daring exhibition in Beijing landed him in trouble with the authorities. For eight months they criss-crossed China on a paperchase for the documentation that would enable Cao to leave the country legally. The book is also partially a biography of Cao's early life. I liked all the different angles it contained – a child's view of the Cultural Revolution, a Han perspective on Tibet and a Japanese perspective on China.

The year was 1989 and martial law had been imposed in Tibet to suppress uprisings that marked the anniversary of the Dalai Lama's departure. This complicated the situation for Cao and Goda. In addition, during their journey the Tiananmen Square protests escalated and ended tragically. Tiananmen is part of history now, and the situation in Tibet still unresolved. This translation may have come out long after the events described in the book took place, but it is still a relevant reminder of the same tensions that exist beneath China's recent modernization.

Tao had won the Kodansha Non-fiction Prize so I thought someone was bound to translate it before long, but not me as I was too busy with childcare and study. Over the years I checked the Internet occasionally and found an interview with Goda saying that the English version was due out soon. Meanwhile, I got on with my MA studies and chose a chapter from *Tao* for my last translation task.

Eventually I resumed work as a freelance translator but I hadn't forgotten about *Tao* and was still waiting for the English translation. So I rang up the publisher to get the details, only to discover there was none. That was when I decided to do it. As I had no idea how to get a translation published, I simply polished up the chapter I'd already done and contacted the author through her website. Coincidentally, she was looking for a translator and requested more sample chapters before eventually asking

me to do the job and to find a publisher. When I realized how difficult a task that was, I contacted an agency. They knew the book and immediately agreed to take it on. Once a publisher was found and the contract signed, I got down to work.

I was conscious of an enormous responsibility. These were living people whose story I was rendering into English, and the words I chose would influence the English-speaking world's perception of them. So, the fact that critics are now taking *Tao* seriously as a book that makes a genuine contribution to the genre of travel writing on China and Tibet is deeply satisfying.

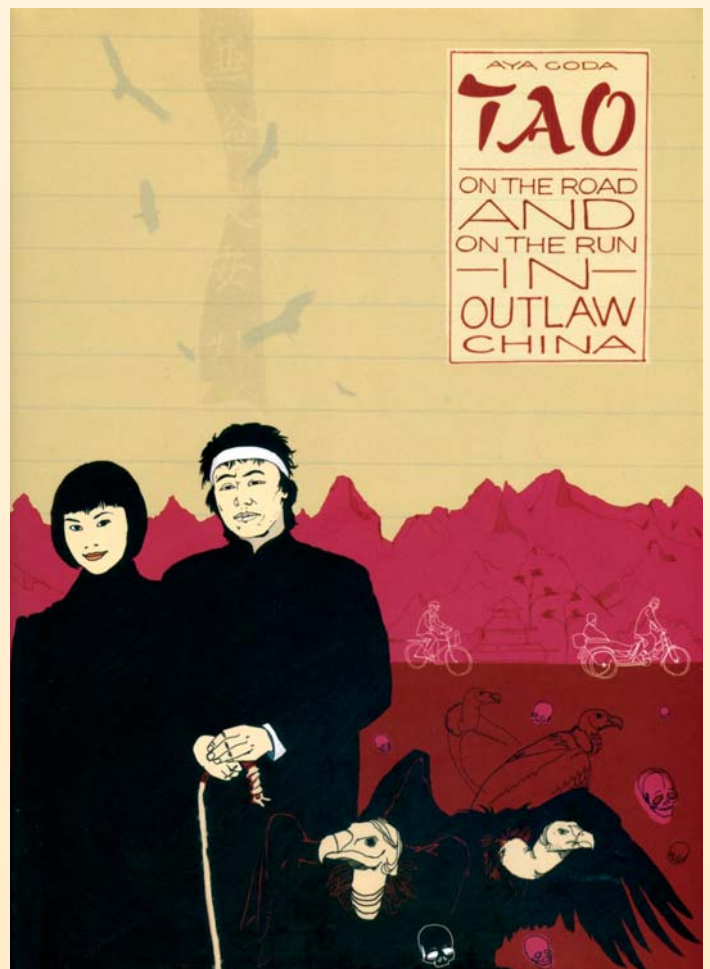


Image courtesy of Portobello Books.

Conferences and workshops

Over recent months academics from across the world have come to the University of Sheffield to attend a range of international conferences, workshops and symposia on both China and Japan.

This summer Japan will host the meeting of the Group of Eight (G8) leaders. In order to explore the participation of Japan and the UK in this central mechanism of global governance, a two-day workshop took place at the University of Sheffield from 29 February to 1 March under the aegis of the White Rose East Asia Centre and with the support of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, British Academy, Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation, GB Sasakawa Foundation and Japan Foundation. Academics, government officials and civil society activists from Japan and the UK discussed a range of issues – reform of the G8, the participation of civil society, Africa and climate change – from the perspectives of both countries.

Japanese political and diplomatic history at the University of Tokyo, presented the second White Rose Distinguished lecture. In his lecture, which was attended by a large audience of staff, students and other interested parties, Professor Kitaoka offered fascinating insights into the role of Japan in East Asian security cooperation. The event was held in cooperation with the Japan Embassy and sponsored by the Embassy, the Japan Foundation, the Chūbu Electric Power Company and the White Rose East Asia Centre.



Takaoka Masato, Minister for Economic Affairs in the Embassy of Japan, speaks on Japan and the G8's contribution to aid and development in Africa.



Professor Kitaoka Shinichi alongside Professor Rosemary Foot of Oxford University.

The same month, a range of leading and emerging scholars were invited to a workshop and symposium to answer the question of how boundaries have been established and negotiated in postwar Japan. The sessions dealt with boundaries at the international, regional, national, local and societal level, with scholars from Japan, North America, South Korea as well as the UK presenting their research from multidisciplinary perspectives. The event was sponsored by the Toshiba International Foundation, the Chūbu Electric Power Company and the White Rose East Asia Centre. A book of the revised papers is planned for the future.

The focus shifted to China when scholars from Europe, East Asia and North America gathered in Sheffield to discuss the practices of life writing. Participants included Professor Wu Peiyi, author of the first full-length study in autobiography in China, and Margaretta Jolly, editor of the *Encyclopedia of Life Writing*. Presentations reflected China's rich and diverse traditions of self-representation by examining seventeenth-century dream records and epitaphs, political diaries and autobiographical writing, and the websites and blogs of novelists and disability activists. The workshop was generously supported by the British Academy, the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange and the White Rose East Asia Centre.

Some of these lectures and presentations will be available as podcasts on the webpages of the White Rose East Asia Centre: <http://www.wreac.org>

Long-term observer of the G8 summits, Sir Nicholas Bayne KCMG, welcomed the workshop believing that "the intellectual content was very high, but always accessible. I learnt a lot of new things and had many suspicions confirmed, whilst other beliefs were exploded."

Later in March, one of Japan's former ambassadors to the United Nations, Professor Kitaoka Shinichi, Professor of

Dr Thomas McAuley introduces students to the distance learning programme.



New postgraduate degrees

SEAS is expanding the range of choice available to postgraduate students and the depth to which they study by launching new versions of its successful distance learning MA in Advanced Japanese Studies and cooperating with the Management School in the provision of a new degree, the MSc in International Management.

Over the summer, the award-winning MA in Advanced Japanese Studies by distance learning will metamorphose into a series of new degrees, each with their own specialist track. October 2008 will see the launch of two versions of the MA, one specializing in Japanese to English translation and the other focusing on gender, diversity and citizenship. These will be followed in April 2009 by two more new specialist tracks, namely literature, in addition to economy and society.

This change will allow students to focus on the aspect of Japan that fascinates them most. Each new degree will contain core language modules, as well as specialist, degree-specific modules which allow students to focus on their chosen specialism, such as "Theory of Japanese to English Translation" and "History of Modern Japanese Literature." The "classic" MA in Advanced Japanese Studies will remain available for those who prefer the freedom to take a broad range of topics.

The delivery of the degrees will also undergo a change. New technologies such as "Wimba Classroom" are currently being trialled and increased use of the University portal, My Online Learning Environment, will be employed to invigorate the learning experience and enhance interaction.

Dr Thomas McAuley is heading up the development of these new degrees: "For some time we have felt that we'd like to offer students the opportunity to study topics in greater depth. With these new degrees, people all over the world will be able to join our distance learning community and enjoy the benefits of

doing a demanding postgraduate programme from their own homes. The new technologies will allow us to keep in regular audio and video contact with each other, and replicate the classroom experience online."

Elsewhere within the University of Sheffield, SEAS is also currently cooperating with the Management School in the delivery of a new MSc in International Management.

Different countries have different ways of doing business and that is what "international management" in the strict sense is all about. Expanding across frontiers and becoming a multinational enterprise involves challenges and requires competences that are different from domestic business. That's also what "international business" is about.

Building on the Management School's expertise in the generic aspects of international management and business, this degree programme also focuses on the specifics of the major business regions of the world: the English-speaking world, Europe and East Asia. East Asia is recognized as the most dynamic region and the most challenging in terms of opportunities and threats.

This degree programme takes full advantage of the strengths of SEAS staff in Chinese, Japanese and Korean business as well as region-wide specialisms. Professor Andrew Tylecote, who oversees the European business element of the programme, believes that "this degree provides exactly what aspiring managers need to know in order to conduct international business successfully."

Trotting the globe

A number of graduates from the School of East Asian Studies have established careers as international officers promoting UK universities, such as Sheffield, across the world and especially in East Asia.



Hannah Lilley
(BA in Chinese Studies, 2004)

I have been working as an International Officer at the University of Sheffield for almost a year now, and can honestly say that no two days have been the same.

I am lucky enough to cover Taiwan and sub-Saharan Africa, which makes for an extremely interesting and varied workload. I spend up to three months each year overseas and this can involve anything from attending education exhibitions and one-to-one counselling sessions with prospective applicants, to giving presentations and arranging Alumni events. Of course, having studied here myself, it gives me a great excuse to talk about Sheffield!

When I am back in the office the focus is on making sure that all the applicants I've met overseas actually make it to Sheffield. There are so many hurdles for them to negotiate, such as visa applications, that it is a great feeling when September comes and they all finally arrive.

Although we generally speak to students in English, I always find an excuse to use a few words of Chinese when I'm in Taiwan. It never fails to raise a smile, albeit a polite one!

Adrian Thomas
(MA in Advanced Japanese Studies, 2003-4)

My role at Lancaster University is primarily about marketing and figuring out ways to ensure that international students keep coming to the university. Like Sheffield, and most other British universities in fact, Lancaster regards international students as making an extremely important contribution to university life, and East Asia is by far the largest source of them.

The job requires up to three months of travel around the region each year and can get pretty taxing. However, so far it has been really stimulating and the people I meet and work with are all interesting and positive people.

For me, the job provides a good balance between the UK and Asia and a career that involves travelling and marketing in Asia is pretty much where I hoped I would end up. I also make a lot of use of the knowledge of the region I acquired at Sheffield whilst learning about Japan. I love being able to get an overview of the whole region and not having to immerse myself too much in just one country.



Mark Bentley
(MSc in East Asian Business, 2003-4)

I'd wanted to work in a university as an international officer for some time and was encouraged when I heard that my friend Adrian Thomas was doing just that. I met up with him a couple of times when he visited Seoul on business and he gave me some pointers.

Soon after that Sungkyunkwan University (SKKU), Korea's oldest university and my wife's *alma mater*, advertized for an international officer. They had signed a partnership agreement with Sheffield, which had been negotiated through Professor James Grayson in SEAS, and were looking for somebody to handle the exchanges for both the incoming and outgoing students. I was successfully interviewed and last September we sent the first two exchange students to Sheffield.

It's interesting to be able to work with students and universities from all around the world and I'm learning a lot about different cultures. I'm still learning about Korean culture as well, especially the strong work and play ethic. My aim is to strengthen the partnership between Sheffield and SKKU and attract more students to the courses, Korean language programmes and new summer school here.



Two SEAS graduates – Cathy Layne (left, MA in Advanced Japanese Studies by distance learning, 2002) and Claudia Albertini (right, MA in Advanced Chinese Studies, 2004) were brought together by similar interests to work together on the publication of a new book on contemporary Chinese art, **Avatars and Antiheroes**. They tell **EastAsia@Sheffield** about their collaboration.



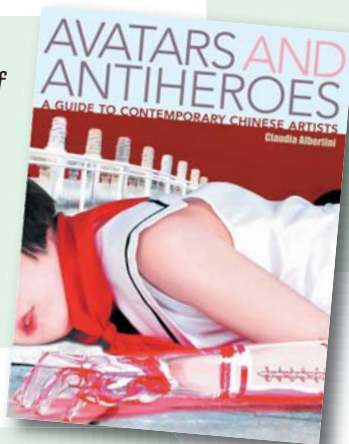
“Avatars and antiheroes”

Cathy: Claudia, I first saw your smiling face in **EastAsia@Sheffield** [Number 13]. I'd just finished producing a book on contemporary Japanese art and was looking round for a follow-up. I knew that interest in Chinese contemporary art was on the rise and when I read about your job at 798 Space, China's leading arts venue, I decided to ask if you'd like to write a book.

Claudia: Although we both had earned degrees from the University of Sheffield, we had never met so your proposal arrived out of the blue but just at the right time. I must admit that the thought of taking on a big project like this was a bit scary, but I felt ready for the challenge.

Cathy: What worried you?

Claudia: A simple lack of confidence, which I soon overcame. You explained that the book would be a resource for art lovers and also a portrait of a country in transition. I realized that this was a great chance to share my amazement at the whirlwind changes happening in this country and to meet the artists – the “avatars and antiheroes” – behind these changes.



Cathy: How did you manage to get some of the biggest names in Chinese art today to appear in the book?

Claudia: First, I emailed them. Answers were slow in coming so I then phoned them and everyone I spoke to was interested in the project. Rather than a formal interview, I simply chatted to them about art in general and the artists were happy to express their ideas. Now, let me ask you a question. We met through the pages of **EastAsia@Sheffield** so was it difficult dealing with a writer only via email and the phone?

Cathy: Of all the books I've produced, this was the smoothest. You got the artists to cooperate and all the deadlines were met. It is amazing that two people who have never met could make a book together.

Claudia: Well, we did it and **Avatars and Antiheroes** is now published. I hope one day you and I will meet and that you will get the chance to know some of these avatars and antiheroes.

Publishing undergraduate research

Congratulations to Harriet Gray (BA in Japanese Studies, 2007) who has just published her first article in the online journal, *Reinvention: A Journal of Undergraduate Research*. This journal is produced biannually by the Reinvention Centre for Undergraduate Research, which is a collaborative Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning based at the University of Warwick and Oxford Brookes University. It is available at: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/sociology/research/cetl/ejournal>

The title of the article is “Rape and Sexual Assault in Japan: Potential Gender Bias in Pre-Trial Procedures” and is based on Harriet's final-year dissertation, which was awarded a first-class mark. Harriet is currently studying for a postgraduate degree at the University of London.



Jenny Leech (second from right) with the SEAS secretarial team (image courtesy of Joseph Tame).

Farewell to SEAS

Both staff and students were saddened to say goodbye to Jenny Leech, who retired at the end of April. Jenny first came to work as part of the secretarial team in the SEAS main office in 1996 and since then has been a friendly face in the main office dispensing support and advice to generations of SEAS students. Although she will be sorely missed, everybody in SEAS wishes Jenny the happiest of retirements.

East Asian Studies degrees

The School of East Asian Studies offers a wide range of single and dual honours degrees, as well as postgraduate taught and research degrees. For further information, contact seas@sheffield.ac.uk, or see the School's webpages: <http://www.shef.ac.uk/seas>

BA degrees

Most degrees involve four years of study. Those marked with an asterisk take three years.

Single honours

Chinese Studies
Japanese Studies
Korean Studies
East Asian Studies*

Dual honours

Chinese Studies and/History, Management, Music
Chinese Studies with/French, German, Japanese, Russian, Spanish
Japanese Studies and/History, Linguistics, Management, Politics, Sociology
Japanese Studies with/German, Russian, Spanish
French/Germanic/Hispanic/Russian Studies with Japanese
Korean Studies and/Linguistics, Management, Music
Korean Studies with Japanese
East Asian Studies and/Management, Music, Russian Studies*
International Politics and East Asian Studies*

Postgraduate taught degrees

In-house

MA/Diploma/Certificate in Chinese Studies
MSc/Diploma/Certificate in Chinese Business and International Relations
MSc/Diploma/Certificate in Chinese Language, Business and International Relations
MA/Diploma/Certificate in Japanese Studies
MA/Diploma/Certificate in Advanced Japanese Studies
MA/Diploma/Certificate in Advanced Japanese Studies (Research Methods)
MA/Diploma/Certificate in Modern Korean Studies
MSc/Diploma/Certificate in East Asian Political Economy
MSc/Diploma/Certificate in East Asian Business

Distance learning

MA/Diploma in Japanese Language and Society
MA in Advanced Japanese Studies
MA in Advanced Japanese Studies (Japanese to English Translation)
MA in Advanced Japanese Studies (Gender, Diversity and Citizenship)
MSc in Chinese Business and International Relations
MSc/Diploma in Chinese Language, Business and International Relations

Postgraduate research degrees

PhD supervision is available in a wide range of subject areas on China, Japan, Korea and intra-regional studies. In addition, a number of scholarships are available through the White Rose East Asia Centre.

Chinese earthquake appeal

The University of Sheffield was deeply saddened to hear of the serious earthquake that recently hit China killing more than 60,000 and leaving over five million people homeless. Our condolences go to all those affected by this tragic event.

In response, students from the Chinese Society and the Chinese Students and Scholars Association, supported by other students, the Union of Students and academic departments, raised over £10,000 in donations in a few days. The money raised will support the vital emergency relief work carried out by the British Red Cross.

The Red Cross China Earthquake Appeal has communicated its thanks "to all University of Sheffield staff and students connected with the fantastic fundraising effort. To mobilize such a strong team of enthusiastic volunteers in such a short space of time was a brilliant achievement but to raise so much money was outstanding!"

Anyone wishing to donate to the Chinese Earthquake Appeal can do so online at: <http://www.redcross.org.uk/donatesection.asp?pid=77029>

Sheffield students raising money for the British Red Cross.



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