Major Grants for Chinese and Korean Studies

The School of East Asian Studies has received two large government grants for the further development of Chinese and Korean Studies.

A major expansion of the Centre for Chinese Studies is under way, following the receipt of a HEFCE (Higher Education Funding Council for England) grant of £150,000 a year for the next five years. The HEFCE initiative is designed to increase the number of China specialists in the United Kingdom in response to China’s growing importance in the international economic and political arena. Sheffield is one of five universities to receive the maximum grant available under the programme.

The Centre’s initiatives include the provision of a conversion MSc degree in Chinese Business/International Relations for graduates in the social sciences and an MA degree in Advanced Chinese Studies. Following the appointment of two professors in Chinese Studies, Tim Wright and Beverley Hooper, a number of new staff have been appointed with HEFCE funding to provide both Chinese language and social sciences training for students. (See page 2 for profiles of new staff members.)

The Centre for Korean Studies will receive Minority Subject funding totalling more than £320,000 over a five-year period to support its teaching of Korean language and studies. The funding is being used for a further lectureship in Korean Studies, to extend the teaching of modern and contemporary Korean literature, and to modernise language-teaching facilities. Funds have already been used to purchase a satellite dish and video equipment to receive and record Korean language TV broadcasts, as well as sophisticated computing equipment for the transmission of Korean vernacular messages and information.

HEFCE’s special funding for Chinese and Korean Studies builds on earlier grants received by Sheffield for the development of Japanese Studies, both as a result of the Parker Report and from the Department of Trade and Industry.
New staff in Chinese Studies

The expansion of Chinese Studies at Sheffield has been reflected in the arrival of five new staff members during 2000: two professors, one lecturer and two teaching fellows.

Tim Wright has been appointed to a Professorship in Chinese Studies and is also the new Chair of the School of East Asian Studies. A specialist on China’s modern economic history and political economy, Professor Wright was previously at Murdoch University in Australia and is a former President of the Chinese Studies Association of Australia.

Beverley Hooper, previously Professor of Asian Studies at the University of Western Australia, has been appointed to a Professorship in Chinese Studies. Professor Hooper is a specialist on contemporary Chinese society, particularly consumerism, youth and gender issues. She is a former President of the Asian Studies Association of Australia.

Chris Bramall has been appointed to a Lectureship in Chinese Studies. An economist specialising on contemporary China, Dr Bramall was formerly at Cambridge. (For details of Dr Bramall’s latest book, Sources of Chinese Economic Growth 1978-1996, see p.5.)

Hu Xiaoling has been appointed as a teaching fellow and currently coordinates the first year Chinese language modules. Dr Hu has a PhD in Chinese linguistics from Durham and her research interests include syntactic theory, syntactic typology, historical linguistics, Chinese linguistics, and Chinese grammar.

Lili Chen, who recently completed a PhD dissertation at Durham, is a new teaching fellow in the Chinese language programme. Her research interests include written discourse analysis, the Chinese media, functional grammar and Chinese grammar.

The new staff members have joined Dr Sarah Dauncey, coordinator of the Chinese language programme, historian Dr Marjorie Dryburgh, and Dr Robert Taylor who researches and teaches on Chinese business and politics.

Prize-winning graduates

Joanna Hwang and Giuseppe Tribuno were the major prize-winners at this year’s East Asian Studies graduation ceremony.

Joanna was the inaugural recipient of the School of East Asian Studies Prize, awarded to the best graduate overall in Asian Studies, Chinese Studies and Korean Studies, for her first class honours degree in Korean Studies. Giuseppe, who gained first class honours in Japanese Studies, was awarded the Margaret Daniels Prize for the best graduate in Japanese Studies.

Joanna and Giuseppe’s performances were all the more impressive because neither is a ‘native’ speaker of English. Joanna came to Sheffield from Finland and Giuseppe from Italy.
Dr Judith Cherry of the Centre for Korean Studies has been awarded a two-year Special Research Fellowship by the Leverhulme Trust, to support her research on the impact of the 1997 financial crisis on Korean foreign direct investment.

This success followed two major achievements in 1999, when Dr Cherry was awarded the MBE in recognition of her contribution to the British Government’s ‘Export to Korea’ initiative, and also received her PhD from the University of Sheffield. Her forthcoming book, *Korean Multinationals in Europe*, which examines Korean investment in Europe prior to the financial crisis, is being published by Curzon Press.

Dr Cherry’s career has spanned academic life, business and government service. After teaching Korean language, history and politics at the University of Sheffield from 1980 to 1987, she joined investment bankers Salomon Brothers International, working in their Tokyo and Seoul offices as Senior Analyst for the Korean market.

In 1990, Dr Cherry returned to Sheffield and set up her own consultancy business, Korea Business Services, advising European businessmen on the cultural aspects of doing business with the Koreans. This work led to her appointment to a number of government committees, including the role of Chairman of the Korea Trade Action Committee and Vice-Chairman of the Asia-Pacific Advisory Group.

Since returning to the School of East Asian Studies in 1995, Dr Cherry has taught Korean language and lectured on Korean and East Asian business and management, completed her PhD with the financial assistance of the KPMG Research Fellowship, and served as the School’s Marketing Officer.

An outline of Judith Cherry’s Leverhulme project is featured on page 11.
**MSc in Chinese Business/International Relations**

This newly-launched MSc gives graduates in the social sciences, particularly in business, economics, politics or international relations, the opportunity to acquire the skills and understanding to embark on a China-oriented career.

Participants in the programme gain intermediate-level skills in Chinese language (with a focus on being able to function effectively in a Chinese-language environment), knowledge of the dynamics of contemporary Chinese society and culture, and a sound understanding of developments in contemporary China in their particular disciplinary area. Students choose from two streams (Chinese business and China's international relations) and may study topics including contemporary Chinese business and management, industrial planning and reform, and China's role in changing regional and global structures.

A feature of the MSc is that, following two semesters at Sheffield, students spend three months on a summer placement at Nanjing University, one of China's top-ranked universities. In Nanjing, they further develop their language skills and undertake either a project based on a placement in an appropriate company (for students looking to a business career) or a research-oriented dissertation (for students looking to an academic or research career).

The MSc was introduced ‘in-house’ this year. It will be offered in distance education mode from September 2001, building on Sheffield’s experience and reputation as a leading provider of Japanese distance education courses. For details, contact Professor Tim Wright (t.wright@sheffield.ac.uk) or tel. 44 (0) 114 2228406.

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**New book in Japan series**


Other forthcoming volumes in the series during 2001 include *Japanese Education Reform: Nakasone’s legacy* (Christopher Hood), *Japan’s International Relations: Politics, economics and security* (Glenn D. Hook, Julie Gilson, Christopher W. Hughes and Hugo Dobson), and *Contested Constitution: Documents and analysis* (Glenn D. Hook and Gavan McCormack).

Inquiries about earlier books in the series, which was introduced in 1992 by the Centre for Japanese Studies in cooperation with Routledge (part of the Taylor & Francis group), may be directed to the series editor Professor Glenn D. Hook (g.hook@sheffield.ac.uk).
The following new books, published during 2000 or currently in press, reflect the School of East Asian Studies’ three major research concentrations: political economy and development, globalization and regionalization, and East Asian identities in transition.

Chris Bramall
Sources of Chinese Economic Growth 1978-1996
(Oxford: Oxford University Press)
This analysis of the political economy of growth in China during the transition era takes issue with the growth-accounting methodologies and market-centred explanations fashionable in World Bank and IMF circles. The book contends instead that Chinese growth after 1978 was driven by a combination of state-led industrial policy and the favourable infrastructural legacies of the Maoist era. Foreign trade and investment played a part in the growth process, but were much less important than conventional wisdom allows.

Judith Cherry
Korean Multinationals in Europe
(London: Curzon)
The late 1980s and early 1990s saw a rapid increase in the levels of Korean global foreign direct investment (FDI); this escalation of FDI activity was particularly evident in Europe, where the ‘Big Three’ consumer electronics companies established extensive sales and manufacturing networks. This book examines this phenomenon, both in the context of the theoretical debate concerning ‘reverse’ or ‘upstream’ investment by newly industrialized countries, and in the context of the macroeconomic and political/diplomatic factors underlying the decision to relocate overseas.

Marjorie Dryburgh
North China and Japanese Expansion 1933-1937
(London: Curzon)
This book draws on a wide range of Chinese and Japanese sources to analyse the uncertain loyalties and complex international pressures that drove Sino-Japanese interactions in pre-war north China. It examines the shifting understandings of the north China problem in its practical, political and moral aspects, and challenges existing assumptions concerning Chinese relations with Japan and their impact on domestic politics.

James H. Grayson
Myths and Legends from Korea
(London: Curzon)
Oral folklore is one means to study the thoughts, values and lifeways of a people. Korean folklore has been under-researched and this book attempts to redress the balance. The most thorough treatment to date in the English language of ancient and modern Korean oral folklore, the book includes 191 tales freshly translated with annotations and commentary, including 16 Northeast Asian tribal and Chinese tales for comparative purposes.

Hyangjin Lee
Contemporary Korean Cinema: Identity, Culture and Politics
(Manchester: Manchester University Press)
This is the first in-depth, comprehensive study of the Korean cinema. The book examines the role of Korean film as a cultural text of contemporary Koreans in both the North and South. It focuses on the conflicting identities of a people still strongly committed to their common cultural traditions despite political division.

Thomas McAuley, ed.
Language Change in East Asia
(London: Curzon)
This book adopts a wide focus on Chinese, Japanese and Korean, in both their pre-modern and modern forms, within the specific topic area of language change. It contains sections on dialect studies, contact linguistics, socio-linguistics and syntax/phonology. It will be of interest both to linguists working in East Asian languages and to general linguists.

Yoko Sellek
Migrant Labour in Japan
(London: Palgrave)
Since the mid-1980s, Japan has become one of the major destinations for foreign migrant workers. This book explores the emergence of the social, economic and political influences exerted by foreign migrants on Japanese society in the 1990s. It explains how some of the components of sovereign power over immigration control have been reshaped under the influence of economic globalization.
The TEPCO managers have been anxious to improve their Business English skills and to equip themselves with useful background knowledge in order to proceed to the Sheffield University MBA degree. Sheffield’s Management School was chosen largely because of its Business English with Commercial Visits (Pre-MBA) course. This course provides special classes in IELTS training that are arranged in co-operation with the university’s English Language Teaching Centre. In addition, weekly visits are organised to local companies and government organisations to give participants insights into how business is conducted in Britain. Students also study the modules General Management with English and Management Cases.

For TEPCO, the most exciting part of the programme has been a series of specially arranged visits, in addition to the regular class visits to companies. Students have been keen to learn about the deregulation of the electricity industry in the UK as Britain was the first major producer of electricity to undertake such a programme. Special visits have included Drax Power Station, Sheffield Forgemasters Engineering, which is a heavy user of electricity, and Yorkshire Electricity. The Drax Power Station is the largest coal fired power station in Europe, using the latest pulsed coal burning in a bank of fluid bed furnaces. Drax has a capacity of 300 tonnes of coal per hour and is sited on a major Yorkshire coalfield with a continuous train of coal trucks feeding the boilers. During the TEPCO visit, a Drax manager gave a briefing on the corporate structure of the company and the group was given a site tour of the boilers and generating plant. Mr Zhang Baogui, the TEPCO Sales Manager on the course, commented: ‘It is the biggest power plant I have ever visited. Its tidiness and efficiency made a great impression on me... The visit was very helpful.’

Forgemasters Engineering, one of Sheffield’s most famous companies, is the world leader in the design and manufacture of offshore structural castings and forgings. The group was given a talk by the Electricity Purchasing Manager who explained the company’s complex deregulated purchasing procedure. The group were also shown around the foundry works. Mr Han Wenzuan, Deputy Chief Financial Controller of
TEPCO, said of the visit: ‘We were particularly impressed by Forgemasters’ cost control system for purchasing electricity which is a result of deregulation.’

The TEPCO visit to Yorkshire Electricity focused on the company’s Business Accounts Office in Hull. Two Yorkshire Electricity managers explained how the distribution system works under deregulation. In particular they learnt how customers might elect to use any supplier in the UK, how the supplier then ‘rents’ the local distribution network to supply the customer, and how suppliers deal with unpaid electricity bills. The group also toured Yorkshire Electricity’s offices and saw people working on the various customer support functions.

Overall, the TEPCO managers have found that their course has given them a good opportunity to improve their IELTS scores considerably and to learn about how business is conducted in the West. Of course, it has also given them time to get to know Sheffield and to sort out important accommodation issues before beginning their MBA degree.

The Business English with Commercial Visits (Pre-MBA) course is open to all students, not just to those from companies. Students with a sufficiently high level of English are able to do more Management courses. It can be taken either as a short course, or as a course to improve English examination scores and at the same time gain valuable background on management issues before going on to MBA studies. The management visits on the programme are of a general nature but special ones can be organised on request.

If you would like more information, please see www.sums.ac.uk or e-mail Mrs Barbara Lukey, Director of Short Courses for Overseas Students (b.lukey@sheffield.ac.uk, fax: +44 (0)114 222 3348)
Students enrolled for the Chinese, Japanese and Korean Studies degrees spend one year of their four-year degree studying in the relevant country. As well as having twenty or more hours of language classes a week, they have the opportunity to integrate into the local society and culture. Three students write about their recent experiences.

Out and about in Nanjing

Cat Brian

Wow! As we stepped into the commotion they call Shanghai, it was clear that neither my phrasebook nor my six months’ supply of Marmite could help me now. The year in Nanjing was going to be vital, but how would I fare?

Sitting on the bus en route to Nanjing, where I would live and study for two semesters, I was beginning to see the changes on some of my classmates’ faces. We marvelled as bicycles scrambled around like bees in a hive, while buses, taxis, pedicabs and a million different lives meandered around them. We would soon be making friends with the trendy youths decked out in the latest gear, complete with a tiny mobile phone and yapping puppy. We would be able to peer over the shoulders of the wise old men quietly clustered around chessboards deliberating their next move.

I would soon find out that instead of going fishing or climbing trees, many of the playful kids preferred their Nintendo and swapping Pokemon cards. I would also realise that young love could well be dictated by a dominant female, dragging her sulky boyfriend by the sleeve as she searched eagerly for the shoes one saw in Cosmo. And I would occasionally be irritated but nevertheless amused by the fruit-seller’s attempts at conning me out of 2 mao (0.3 p) until a lovely old lady took up the quarrel, shaming his treatment of the poor unsuspecting laowai.

As our Chinese improved, assisted by twenty-two hours of classes a week, we managed to delve deeper and lead a rich city life, visiting the local historical sites and museums, numerous parks and lakes, and travelling further afield in the holidays, as well as frequenting some fabulous restaurants and befriending people from all walks of life: from dentists and policemen to DJs and the resident washer-woman (who claimed to have the least stressful job in the country)!

We undoubtedly made the best of our year in China, and as a result have come away happy, fulfilled and with a firm grasp of the language. Of course, there's still a way to go in gaining a deeper understanding of this gargantuan country, but China taught me lessons in patience, perseverance and how important it is to keep your sense of humour at all times.
A year in Kyoto

Philip Shetler-Jones

My language year abroad at the University in Kyoto, the old capital of Japan, meant that I was surrounded by the cultural sites that many tourists pay thousands to see - only I was there for a whole year!

One of the best things about my experience was that many of the other students came from countries like China and Korea, so it was quite different from studying in Sheffield. The mix also meant that language classes were conducted completely in Japanese, and I really liked the way this brought all the different people together. My language classes took up the morning, leaving most of the afternoon free for voluntary activities and other lectures in Japanese or English.

A lot of socialising among Japanese students is done in the various clubs, and I joined a pottery class and the camera club, which had its own dark-room. It can sometimes be difficult to make friends abroad, but once you join a club in the university you are suddenly crushed under a weight of invitations and all kinds of friendly offers. Japanese students put a lot of effort into socialising, and the river running through the city was lined with groups eating and drinking in the open air all through summer.

A lot of evening socialising takes place indoors, and when you visit some of the theme bars, you begin to see why! All night karaoke and other exotic excess are going on behind many of the anonymously fronted buildings, with only a discreet sign to hint at what lies within.

After studying Japanese in Sheffield for two years, you can get by quite well in Japan, but it felt like there was something new to get used to every day: like when you need to navigate through university administration, book tickets, set up a mobile phone line, etc. These mundane tasks actually reveal so much about how Japanese society operates; the feel of day-to-day life which you can’t learn from books. The food, the music, the festivals - there is so much more to the experience than I have room for here. But it’s some thing to taste for yourself ...

Living and studying in Chinju

James Buchanan

Despite having studied Korean and various aspects of Korea's culture and history for two years prior to heading off, nothing could have prepared me for the culture shock that was in store.

This was not just a sudden shock, but more of an ongoing challenge to all preconceptions that I held, lasting the entire period of my stay in the country.

In studying Korean, as with any other Asian language, it’s vital to spend an extended period immersed in the culture to gain a valid understanding of it. In this respect I felt our course to be spot on. Our exchange program with Gyeongsang National University in the small city of Chinju meant that our keen group had every advantage when it came to living a truly Korean day-to-day existence. Unlike Seoul, Chinju only has a very small foreign community. This initially made it much more of a challenge for us than Seoul might have been but in the long term it meant that we developed a much deeper understanding of Korea.

Indeed we were the only non-Korean students, not just in the university but in the entire city! This was a bit daunting at first, but certainly meant that we socialised with Korean people from the outset. I made all sorts of friends, mainly from university and the local squash club that I joined, but also acquaintances from wherever I went. This was all made much easier in that people only had to meet us once and would remember us. Even a trip to the market afforded many an amusing conversation with interested old women who had never spoken to a foreigner before.

The hospitality and generosity of Koreans was second to none and the close friendships we made will never be lost. Chinju now occupies a special place in my life and it will always feel like a second home to me. From now on my only question is: when can I go back?

James Buchanan (left), pictured with a Korean friend and two other Sheffield students, Mari Hardwick and Martina Marek, at the Shrine to Yi Sun-sin (who fought the invasion from Japan in 1592-98) off the south coast of Korea.
The Distance Learning Centre recently launched its new Diploma/MA in Japanese Language and Society. The twenty-five enrolments in the inaugural programme include students who have already completed the Certificate in Japanese Language and Society which teaches Japanese from beginners’ level.

The new programme builds on Sheffield’s experience as a provider of Japanese distance education. In 1996 its MA in Advanced Japanese Studies by distance learning was awarded a Japan Festival Prize for innovation in education.

Approximately twenty-five students now commence the MA in Advanced Japanese Studies each year. The students (originally from the UK, other parts of Europe, the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand) have been living in Japan for anything between five and thirty years.

A small number of students spent a number of years in Japan but are now living in various parts of Europe, including Croatia! The students’ knowledge of Japanese language and society is already quite high when they enter the programme, which develops their Japanese reading and writing skills to advanced level, as well as their research skills and understanding of Japanese society.

Students in both programmes use a range of distance-learning materials (text, video, audio-cassette) specially created by SEAS staff, supplemented by on-line discussion and interaction with staff and fellow students. Each student has a personal tutor who lives in Japan or the UK. During the course of their degree studies, students also attend an initial ‘orientation weekend’, two 4-5 day residential summer schools in Sheffield or Japan (with visiting lecturers from Sheffield) and a final ‘exam weekend’.

For further information on the Japanese distance learning programmes, contact Clare Tomlinson, Distance Learning Centre, University of Sheffield. (See back page for address.) Tel: +44 (0) 114 222 8428; Fax: +44 (0) 114 222 8432; E-mail: c.tomlinson@sheffield.ac.uk

The UK-Japan Business Research Centre aims to create a forum for discussion of contemporary UK-Japanese/Asian business issues, promote greater understanding of business and management among Japanese and British business and academia, and provide a network for people interested in wider issues related to the UK and Japan/Asia.

The seminar was attended by some thirty people from the Sheffield business community and the university. It was organised by Dr Harukiyo Hasegawa, Director of the Centre for Japanese Studies, Mrs Yoshimi McLeod (Business Link Sheffield) and postgraduate student Andy Staples.
Korea—The impact of the Asian financial crisis

Judith Cherry
Centre for Korean Studies

The economic crisis that engulfed Asia in 1997 has led to major changes in economic management and corporate governance within South Korea and a dramatic restructuring of the nation’s powerful business groups, the chaebol.

As the economic crisis unfolded in 1997 and leading conglomerates struggled with massive debts and the prospect of bankruptcy, it became clear that they could expect little sympathy or assistance from the Korean government. The chaebol were now required to open up their business empires to full public scrutiny, change their traditional paternalistic style of management, and improve their financial health by reducing debts, increasing profits, and adopting more conservative investment strategies. The sluggish reaction of the top conglomerates to calls for their restructuring raised concerns that their commitment to reform was weak and would only last until the economy showed signs of recovery. Government proposals and incentives turned into warnings and threats, until the top five chaebol finally agreed to implement substantive restructuring measures in August 1999.

On 16 August 1999 the unthinkable happened: the Daewoo Group’s creditor banks announced that the debt-ridden conglomerate was to be dismantled and restructured, as Daewoo’s domestic debt reached US$50 billion — almost as large a sum as the bailout funds allocated to Korea by the IMF. The problems faced by Daewoo, rumours that Hyundai might be the next conglomerate to fail, and continuing pressure on the chaebol to streamline their business activities raised serious doubts about the future of Korean FDI.

A year later, Korea’s economic prospects remain uncertain, as do prospects for Korea’s global investment. While the rationale for establishing overseas production and sales networks remains compelling, future investments will have to be made on a more secure financial footing than in the past. Furthermore, the suspension or withdrawal of major FDI projects overseas after the 1997 crisis may give host countries and governments food for thought when considering future investment proposals from Korean multinationals.

However, provided that the current programme of reform and restructuring is carried through to a successful conclusion, the chaebol should, in the short to medium term, be able to adopt a more rational and focused approach to internationalisation, and establish a global presence as world-class, financially sound corporations.
China exchange

The latest group of Chinese scholars, sponsored under an exchange agreement between the University of Sheffield and the Chinese Ministry of Education, arrived in Sheffield in October. The ten scholars come from six different Chinese cities and include academics, university international officers, and officials from the Education Ministry in Beijing and provincial education commissions.

Since the establishment of the exchange in 1997, some forty Chinese scholars have spent a year at Sheffield, undertaking studies in the English Language Teaching Centre and the Management School. Some have spent time in academic departments including Sociology, Education, Leisure Management and Politics.

As part of the exchange, each year the second year cohort of Sheffield’s Chinese Studies students go to the University of Nanjing for a year’s intensive language study as an integral part of their four-year degree. The latest group of students arrived in Nanjing in early September.

The exchange has been carried out with the assistance of the Chinese Consulate in Manchester and coordinated at Sheffield for a number of years by Dr Robert Taylor. In September this year, Professor Tim Wright and Professor Beverley Hooper visited Nanjing University for discussions with university officials.

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir Gareth Roberts, has taken a keen interest in exchanges with China, and also visited Nanjing University and Zhejiang University in September. It is expected that the exchange arrangements with Nanjing University will be widened in future to encompass other areas of study and research.

Milena Popovic, a final year student in the Chinese Studies/Business Studies dual honours degree programme, spent the summer vacation in Shanghai on an internship with DiversyLever China, a subsidiary of Unilever. She had full responsibility for the company’s Shanghai Restaurant Market Research Project and reported directly to the Regional Director and Marketing Director. In Milena’s words: ‘The internship proved to be a lifetime opportunity to participate in all stages of company negotiations. As an “insider”, I gained valuable insights into the internal politics and power struggles of companies operating in China.’ This was Milena’s second experience in China, complementing the year she spent in Nanjing (1998-99) as part of her degree.

Robert Morini, who recently completed the MA in Chinese Studies, was one of three British students to be awarded an internship with the United Nations in New York over the summer vacation. Robert finished his Bachelor of Laws and French Degree at Sheffield in 1998. As part of his law degree, Robert studied international public law at the University of Nancy in France, and continued his interest in this field by writing his MA dissertation on human rights in contemporary China as a foreign policy issue. Following his internship at the UN, Robert spent a brief period in Sheffield before taking up an appointment at Shanghai University where he is spending a year on the British Council’s Teach-in-China program.

Milena Popovic (centre) showing fellow-students Satsuki Fujii (left) and Li-Sa Lim (right) where she worked in Shanghai.

Pictured at a welcome reception on 6 October.
From left: Dr Thomas McAuley of the School of East Asian Studies chats with Mr Chen Weijun and Mr Yao Fuming (Ministry of Education, Beijing)

From left: Mr Ma Aidong (Qingdao Ocean University, Qingdao) and Mr Ye Yongbang (Tongji University, Shanghai)
Economic migration is one of the most significant items on the domestic political agenda of many countries. Although migration brings many blessings in economic terms, it also has socio-economic costs relating to housing, employment and welfare. For many countries, a major perceived risk is that immigration may dilute the host society’s ethnic, social and linguistic homogeneity, regarded by some as the fundamental characteristic of the nation-state.

Traditionally, Japan did not encourage immigration. Japanese citizenship relies on the *jus sanguinis* principle, with citizenship based on descent from a Japanese national. The country is generally recognised as having a high level of ethnic, language, religious and cultural homogeneity, as well as having lineage as the primary determinant of ‘Japaneseness’. The country has the lowest proportion of foreigners of any major industrialised country, with just 1.55 million registered foreign residents in 1999, representing only 1.23 per cent of the total Japanese population. Japanese society has an historical tradition of racial exclusion, as demonstrated by the classification of over 500,000 South and North Koreans as ‘special permanent residents’.

The issue of foreign migration to Japan emerged in the mid-1980s in response to the development of new global economic processes. The government has been attempting to restrict the growth of an illegal foreign migrant population, but at the same time it has introduced legal unskilled foreign labour using various informal ‘side-door’ mechanisms. These include the acceptance of Japanese descendants (*Nikkeijin*) from South America, mainly Brazil and Peru, with the objective of meeting labour shortages in certain unskilled job sectors while at the same time preserving the image of Japan’s ethnic homogeneity.

However, the *Nikkeijin* tend to come to Japan with their entire families, with the largest group now being third-generation *Nikkeijin* who are unfamiliar with Japanese language, culture and customs. From the viewpoint of lineage, the majority of the spouses of second and third generation *Nikkeijin* are not of Japanese descent. Thus, their bond with Japan based on lineage, the original reason behind allowing them to work in Japan, has become increasingly tenuous. In addition, the majority of *Nikkeijin* in Japan are ‘repeaters’ (they have come to Japan more than two or three times to work) and *Nikkeijin* networks have become well-established. While living in Japan, the *Nikkeijin* maintain their identity as Brazilians or Peruvians.

The growing number of *Nikkeijin* has been complemented by an increase in the number of registered foreign residents, such as the spouses of Japanese nationals and former refugees who have changed their residence status from spouse of a Japanese national or long-term resident to that of permanent resident. As foreigners are beginning to appear as long-term settlers in Japan, their migrations have spilt over into the social, cultural and political domains of Japanese society. Some of the components of sovereign power over the control of migrants in Japan have been influenced and reshaped by their existence. For example, there have recently been a number of changes in central governmental policy, including granting residential permission for foreigners raising children born to Japanese/foreign unmarried couples. The government is also considering granting voting rights in local elections to foreign permanent residents.

The Japanese government is facing a dilemma. While seeking to respond to labour shortages resulting from demographic trends, there is fear that the emergence of various groups of foreigners could dilute the country’s homogeneity. And as non-nationals reside in Japan for long periods of time, the government is faced with becoming accountable to all residents, with an increasing focus being placed on the rights of non-citizens. These include the provision of services such as education for foreign children, health insurance, and the consideration of an amnesty programme for over-stayers.

For Japan, a country that proclaims its identity on the basis of ethnic purity and cultural homogeneity, migration may bring significance changes to society.

Japanese and foreign children play together in a kindergarten in Iwadeyama, Miyagi Prefecture.
As part of the activities for next year’s JAPAN 2001 festival, which will celebrate and expand the links between Japan and the UK, Dr Thomas McAuley will be creating a web site devoted to waka (Japanese poetry) attached to the School’s site. Dr McAuley has had a long-standing interest in traditional Japanese poetry which developed while analysing classical Japanese texts for his PhD at SOAS, London University.

Visitors to the web site will be able to register themselves on a mailing list and receive daily postings throughout 2001 of waka romanised and translated into English. At the end of each week, the poems circulated on the mailing list will be added to the web site, in vernacular, romanised and translated form, building up to a collection of 2001 poems by the end of the year. The project has been made possible as a result of generous support from the Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation.

The series will begin with poems from the earliest periods: nagauta (long poems) and tanka (short poems) from the Man’yōshū anthology compiled in the eighth century, followed by tanka from the Kokinshū (tenth century) and other imperial poetry anthologies, and finally haiku which are perhaps the most well-known Japanese poems.

In addition to the poems and translations, the project will include articles, essays and other materials written by the staff and students of the Centre for Japanese Studies. These will support and extend the site visitors’ understanding of the nature of waka. By the end of 2001 the project will have produced an educational resource, which will remain on the School’s website for use by both students studying waka and those who are simply curious and wish to learn more about the subject. The following tanka was composed as a winter poem by Ki no Tsurayuki (ca 872-945) in response to an imperial command.

Yuku tosi no
Osiku mo aru kana
Masukagami
Miru kage safe ni
Kurenu to omofeba

The passing of this year
Fills me with regret
For in a clear glass
All I see are signs
Of my passing.

Sheffield’s inaugural cohort of Chinese Studies students completed their four-year degree in June and graduated at this year’s East Asian Studies degree ceremony. The students spent the second year of their degree programme at Nanjing University, returning to Sheffield for two years to take advanced level studies in Chinese language, as well as modules on China and East Asia.

Sheffield’s Chinese Studies degree was introduced in 1996 to complement the existing Japanese Studies and Korean Studies degrees. The range of subjects available to students will increase substantially from 2001, as a result of new staff appointments, with modules on Chinese history, politics, economics, business, society and culture.
Consumer rights in China

Beverley Hooper
Centre for Chinese Studies


In December 1996 the Director of International Crisis Management for Edelman Public Relations, the world’s fifth largest public relations company, issued a warning: ‘China’s consumers are finding their voice...Business in China can now be impacted by interest groups in the same way as the rest of the world.’

According to a 1997 Chinese survey, consumer protection was the dominant legal concern of the urban population, cited by 29% of respondents ahead of labour protection (25.5%) and the criminal law (19.1%).

The issue of consumer rights emerged in China from the early 1980s, paralleling the economic growth of the immediate post-Mao era, and accelerated during the 1990s as the ‘consumer revolution’ got under way. Chinese people have experienced the consumer problems characteristic of developing countries: sub-standard products and services, fake goods and brands, and a lack of product safety that includes adulterated food and faulty domestic appliances ‘Hazardous products’, including exploding gas stoves, television sets and beer bottles, frequently head the list of the year’s ‘ten worst cases’ published in the national press on Consumers’ Day (15 March) each year.

The dramatic expansion of the mass media in the post-Mao era, along with its growing attention to socio-economic rather than political issues, has enabled China’s consumers to make their voices heard. Consumer grievances have been publicized in newspapers and magazines that feature columns such as ‘Voice of the consumer’ and ‘Consumer watch’. They have also been widely covered on television, which by the 1990s reached over eighty per cent of the Chinese population.

Since Beijing’s first telephone hotline commenced operations in 1993, hotlines on consumer matters—as on other socio-economic issues—have become a feature of everyday life. Most recently, the rapidly expanding Internet has also provided consumers with the opportunity to express their grievances, as well as to participate in public debate about consumer issues. As one website expressed it: ‘We now have the Internet, the only aspect of the media that can be in consumers’ hands.’

Far from criticizing people for ‘speaking out’ on consumer issues, the Government encourages them to do so. Problems with product quality and safety pose a threat to China’s economic development, to the much-vaunted improvements in people’s living standards, and to the national and international reputation of Chinese products. With a strong interest in remedying the problems, while at the same time wanting to preclude the development of an independent consumer rights movement, the government has essentially co-opted consumer rights. In 1985 it established the China Consumers’ Association (CCA) which, while being government-dominated, has had the customary functions of a consumer rights organization: providing information and education on consumer issues and handling complaints from dissatisfied consumers. In the decade 1988-1998 the number of complaints it received annually increased from under 130,000 to over 650,000.

The nascent development of a legal system in post-Mao China has included legislation on consumer protection, with the Law for the Protection of Consumers’ Rights and Interests coming into effect on 1 January 1994. Many subsequent legal cases involved what the media described as ‘the abuse of consumers’ health and safety’. In March 1997, for example, a Beijing court granted compensation of 270,000 yuan (approximately £22,500), one of the largest amounts yet awarded to a victim of unsafe products, to a young girl who had been badly burnt when a gas burner exploded during a hot-pot meal.

Pressures for consumer rights and rising levels of litigation have been part of the growth of ‘rights consciousness’ in China over the past two decades. The consumer rights issue has also given people a range of experiences in asserting themselves personally: finding and using avenues to express grievances, to gain recompense and to debate issues. But there are still limitations, as people recognize. As one consumer complaints website warned: ‘In order not to have this site closed down, and also for your own safety, kindly please do not talk about political issues’.

Urging Chinese consumers to assert their rights.

Sign outside a photographic store in the Shandong city of Qingdao.
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(from September 2001)

Anglo-Japanese Academy conference

The inaugural meeting of the Anglo-Japanese Academy will be held in Sheffield from 4-9 September 2001.

The Academy will be launched as part of the Japan 2001 celebrations with the aim of bringing together leading British and Japanese scholars in the social sciences with the coming generation of academic leaders.

During the first three days young social scientists from the two countries will receive advanced research training in their disciplines. They will then participate in an international conference entitled National, Regional and Global Transition: A Common Agenda for Anglo-Japanese Relations in the 21st Century, which will bring them together with leading scholars from the two countries.

The meeting has major funding from the Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation. For further information, contact Professor Glenn D. Hook, School of East Asian Studies, University of Sheffield (g-hook@sheffield.ac.uk)

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