Japan and Britain
Two new books published

Two recently published books shed new light on the contemporary and historical relationship between Japan and Britain.

The second book is Volume 5 of The History of Anglo-Japanese Relations, 1600-2000, entitled Social and Cultural Perspectives. The book is edited by Dr Gordon Daniels, who recently retired from his position as Reader in History at Sheffield, and Tsuzuki Chushichi, Professor Emeritus of Hitotsubashi University. It is the latest volume in the Anglo-Japanese History Project, published by Palgrave Macmillan.

The new volume, which includes essays by Japanese, British and Canadian scholars, demonstrates how individuals, government agencies and non-governmental organisations have confirmed and challenged the ideas of diplomats and statesmen. Case studies of mutual perceptions, feminism, ceremonial, theatre, economic and social thought, fine arts, broadcasting, labour, and missionary activity illustrate the ways in which nationalism and internationalism have shaped Anglo-Japanese relations.

Published by RoutledgeCurzon, the book provides up-to-date analyses of Japan and Britain in terms of economics, politics, security and identity on the global, regional, sub-national and civic levels. It examines the ways in which the two countries deal with common issues including the 'special relationship' both maintain with the United States, the relationship with the continents each of these island nations border, the question of the degree of decentralisation to allow within their contested borders, and the role of Tokyo and London as global cities.
Japanese Capitalism and Modernity in a Global Era: Refabricating Lifetime Employment Relations, authored by Peter Matanle, will be published in August. Dr Matanle lectures at Sheffield on the sociology of Japanese capitalism. The book argues that, contrary to the popular hypothesis that the Japanese lifetime employment system is collapsing and the work values of the salaryman are being radically transformed in response to both the globalisation of market capitalism and the achievement of material affluence, there has not yet been a fundamental transformation of the system’s foundations. Significantly, the book contends that a subtle change in the way management perceives its relationship with company employees may herald a more profound and long-term change in the future organisation of the Japanese corporation.

The Centre for Japanese Studies/RoutledgeCurzon series was set up in 1992 under the general editorship of Glenn D Hook, Professor of Japanese Studies at Sheffield. Other books published in the series during 2002-2003 are:

- Japan and Britain in the Contemporary World: Responses to Common Issues, edited by Hugo Dobson and Glenn D Hook (2003)

A new resource centre has been established in the School of East Asian Studies to provide facilities for MA and MSc students taking one of the School’s nine Masters degrees in East Asian, Chinese, Japanese and Korean Studies (see page 16 for full listing of degrees). The area has been decorated in a bright contemporary style, and features new furnishings, computers, scanner, printer and resource materials. Students doing Masters degrees by distance learning will also have use of the new facilities when they visit Sheffield for ‘residential’.

The Centre has been funded by a generous donation from Sir Sze-yuen Chung, a Sheffield Mechanical Engineering graduate (PhD 1951, LLD 1985), and with support from the School of East Asian Studies and the University’s Alumni Foundation. The Foundation exists to channel the support of alumni and friends of the University for current projects involving students and staff (www.shef.ac.uk/alumni/).

Sir Sze-yuen Chung has had a distinguished career as a leading Hong Kong businessman, politician and educator. His memoirs, entitled Hong Kong’s Journey to Reunification: Memoirs of Sze-yuen Chung, were published in 2001 by The Chinese University Press of the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

The Centre was formally opened on 3 April by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Bob Boucher, at a function attended by senior University officials (including representatives of the Alumni Foundation), as well as postgraduate students and staff members. The latter included Dr Peter Matanle, degree tutor for taught postgraduate courses, who coordinated the physical aspects of the Centre’s establishment.
New Korean Cinema...
From political issues to gangsters and romantic comedy

Hyangjin Lee

Dr Hyangjin Lee is the author of Contemporary Korean Cinema: Identity, Culture and Politics (Manchester University Press, 2001). She curated the 2002 South Korean Cinema Season which was held in Sheffield, Edinburgh, Oxford, Cambridge, Bristol and Manchester. The South Korean film hit My Sassy Girl, which launched the 2002 South Korean Cinema Season in Sheffield last November, came as something of a surprise to many people in the large audience. A romantic comedy, it featured an often drunk, youthful dominatrix and her lazy long-suffering boyfriend: a long way from the stereotyped images of Korea's Confucian (or even post-Confucian) society.

In recent years, New Korean Cinema has become firmly ensconced on the international film scene. When two Korean film-makers won the Best Director Awards at Cannes and Venice in 2002 - Im Kwo-taek for Chihwason and Yi Chang-dong for Oasis - their success demonstrated the appeal of contemporary Korean cinema beyond the small circles of film connoisseurs and critics.

A series of South Korean films made from the 1980s is often referred to as the 'new wave', forming the foundation of New Korean Cinema, which emerged as a vibrant art form in the early 1990s. Many film critics and scholars agree that the rapid transformation of South Korean cinema can be likened to that of Hong Kong cinema in the 1970s and 1980s. The growth and content of New Korean Cinema reflected the radical social changes brought about by the mid-1980s democratisation movement. The films openly and confidently dealt with serious social issues such as hidden violence and sexual harassment within the family, juvenile delinquency, class conflict, national divisions, and even the tragic consequences of the recent political upheavals. For example, The Day a Pig Fell into the Well (1996), A Hot Roof (1996), and Tell Me Something (2000) dealt with domestic violence and sexual abuse by family members, Kuro Arirang (1998) and Single Spark (1996) treated the labour movements of the 1970s and 1980s, and Song of Rebirth (1990), A Petal (1996), and Peppermint Candy (2000) portrayed the 1980 Kwangju Uprising.

A new feature of Korean Cinema since the late 1990s has been its strong nationalistic sentiments against the US presence in Korea's history and society. While older generations still appreciate the Americans' personal sacrifices during the Korean War and their contribution to the development of the South Korean economy, the younger generation is more inclined to express anti-American sentiments. This serves as a resistant ideology - a self-preservation mechanism to maintain Korean national identity - as was demonstrated in Spring in My Hometown (1998), Shiri (1999) and Joint Security Area (2000).

Korean film-makers have also been determined to contest American dominance of the domestic film market. In 1987, the government had lifted sanctions against the operation of UIP (United International Pictures) in the domestic market, and abolished the foreign film import quota system. These measures provided an incentive for the inefficient Korean film industry to become economically viable and to develop the concept of a national cinema.

Over the past decade Korean film has seen a dramatic reversal in fortune from a struggle to survive to its current unprecedented popularity at home, coupled with international recognition and acclaim. The domestic market share of Korean film increased from only 15.9% in 1993 to 39.5% in 1999, and reached 50% in 2002.

The dramatic growth of the domestic film market has been achieved partly by appealing to younger audiences whose favourite genres are gangster films, action thrillers, horror films, romantic melodramas and light comedies. These films also skilfully exploit the younger generation's strong antagonism towards foreign intervention in Korea's national affairs, as well as towards repressive cultural norms and hierarchical human relationships. Some of the films shown during the 2002 Korean Film Season in the UK are examples of these genres: My Sassy Girl, I Wish I Had a Wife, The Power of Kangwon Province and Birdcage Inn.

Furnished with its commercial success, New Korean Cinema has become part of the transformation of popular culture not just in South Korea but also more widely across Asia. However, growing commercialisation also threatens to dilute the progressive ideas of creative, rebellious film-makers.

* Professor Ra Jong-yil returned to Seoul following his appointment in February as National Security Adviser to the new South Korean President, Roh Moo-hyun.
Masters student profiles
Chinese Studies by distance learning

Sali Morris
Distance Learning Centre

Students enrolled for the two new Masters degrees in Chinese Studies (by distance learning) participate in the same WEB/CT seminar discussions – but they live all over the world. Here we profile four of this year’s students. Richard, Darby and Toby are enrolled for the MSc in Chinese Language, Business and International Relations. Derval is studying for the MSc in Chinese Business and International Relations.

Richard Crombie

Graduated from Cardiff University in 1991 with a BSc in Microbiology. After graduating he lived in Hong Kong for eighteen months, travelling frequently to China. Richard has worked in the chemical industry for over nine years and is currently an account manager with the multinational chemical company Cognis. He travels frequently on business and says: ‘My motivation for taking this course was partly because of my career and partly a fascination in understanding the meaning behind Chinese characters.’

Darby Sanchez

Lives in Sunrise, Florida, and works in Miami for France Telecom. She gained a degree in Linguistics from Georgetown University in 1983 and an MBA from the University of Miami in 1992. Since then her professional career has focused primarily on Latin America and Western Europe as she is a fluent speaker of both Spanish and French, but for some time she has been interested in East Asia, particularly China. She has just sent us news of her appointment as CEO for GlobeCast Asia (a division of France Telecom), based in Singapore. ‘It seems as if the Masters degree at Sheffield is paying off already!’

Toby Philpott

Currently lives in Nanchang, Jiangxi Province. He works for the University of Durham Foundation for Small and Medium Enterprise Development. Over the past six years he has been involved in development projects in China, Central and Eastern Europe and Russia. Toby is married to Dong Qun whom he met through his work in Shenyang. ‘I was attracted to study the course at Sheffield because I wanted to understand better what is happening in China, and specifically in Jiangxi Province – and so that I can communicate more effectively with my wife and her family!’

Derval Usher

Is from Ireland. At university in Dublin, she studied International Business and Languages (French and German). After working in Germany for a year, she decided to ‘head east’ and has been based in Taipei since 1998 (apart from taking a year out to travel around Australia and New Zealand). Her positions have included working as Project Manager for the multinational Taiwan-based company TECO Electric & Machinery Co Ltd, with responsibility for sales and business development in the European market. Derval enrolled in the Sheffield course because she has a keen interest in East Asia and also wanted to study the Chinese language more formally.

New book on Shanghai opera

Jonathan Stock’s book Huju: Traditional Opera in Modern Shanghai was published in April by Oxford University Press in the British Academy Postdoctoral Monograph Series. It is the first English-language book-length account of haju, Shanghai’s local operatic tradition.

Established two centuries ago, haju is renowned for its portrayal of ordinary people, not the emperors, courtesans and heroes of older drama forms. Stories deal with contemporary themes: the struggles of lovers to marry, women’s rights after the 1949 Communist Revolution, and life in the new social order established by Deng Xiaoping’s reforms from the late 1970s. Music ranges from local folksong to syncretic adaptations of Western popular music.

Huju: Traditional Opera in Modern Shanghai follows haju as it developed in China’s largest city: from rural entertainment to urban ballad, revolutionary drama, and contemporary opera. An innovative combination of urban and historical ethnomusicology, the book assesses haju equally as historical tradition, venue for social action and forum for musical creativity.

Dr Jonathan Stock is a Reader in the Department of Music. The recipient of the 2002 Westrup Prize for Musicology, he is currently completing the Blackwell Dictionary of Ethnomusicology and editing a CD compilation of Shanghai opera music.

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The topic of Japan’s participation in the United Nations in general, and its role in peacekeeping specifically, is highly controversial and commands a great deal of attention.

In my book Japan and United Nations Peacekeeping, I argue that Japan’s peacekeeping policy changed, incrementally at times and rapidly at others, throughout the 1990s. The nature of this change can be understood as a process by which the Japanese government and its people attempted to respond to, and negotiate their way through, a variety of norms of behaviour.

What do I mean by ‘norms’? Norms have been a subject of much debate in a variety of disciplines including my own, international relations. In the simplest terms what I mean by a ‘norm’ is the idea of ‘I should (or equally should not) do this’. A norm is a rule of sorts that might – but need not – be physically manifested as a law. The important aspect of a norm is that everybody understands what is meant by it.

So, what kinds of norms have influenced Japan’s foreign policy? I would argue that four can be identified, namely: anti-militarism, bilateralism, East Asianism and internationalism. It is no coincidence that these words are all ‘isms’ for, as seen above, norms suggest the way the world should be.

Anti-militarism dictates that Japan should never again wage war and to this end a number of restrictions exist upon what Japan’s Self-Defence Forces can or cannot do in military situations. Bilateralism proposes that Japan’s foreign policy should be built upon its relations with the most powerful state in the world, which since 1945 has been the United States. East Asianism suggests a new, higher profile for Japan in the region. And finally, internationalism demands that Japan be a more responsible political and economic power in line with the ideals of the United Nations.

Japan’s foreign policy in general, and peacekeeping policy specifically, has responded to these norms in different ratios and different ways over the years. For most of the post-World War II period, anti-militarism was the most influential norm and, as peacekeeping is essentially a military exercise, Japan’s role therein was limited. Pressure from the United Nations and the United States for Japan to respond to the internationalist and bilateral norms was not powerful enough to overcome Japan’s anti-militarist position and, as a result, the impression that Japan responded only slowly and belatedly, if at all, was born.

However, with the end of the Cold War and the rise in prominence of peacekeeping, the Japanese government began to pursue a more active role in peacekeeping. In this it was encouraged by the US as part of its policy of burden-sharing (especially after September 11), by the UN as the chief promotor of peace and security in the world, and even by some nations in Southeast Asia who wanted to see Japan unburden itself from its postwar anti-militarism and play a more active role in the region.

My book Japan and United Nations Peacekeeping traces how these different norms came into conflict, interacted with each other, and finally influenced Japanese foreign policy: from the Persian Gulf War of 1990-1 to the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 2001. There was a change – the anti-militarist norm and resistance to greater peacekeeping responsibilities in Japan were only overcome by appealing to the norm of internationalism and the ideals of the UN Charter (in other words, Japan’s contribution is no longer problematic if it is part of the UN’s efforts to establish peace), and after the events of 11 September by appealing to the bilateral norm and the need to assist a traditional ally in a time of crisis.

Future events in the continuing ‘war on terrorism’ will provide a considerable challenge for the Japanese government and its people as to how they respond to these norms.

Author’s note

In Issue No.3 of this newsletter, Philip Shetler-Jones (a Sheffield Japanese Studies graduate and former UN peacekeeper) wrote an overview of his undergraduate dissertation on Japan’s contribution to UN-sponsored peacekeeping operations. Philip argued that Japan was essentially out-of-step with the rest of the world. While I recognise the high quality of Philip’s research and the persuasiveness of his arguments, we have politely agreed to disagree on the overarching question of whether or not Japan has been changing.

Dr Hugo Dobson lectures on Japan’s politics and international relations. His book Japan and United Nations Peacekeeping: New Pressures, New Responses was published by RoutledgeCurzon in March.

Hugo Dobson.

Japan and UN Peacekeeping

New pressures, new responses
Consumer nationalism in China

Domestic products or Coke and McDonald’s?

Beverley Hooper

Professor Beverley Hooper’s recent research on consumer rights and consumer nationalism in contemporary China has been published in journals including China Information, the Asian Studies Review and the Harvard Asia Pacific Review.

By the late 1990s, over 90% of people in China’s ten major cities recognised these Western and Japanese brand names: Coca-Cola, McDonald’s, Mercedes, Lux, Kodak, Hitachi, Fuji, Sharp and Toyota.

The post-Mao government’s ‘open door’ policy has changed the face of urban China. In 1975 – when I first went to China to study – the country was in the final throes of the Mao era and anything ‘Western’ was denounced as a manifestation of the bourgeois capitalist world. This all changed after Deng Xiaoping launched a new era of economic reform in 1978 which included China’s reopening to the outside world.

Once again, Western businesses began dreaming of the ‘vast China market’: not the 400 million potential customers of the nineteenth century but the fast developing nation’s 1.2 billion who soon included a burgeoning middle class. By 1994, two years after Deng endorsed a further shift towards a market economy, The Economist was commenting: ‘The purveyors of nearly all the world’s big consumer brands are battling for at least a foothold in the Chinese market’.

The renewed presence in China of Western consumer products, as well as culture, has provoked both infatuation and resistance. This revives memories of the 1920s when Shanghai’s ‘Westernised Chinese’ strolled along Nanjing Road in the latest Western fashions but nationalistic writers like Lu Xun condemned those Chinese who ‘bow in the face of foreigners’ and ‘sacrifice China’s national dignity’.

As in the 1920s, a major appeal of Western (and now Japanese) products is that they symbolise ‘modernity’ and enable people to identify with what consumerism specialist Russell Belk has called ‘the consumer dreamlands of the more developed world’. According to one Chinese magazine: ‘People feel superior with foreign products. They are more expensive than local products and represent a certain social standard’. As in other developing countries, the ultimate consumer acquisitions are international designer brands like Mercedes, Rolex, Gucci and Cartier.

The symbolic value of Western brands has persisted even as the quality of Chinese products has improved dramatically.

At the same time, there has been an undercurrent of resistance to foreign products. By the mid-1990s, this had become part of a wide-ranging media debate about ‘cultural colonialism’ which harked back to China’s humiliating experience at the hands of the Western powers from the mid-nineteenth century. Multinational troops have once again invaded China. This time they’ve come not with guns and cannon but with cosmetics, cars, cigarettes and Western cuisine.

While criticising people’s alleged ‘infatuation with foreign products’, Chinese officials and the media have promoted domestic goods in the name of ‘consumer nationalism’, focusing on China’s need to develop its own international brands as symbols of the nation’s growing economic power.

As foreign companies and their competitors with Western and Japanese brands. Otherwise we shall be bullied.’

Individual Chinese companies have readily ’played the nationalism card’ in their efforts to compete with multinationals in China. The country’s largest electrical appliance manufacturer, Haier, has astutely utilised the discourse of consumer nationalism in its battle with Western and Japanese brands. ‘Our ideal must be to develop our own national brands. A country without famous brands will forever manufacture

for others and be subject to conditions imposed by others.’

Foreign companies have come under assault for allegedly undermining Chinese brand names following the establishment of joint ventures. ‘We can’t let all Chinese brands be eaten up by foreign companies’, declared the editor of the magazine China’s Top Brands, referring to allegations that Chinese brands such as Snow refrigerators and Peacock televisions were being ‘killed by their partner’ in favour of foreign brand names.

As foreign companies and their consumer products become even more entrenched in China, they are also likely to encounter the ongoing assertion – and utilisation – of consumer nationalism, with both the Chinese government and manufacturers reviving memories of the country’s ‘past humiliations’ when it suits them to do so.
**Two Chevening scholars from South Korea**

Two prominent South Korean journalists, Key-young Son and Yan-woon Seo, have been undertaking research in the School of East Asian Studies since late last year. Both have been awarded Chevening scholarships which are funded by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and administered by the British Council. The scholarships are designed to enable talented graduates and young professionals to become familiar with Britain and to gain skills that will benefit their countries.

Key-young Son is a graduate of Hankuk University of Foreign Studies and has a Masters degree in International Relations from Korea University. He has worked for fifteen years as a journalist, most recently as political editor for The Korea Times. Mr Son will be in Sheffield for three years to research a PhD on the Sunshine Policy, an Inter-Korean crisis prevention and integration policy initiated by the Kim Dae-jung government.

Yan-woon Seo has Bachelors and Masters degrees in Economics from Yonsei University. He has been a journalist for the Mael Business Newspaper in Seoul for the past twelve years. Mr Seo is spending a year at Sheffield undertaking research on the ‘Two Koreas’ monetary union, focusing on decisions about the exchange rate.

The two Chevening scholars have been making a valuable contribution to the School’s overall activities, sharing their expertise on Korea – and more broadly on East Asia – in seminars and discussions with colleagues, and providing links to the worlds of journalism, business and politics.

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**Visiting professor from China**

Professor Liu Chuanping is the School of East Asian Studies’ new visiting professor from China, under an arrangement with the Chinese Ministry for Education. He replaces Professor Cui Yonghua who has returned to the Beijing Language University.

Professor Liu is on secondment from the Dalian University of Foreign Languages where he held the position of Dean of the School of Chinese Studies. He is Director of the North-Eastern Branch of the Chinese Association for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language, and a member of the International Society for Chinese Language Teaching.

Most of Professor Liu’s career has been devoted to studying and teaching Chinese to foreign students, including a year at a college in Pennsylvania. His main research interests are Chinese grammar, the design of teaching materials and teaching methodology, and his publications include articles on tones and on the use of adverbs in Chinese. He has also edited Chinese language textbooks and is chief editor of The Practical Chinese Dictionary for Foreigners, which will be published shortly by Beijing Language University Press.

Whilst at Sheffield, Professor Liu will be mainly responsible for developing students’ oral and aural skills at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. He will also be examining the particular needs of students living outside the ‘immersion environment’ of China and the different teaching methodologies used in the UK.
China tales...

from four ‘language year abroad’ students

Summer camp
Stephen Tingay

The notice near Nanjing University read: ‘New summer camp, set in the blue waters of the Pacific off the coast of Shanghai, seeks native English speakers for two weeks of chat, fun, entertainment and learning’. It sounded great; I made a few phone calls and as soon as the 2002 summer vacation started I was on my way.

Even the Mayor turned up for the opening ceremony of the first school camp of its kind held on a small island called Daishan. I was the only Chinese speaker in our group of ten foreign teachers and was told that I would be interviewed by the local TV station. Helpfully the camp’s press officer also told me exactly what to say!

As we entered the camp for the first time in the 40 degree heat, the sun was blazing down, the palm trees were swaying and the birds were singing. You could see the blue ocean behind you and in front were the green hills that made up the backbone of the island. I hardly noticed the creak and clunk of the large gates that slammed shut behind us and were securely locked!

It was only then that the small print was revealed. We were not to leave the camp for the whole two weeks and we were always to be available for the ‘fun and entertainment’ that was advertised. It turned out that we were the entertainment and the kids made fun of us ten foreigners cooped up together. What did we teach in those two weeks? Not much, but I did learn that, as a foreigner in China, you’re an asset and a novelty at the same time. Just being the person that you are can open lots of doors … Make sure, though, that you can get them open again when you want to leave!

Hard seat to Xiahe
Stuart McClelland

Last May, during a university break, I travelled to Xiahe in the western province of Gansu with a couple of my classmates. The train ride from Nanjing to the provincial capital of Lanzhou took over 24 hours and, in an effort to save money, I’d decided to travel ‘hard seat’ (a very literal description) all the way. It was a bad decision for my sanity, but I met lots of Chinese people who came to see the crazy waiguoren (foreigner) who’d insisted on sitting with the peasants, rather than having a sleeper!

On arrival in Lanzhou we took a rickety bus through the sparse mountain scenery, crossing the Yellow River and heading southwest. After about six hours we arrived in the sleepy town of Xiahe, almost 3,000 metres above sea level on the edge of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. Xiahe is famed in China as the most important Tibetan Buddhist monastery town outside Tibet.

We weren’t disappointed. The little town is nestled between high hills and is dominated by the imposing Labrang Monastery, with its golden roof and brightly coloured walls. Founded in 1709, it’s one of the six Great monasteries of the Gelukpa (Yellow Hat) Sect of Tibetan Buddhism and houses some 2,000 monks. All over the town, monks in red robes wander around, drink tea in the local restaurants, and sit in the streets reading their books.

We spent a fantastic week in Xiahe, visiting the monastery, riding bikes out into the grasslands, relaxing by the little river that runs through the town, and sampling the local ‘cuisine’ which didn’t seem to go much further than yak butter and deep fried egg sandwiches (the latter an attempt at ‘Western’ food). When our week came to an end it was sad to leave sleepy Xiahe and head back to the booming cities of eastern China.

Xiahe: nestled between hills at almost 3,000 metres.
The Lobster Festival beauty contest

Lucy Johnston

One of my most bizarre experiences in China was towards the end of the academic year when I found myself taking part in a beauty contest. I signed up for the event – after a few confusing phone calls from a woman who spoke Chinese at great speed – thinking that I was entering a lobster eating competition!

Only when I arrived for the first heat did I realise that I was actually participating in the beauty contest at Nanjing’s 2002 China Lobster Festival. Although somewhat worried about my lack of experience or ability to take on the women of Nanjing in the beauty stakes, I decided to take part... proof of how willing you become to try new things in a foreign country.

After a couple of amusing attempts at parading along the catwalk, as well as singing for the judges (The Beatles’ All My Loving!), I got through to the ‘top 100’ and then to the ‘final 30’ – probably because of my novelty as a foreign contestant. I’d hardly expected beauty contests to be on the agenda during my year abroad and hadn’t packed any dresses, but I managed to scrape an outfit together from a few friends – though it scarcely matched the other finalists’ stunning ball gowns. I can’t claim that I looked as elegant as the other models on the catwalk, though I did manage to make it through the evening without falling over. And I won 2000 yuan (almost £170) for 18th place!

It was weird taking part in one of those glitzy shows I’d often seen on Chinese TV, and to meet the other contestants and the organisers. During the evening I did have a few of those ‘What am I doing on a catwalk in a lobster festival in Nanjing?’ moments, but it was definitely an experience, and for me a uniquely Chinese one.

Hospitality Chinese-style

Carl Shieber

During the 2002 winter break I decided to visit Mao Zedong’s childhood home in Shaoshan, a village close to Changsha, the capital of the southern province of Hunan. On the long train journey, a smartly dressed Chinese businessman in his forties came and sat on the opposite bunk, introduced himself, and chatted with me in a mixture of English and Chinese. He told me he liked meeting foreigners and practising English with them.

When we arrived in Changsha, my ‘new friend’ said he’d like to show me around the city – his hometown – and also take me to Shaoshan. Despite my protests, Mr She gave me the keys to his penthouse apartment in the city centre, and every morning he’d come for me (apparently after spending the night at his girlfriend’s place).

We’d eat breakfast in a local restaurant and then go sightseeing in Changsha and nearby areas, including Shaoshan – now taken over by tourism and trinket sellers. We also went to Yueyang, a nearby town, to stay with Mr She’s Chinese friends. I was given the largest bedroom in the family’s small flat, with everyone else sharing beds or sleeping on sofas, and treated to lavish banquet-style Chinese meals. The daughter in the family had been told to return home from university to meet ‘the foreign visitor’.

Mr She insisted on paying for everything we did: the entrance fees to museums, bus and train tickets, meals in restaurants – and even for a stint in a ‘genuine’ massage parlour. I tried to protest, but he was adamant. At first I was somewhat sceptical about Mr She’s motives. But eventually I realised that he was simply intent on impressing a foreign visitor with Chinese hospitality – something he was able to do in great measure because of his wealth in China’s new marketising society.
The MA in Translation Studies, run by the Modern Languages Teaching Centre (MLTC), now includes Chinese and Japanese in its choice of language-specific translation classes - alongside Arabic, Czech, French, German, Greek, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish. As well as developing the ability to translate between at least one foreign language and English, the degree teaches graduate students the main theories of translation and the strategies, procedures and techniques employed by translators.


Dominic is doing the Masters degree to further his Japanese language skills. ‘After graduation, I realised that I would like to pay more attention to the nuances and interpretation issues involved in cross-cultural communication. The MA enables me to do this while raising my level of Japanese to a high professional standard.’ After graduating, Dominic’s aim is to combine his in-depth understanding of the cultural and linguistic differences between Japanese and English with business skills, thus becoming an asset to an international enterprise.

Sek Kwan is finding that such a course helps improve both her English and Chinese. ‘I am really enjoying the exposure to many types of language levels and different texts, whether journalistic, literary or scientific.’ She hopes to become a professional translator after graduation.

For more information on the MA in Translation Studies (full- and part-time), contact Elke St. John at e.stjohn@sheffield.ac.uk

The UK-Japan Business Research Centre was established in 2000 as a discussion forum, linking business and academia in South Yorkshire, on contemporary UK-Japan/Asian business issues. The Centre’s activities are supported by the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), the South Yorkshire International Trade Centre (SYITC) and Sheffield’s School of East Asian Studies. Dr Harukiyo Hasegawa, Director of Sheffield’s Centre for Japanese Studies, is Chairman of the Centre which is administered by Mrs Yoshimi McLeod of SYITC.

The Centre organises a regular UK-Japan Business Seminar series, inviting high profile speakers from the business worlds of both Britain and Japan. A recent highlight was a lecture by the Japanese Ambassador to the UK, His Excellency Mr Masaki Orita, on UK-Japan Relations in the 21st Century. Mr Orita focused on the need to consider the relationship in terms of historical, as well as contemporary, perspectives of Britain and Japan.
New South Korean leader

Young President with old tasks

Key-young Son

Key-young Son was political editor for The Korea Times before coming to Sheffield in late 2002 as a Chevening Scholar.

As the euphoria of his supporters settles down, new South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun is immediately facing stark realities and stock-piled tasks, mainly on two policy fronts: North Korea policies and domestic politics.

When he won a come-from-behind victory in a closely contested Presidential election in December 2002 and was sworn in as the nation’s 9th President in February, he carved out the image of an invincible man ready to defy all odds and emerge triumphantly. This was particularly true for Roh, who has the curriculum vitae of a self-made man: a peasant’s son and high school graduate without a college diploma. In fact, the whole presidential race was a treacherous journey for the 56-year-old politician, a Young Turk in Korean politics symbolising a generational shift; the two previous presidents, Kim Young-sam and Kim Dae-jung, served their five-year terms in their seventies.

Roh’s imminent task, without doubt, is how to resolve the North Korean nuclear problem peacefully. By vowing to continue President Kim Dae-jung’s Sunshine Policy of engaging North Korea, Roh has set the major trajectory of his future North Korea policies, but he needs to work out his own roadmap to reach his destination.

On the one hand, Roh might find much less room for manoeuvre for his engagement policies, unless he wins support from the Bush administration. If, on the other hand, he blindly seeks conformity with US policies, he will face an angry North Korea, shattering the fledging inter-Korean trust his predecessor endeavoured to build during his five-year term as President. He will face moments when he must listen attentively to the opinions of one party against the other, but he cannot afford losing either of them: one as a brother and the other as a patron.

It is urgent for the Roh government to iron out policy discrepancies between Seoul and Washington about how to deal with North Korea, given that another war on the peninsula is a situation abhorred not only by South Korea but also by all neighbouring countries, including Japan, China and Russia. In view of the nature of the protracted North Korean problem, the South Korean government should not be swayed by a short-term failure, caused by North Korea’s brinkmanship or the changing policies of different US governments, but pursue a balanced approach with a long-term vision of building a unified Korea capable of playing a responsible role in the international community.

On the domestic front, Roh’s victory is synonymous with the voters’ desire to introduce sweeping reforms in the political, economic and social sectors. When President Kim Dae-jung won the Presidential election five years ago, his achievement was eulogised as the first transfer of power from the ruling to the opposition party. As there is no more credit Roh could win in this category, he will have to emerge as a champion of the rule of law and transparency in all walks of life, thus shedding Korea’s past image as a nation of corrupt politicians and public servants and their collusion with business circles.

In 1999, Roh delivered the following speech:

‘Dreams make history. In 1917, when World War I was in progress, a young man named Konrad Adenauer delivered a speech at a small church in northern Germany on a theme of “Europe must be united as one”. The youngster eventually became the Chancellor of West Germany in 1952. As Chancellor, he created the European Coal and Steel Community, which later evolved into the European Economic Community and now Europe is united to the point of using a single currency.’

In fact, Roh’s dream is not only his personal dream. It is a dream shared by all Koreans, regardless of whether or not they voted for Roh. Compared with his predecessors, surrounded by a thick wall of life-long followers and estranged from the public, Roh is in a somewhat better position to heed the public’s voices. His election victory was possible partly because of the Internet, a new but powerful campaign medium.

The new President’s five-year term is a short period for the overhaul of the whole state system, but a period long enough to place the country on the right track.

President Roh Moo-hyun takes the oath as 9th President of the Republic of Korea at his inauguration on 25 February.
Socialising in SEAS

Students in the School of East Asian Studies have been busy organising social functions this year. Despite looming essay deadlines and exams, they arranged two lively evenings in the second part of the semester.

The East Asia Spring Ball has become an annual fixture in the SEAS calendar. This year’s ball, held on 31 March, was jointly hosted by SEAS and two Sheffield University student associations, ChiSoc (the Chinese Society) and the Japan Society. The impressive venue was the Cutlers’ Hall, a Grade 2 listed building whose magnificent décor harks back to the days when ‘made in Sheffield’ first became synonymous with the world’s finest cutlery. Guests enjoyed a sit-down dinner (using Sheffield silver), disco, karaoke and casino into the small hours.

On 9 April, a group of postgraduate and undergraduate students organised a School dinner at Sheffield’s Marble Court Restaurant (formerly the Top Wok), a venue with which many of the attendees were more familiar. The evening was again a very multi-cultural affair, with Japanese exchange students and visiting scholars from China joining SEAS students and staff members. The sumptuous Chinese banquet was followed by disco and a karaoke competition with lively renditions in both English and Chinese.
High Japanese divorce rates 
...increasing the number of poor families

J Sean Curtin

J Sean Curtin has an MA in Advanced Japanese Studies from Sheffield and is currently doing research for a PhD on lone-mother families in Japan. Most recently he has been a professor at the Japanese Red Cross University in Hokkaido. He writes regular opinion articles for the South China Morning Post as well as a weekly Japanese Social Trends Series for the Tokyo-based think tank Global Communications from Japan.

The alarming rise in the number of Japanese children living in poverty is perhaps one of the most troubling aspects of the country’s prolonged economic woes.

Most of Japan’s poor children live in mother-headed households and over the last decade their ranks have rapidly grown as the country’s divorce rate has soared (mothers were granted child custody in nearly 80% of divorce cases). A battered economy, inadequate welfare policies and the government’s complete failure to respond to changing family trends have compounded the plight of millions of disadvantaged children.

In 2003, a record high divorce rate and the worsening economic outlook seem almost certain to accentuate an already critical situation.

The severe degree of lone-mother poverty is visible in the income data from the most recent Citizen’s Basic Living Survey published in August 2002. A married couple with children under the age of 18 had an average annual household income of about 7.26 million yen. This compares with an average annual income of a lone-mother household of only 2.52 million yen. The average single-parent family thus lives way below the poverty line which is normally measured as a household income falling below half of the national average. In the same survey 81.6% of Japanese lone mothers said that they were experiencing extreme hardship.

Although employment rates for Japanese lone mothers are some of the highest in the developed world at about 86%, the average wage of these women is usually extremely low. Additionally, most Japanese fathers fail to make child support payments for the upkeep of their former families. Unlike every other industrially advanced country, Japan has no effective legal framework for enforcing payment. Social welfare benefits for lone-parent families are totally inadequate and in recent years have been the target of aggressive austerity measures.

The Japanese government has failed to come up with any kind of effective strategy for reducing the level of poverty experienced by mother-headed families. Instead, over the last few years it has adopted an ultra-conservative approach of trying to discourage divorce by restricting the eligibility to various lone-mother welfare entitlements. For example, from August 2002 the income threshold for receiving a single-parent benefit (called the dependent-child allowance) was lowered from 2 million yen to below 1.3 million yen. Groups representing single parents have reported that this measure has caused increased hardship for families already on borderline incomes. Lone-mother suicides for financial reasons have shot up in the last five years with local and national newspapers carrying daily reports of such tragedies.

Traditionally, Japanese people relied on family networks to support them in times of financial difficulty. However, as family ties have weakened and the slim welfare budget for mother-headed households eroded away, a large number of children now find themselves living in real poverty.

The increasing severity of the economic situation in 2003 will almost certainly compound this already serious problem. Eventually, the sheer scale of the social crisis will force Japanese lawmakers to adopt policies that take into account the realities of modern Japanese society. Until then, the plight of Japan’s poor children will continue to worsen.

What are lone mothers going to do as a result of the government’s desire to reduce child benefits in order to promote self-reliance? Mainichi Interactive, 27 January 2002.

Not a new problem - but one that has increased with rising divorce rates. Yuko Tsushima’s prize-winning 1978 novel Choji, translated into English as Child of Fortune, told the story of Koko, a divorced single mother in her mid-thirties, hemmed in by society’s and her family’s expectations.

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Japanese Studies scholars gather in Sheffield

Peter Matanle
BAJS 2003 Conference Representative

The annual conference of the British Association for Japanese Studies (BAJS) was held in Sheffield from 14 to 16 April when almost one hundred academics and postgraduate students from around the world converged on Tapton Hall. The meeting coincided with the 40th anniversary of the opening of Sheffield’s Centre for Japanese Studies (now part of the School of East Asian Studies), when Japanese Studies were first offered at the University. More than forty papers were presented in fields as diverse as anthropology, sociology, economics and business studies, politics and international relations, and literature. Plenary speakers from Japan, the UK and the US — including Professors Ronald Dore, T J Pempel, Osawa Mari, Kikkawa Takeo and Hiwatari Nobuhiro — discussed the issue of Japan’s ‘Lost Decade’ and its aftermath from a variety of perspectives. The plenary sessions were chaired by Glenn Hook, Professor of Japanese Studies at Sheffield and the current President of BAJS. As always, the social events at the conference played a crucial role in helping to deepen ties among academics. At the conference reception, this year’s BAJS Emeritus Fellows were honoured: Nicolas Maclean of Pennycross CMG, whose promotion of Japan-related activities included persuading the Japanese Government to set up the popular Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme, and Professor Emeritus Geoffrey Bownas CBE, who was instrumental in the development of Japanese Studies at Sheffield as the University’s first Professor of Japanese Studies. The Toshiba Prize for the best article in Japan Forum in 2002 was presented to Dr Thomas Lamarre for his article ‘From animation to anime: drawing movements and moving drawings’ (Japan Forum, 14.2, pp 329-367). Four Sheffield academics and PhD scholars presented papers at the conference.

- Sarah Hyde, ‘The Internet and Japanese Diet members - Are Web Pages the New Koenkai?’
- Peter Matanle, ‘Attitudes to Lifetime Employment in Japan and the UK: Converging Preferences but Differential Understandings’
- Andy Staples, ‘The Political Economy of Japanese Foreign Direct Investment in East Asia: Theories, Models, and Practice’
- J  Sean Curtin, ‘Employment and Japan’s Poorest Families’

As part of Sheffield’s Centre for Japanese Studies’ 40th anniversary celebrations, the School of East Asian Studies will be hosting BAJS’s Annual Politics Colloquium from 10 to 12 September. For further details contact g.hook@sheffield.ac.uk

Looking for East Asian Studies library collections in the UK?
Welcome to mappingasia www.asiamap.ac.uk

Gill Goddard
East Asian Studies Librarian

The Mapping Asia database is a new tool for UK resource discovery in all subject areas of the humanities and social sciences relating to Asia, the Middle East and North Africa. The database provides detailed descriptions of UK library collections, including information on content, history and development, strengths, subjects, languages and countries covered, collection material and size, catalogue and collection management information, plus live links to online catalogues and information web pages on access and DDS (Document Delivery Services).

The database also provides access to information on newspapers published in Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa that are held in UK libraries. It offers bibliographic records of newspaper titles and holdings information and is searchable by title, city, country, and language.

Please note that the database is still developing and expanding. Your comments are welcome, via the feedback button on the front web page, or via Sheffield’s East Asian Studies Librarian (easl@sheffield.ac.uk).

The database has been developed through a project funded by the government’s Research Support Libraries Programme. Details of other RSLP projects can be found at www.rslp.ac.uk/projects/

Of particular relevance to Sheffield’s School of East Asian Studies has been the development of the UK Union Catalogue of Chinese Books at www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/rslpchin/
Profile: Dr Andrew P Killick
New lecturer in Ethnomusicology

Dr Andrew P Killick has joined the Department of Music as a lecturer in Ethnomusicology. An expert on the traditional and contemporary music of Korea, Dr Killick was formerly an assistant professor of Ethnomusicology at the Florida State University. Although his postgraduate studies and professional activities have hitherto been in the US and Asia, he is a native of Yorkshire, returning home after working his way steadily round the world.

Dr Killick holds degrees from the universities of Edinburgh, Hawai and Washington. Prior to his appointment at Sheffield he taught at two Korean and two American universities. He has spent six years conducting research in the Republic of Korea, and has also done research in India and developed a secondary area of specialisation in popular music of the English speaking world, particularly musical theatre and film.

Since 1988 Dr Killick has studied the Korean zither (kayag˘um) with leading performer and composer Byung-ki Hwang. His doctoral dissertation, entitled 'The Invention of Traditional Korean Opera', was the first study in a Western language of the Korean opera form ch’angg˘uk, and he has published articles in Asian Music, Asian Theatre Journal, Ethnomusicology, Korean Journal, Korean Studies, and Review of Korean Studies, as well as chapters in anthologies on reflexive anthropology and on popular music and film. He is a founding member and past President of the Association for Korean Music Research and a Council member of the Society for Ethnomusicology. In partnership with his wife Sukyeon Cho, he is also a prize-winning translator of modern Korean literature.

Dr Killick joins two other ethnomusicologists of East Asia in Sheffield’s Department of Music, Dr Jonathan Stock and Dr Inok Paek, and his appointment further strengthens the study of Korean and Chinese music at Sheffield.

Dr Killick pictured with cast members of a ch’angg˘uk opera production at the National Centre for Korean Traditional Performing Arts, Seoul.

In Brief...

- Professor Tim Wright has been elected Chair of the Universities China Committee, London, and a member of the Board of the European Association for Chinese Studies.
- Sarah Hyde has spent the 2002-2003 academic year at Sheffield, teaching courses on Japanese politics and international relations during Dr Hugo Dobson’s sojourn as a visiting fellow at Hosei University in Tokyo. A Sheffield graduate (BA in Japanese Studies), Sarah completed a Masters degree at Okayama University in Japan and a doctorate at the University of Oxford. In July she will take up a lectureship in the Department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Kent at Canterbury.

Congratulations To...

- Geoffrey Bownas, Sheffield’s inaugural Professor of Japanese Studies (1965-80), who was awarded a CBE in the 2003 New Year Honours list for services to Japanese studies and to UK-Japanese relations. A distinguished linguist and translator, Professor Emeritus Bownas has been involved in the development and promotion of Japanese Studies in the UK for over fifty years, and is currently Vice-Chairman of the Japan Society.
- James Brodie, Carl Shieber, Lucy Johnston and Elizabeth Duggan, who have been awarded scholarships by the Taiwan Government, administered through the British Association for Chinese Studies. James, Carl and Lucy will spend two months doing advanced language study in Taiwan over the 2003 summer vacation before returning to Sheffield for their fourth and final year of study. Elizabeth, who is completing the MA in Chinese Studies degree in August, will spend a year in Taiwan furthering her language studies.
- Mark Winchester, winner of the 2002 Margaret Daniels Prize for the top graduate in Japanese Studies, who has been awarded a Monbukagakusho (formerly Monbusho) Scholarship for two years’ postgraduate study in Japan. Mark’s studies in the Graduate School of Social Science at Hitotsubashi University in Tokyo will be supervised by Professor Toshio Iyotani, one of Japan’s foremost specialists on globalisation.
Weblinks about East Asia
www.seas.ac.uk/InfoEastAsia/index.shtml

Do you want to know more about China, Japan or Korea?
- From China's political structure to films and the latest pop stars
- From Japan's history to youth culture and manga comics
- From Korea's economy to newspapers and travel

Hundreds of websites on the social sciences and humanities, science and technology, literature, and arts and crafts are categorised and listed on Weblinks about East Asia, designed by the School's webmaster, Dr Peter Matanle, with help from staff and students. Particular features include links to photo banks and newspapers across the Asian region. The site is available as a link from www.seas.ac.uk or direct at www.seas.ac.uk/InfoEastAsia/index.shtml.

Weblinks is divided into three basic parts: China, Japan and Korea. Each part has two sections: one designed mainly for academics and university students (which will also be very useful for people working in government, business, the media and other organisations) and one providing links to learning and teaching resources for school students and teachers.

The site will be updated and expanded about once a year to become a principal educational resource on East Asia, particularly for schools and universities. We would like to encourage readers to send us details of their East Asian websites and links so that we can involve as many people as possible in the project. And please tell us what you would like to see on our site!
Email: p.matanle@sheffield.ac.uk

STOP PRESS…

Four Sheffield Chinese Studies students have been chosen as the British participants in a 'fast, stylish and entertaining adventure television series' that will be shown in China later this year. The third-year students – James Brodie, Siân Rogers, Stuart McClelland and Lucy Johnston – were selected from more than seventy applicants from universities across the UK.

Challenge UK will be the first television series made in the UK specifically for China. The overall project is being coordinated by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office as part of this year's Think UK initiative to promote the UK in China. Each team in the bilingual (Mandarin and English) adventure challenge, which is being filmed at various locations in the UK, will have two British students and two Chinese students – so our students will be competing against each other!

The next issue of EastAsia@Sheffield will feature first-hand accounts of the filming of the adventure series.

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 webpage www.seas.ac.uk

BA degrees
Most degrees involve four years of study. Those marked* take three years.

Single honours
- Chinese Studies
- Japanese Studies
- Korean Studies
- East Asian Studies*

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

Note: Some of the above combinations are still subject to formal approval.

Postgraduate taught degrees

In-house
- MA/Diploma/Certificate in Chinese Studies
- MA in Advanced 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 Language and Society
- MA in Advanced Japanese Studies
- MA/Diploma/Certificate in Modern Korean Studies
- MSc/Diploma/Certificate in East Asian Political Economy
- MSc/Diploma in East Asian Business

Distance learning
- MA/Diploma in Japanese Language and Society
- MA in Advanced Japanese Studies
- MSc/Diploma 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 inter-regional studies.