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During the second half of the 19th century, at a time when a boom in Japanism (in French, Japonisme) was sweeping Europe, René Lalique published a number of works with motifs of Japanese garden plants, such as the *Lilium longiflorum* (White Trumpet Lily). Lalique had never been to Japan. How did he learn about this plants of Japanese origin?

Philipp Franz Balthasar von Siebold, a German doctor who had lived in Japan twice, late in the Edo period (from 1823 to 1829 and then again from 1859 to 1862), brought enormous collections of Japanese arts and crafts, as well as plants, to the Netherlands. We were able to view his collections at the National Museum of Ethnology (Rijksmuseum Volkenkunde) in Leiden, and at the Museum Five Continents (Museum Fünf Kontinente) in Munich, among other places. The plants he had brought back were transported to various parts of Europe and triggered a boom in gardening using plants of Japanese origin. Meanwhile, Japanese art was attracting public attention in Europe, resulting in a boom in Japanism. The plants Siebold brought back from Japan provided artistic stimulation to some artists of the Art Nouveau movement, such as Émile Gallé and René Lalique.

On January 30, 2016, the National Institutes for the Humanities, Japan (NIHU) held a symposium in Tokyo titled "Siebold's Introduction of Japanese Culture: Commemorating the 150th Anniversary of His Death."

The symposium summarized the results of a research project

"Study of the Siebold Family Collection and Other Materials Collected in Japan and Taken Overseas in the Nineteenth Century" (Hub research center: National Museum of Japanese History, Japan, REKIHAKU) that NIHU has been conducting in the researching and studying Project which is about foreign materials related to Japan.

At the symposium, Josef Kleiner, Professor Emeritus of the University of Bonn and Visiting Researcher of Hosei University Research Center for International Japanese Studies, Hideaki Oba, Professor Emeritus of the University of Tokyo, and Yoko Matsui, Professor of the Historiographical Institute, University of Tokyo, provided a history of the introduction of Japanese culture to Europe and its reception there, and spoke about the plants that Siebold had taken back to Europe and their subsequent influence on Japanism.

This research project will provide an image-attached database with approximately 6,000 items of the Siebold Collection of the Museum Five Continents in Munich on the REKIHAKU website from March, 2016 ([Database REKIHAKU](#))

In addition, it plans to hold a Special Exhibition about Siebold at REKIHAKU from July 12, 2016. In the Botanical Garden of Everyday Life, REKIHAKU, several species of the plants known as Siebold's Children*, donated by the Leiden University Botanical Garden, have been cultivated, and we can view these plants there.

*Siebold's Children: Seedlings that people have cultivated from the seeds of Siebold's plants.



NIHU symposium "Siebold's Introduction of Japanese Culture: Commemorating the 150th Anniversary of His Death"[January 30, 2016,TOKYO]



Study of Japanese artifacts at the Museum Five Continents in Munich



Vol. 001 Grief of Local People

When series of major earthquakes first struck Kumamoto Prefecture, I was in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia, China. I was there to speak about [the Northeast Asia Area Study project](#), which the National Institutes for the Humanities (NIHU) began promoting in April 2016, and encourage participation in joint global research. I believe that local researchers must be engaged to proactively participate in research.

Because I had been requested by Inner Mongolia University to lecture, I took the opportunity to speak about the introduction of the NIHU project in one of my lectures. The research project features a system, in which five institutes addressing different issues all work together. The National Museum of Ethnology (MINPAKU), one of institutes that make up the NIHU, acts as the center base. The specific area of research it focuses on is *nature and civilization as seen through the movement and exchange of people, goods, and systems*. Research is carried out with cooperation with the National Museum of Japanese History (REKIHAKU), another museum in the NIHU. The Slavic-Eurasian Research Center of Hokkaido University is in charge of international politics and tackles research on *international relations which aim to establish an inter-regional cooperation structure*. Cooperating with the Research Institute for Humanity and Nature (RIHN) of NIHU, the Center for Northeast Asian Studies of Tohoku University conducts research on *cultures and policies related to environmental issues and regional resources*. The Center for Far Eastern Studies of Toyama University is in charge of *research on the evolution of international specialization and the sustainable use of natural resources*, with the aim of achieving sustainable economic development. Focusing on historical identities, the Institute for North East Asian Research of the University of Shimane Prefecture conducts research on the *creation of modern space and its influence* in cooperation with the International Research Center for Japanese Studies (NICHIBUNKEN) of NIHU. As described above, this is a program in which the five institutes collaborate and promote comprehensive area study by sharing and addressing specific issues, such as international relations, economic cooperation, environmental issues, cultural complexes, and historical perceptions.

In accordance with their interests, local researchers will be able to appear their research results as international members of the teams of each institute. Likewise, by setting out research issues in an organized manner, local researchers will be able to cooperate with research as one of the bases of the international network.

One example is the comprehensive research of Huhutog. Huhutog means “blue flag” and was the name of the Mongolian newspaper published in Manchukuo (the “puppet state of Manchuria” in China). It is known that Japanese people were also heavily involved in editing the newspaper. In Japan, researchers create digital copies of the newspaper and examine the details of its foundation and other matters primarily through official documents, while local researchers are able to share and read articles related to various subjects, including agriculture and livestock farming and literature. By focusing on a group of particular documents, a variety of research fields come to the surface, and this enables Japan and local areas to cooperate with each other. After careful discussion, a specific example of this research has emerged.

Jilin University also hosted an academic exchange where modern social history researchers gathered from various universities in the northeastern part of China. At this academic exchange, I introduced articles from my previous research results that was related to modern social history, and once again highlighted the NIHU program. Changchun city, where Jilin University is located, was once called Shinkyō and served as the capital of the puppet state of Manchuria. As a result, cooperation with Japanese researchers might be essential in conducting research on modern social history of this area. I felt the great expectations local researchers held for assistance from Japan. There is no real need to provide funds to China, a country whose GNP has surpassed Japan's and now ranks as the world's second largest economy. What is essential is the sharing of information.

Incidentally, one student asked me a question after I introduced the program in Hohhot. He asked how he would be able to deal with the environmental issues his hometown faced in the wake of regional development. The environmental destruction of the grass reminds me of a demonstration that took place in 2011. Nomads started an opposition movement because they were no longer able to graze as a result of the severe deterioration of the natural environment in areas near where the mines were developed. One of the trucks trying to control the protesters ran over members of the crowd and killed one pastoralist. The news of this incident triggered demonstrations in Hohhot and even Beijing. Since then, the Chinese government's surveillance of research on environmental issues has become incredibly tight, and research must now be conducted with extreme care. As a person who lives outside China, I must refrain from recklessly instigating students.

These demonstrations have been quelled, but similar incidents are taking place in other places. In fact, during my visit a series of scenes from skirmishes taking place in Jarud Banner unexpectedly appeared on people's mobile phones. Jarud Banner is a region in the northwest of Tong Liao city in which people were forcibly relocated due to the development of coal mines in Hologol. When I visited there in 2013, the smog in the surrounding areas was really bad. However, the impact of pollution is only not limited to the air, and unfortunately has many damaging and serious consequences. There have been cases in which naked lambs without any hair and goats with one eye being born. Pictures of policemen holding back pastoralists who stood up demanding the truth were distributed through WeChat in China, but the distribution of information from the area then stopped. According to rumors, in addition to road blocks, the information network is also believed to have been intercepted.

It is a social disaster when traffic routes and information networks are cut off, even when there are no earthquakes. What can we do for the grieving people who live in areas suffering from social disasters? The natural limits of all research are what compel me to be a researcher who at least understands the grief of the local people.

KONAGAYA Yuki
Executive Director, NIHU



Vol. 002 Challenges to the Northeast Asia Regional Studies

The National Institutes for the Humanities "[Northeast Asia Area Studies Project](#)" which involves 5 institutions including [the National Museum of Ethnology \(MINPAKU\)](#), [Center for Northeast Asian Studies of Tohoku University](#), [Center for Far Eastern Studies of Toyama University](#), [Institute for North East Asian Research \(NEAR\) of the University of Shimane Prefecture](#) and [the Slavic-Eurasian Research Center \(SRC\) of Hokkaido University](#). Within this project team, the SRC is responsible for the "international relations for the construction of inter-regional cooperation in Northeast Asia"

On May 28-29, the kick off conference titled "Challenges to the Northeast Asia Regional Studies" for the SRC project unit took place in cooperation with the NEAR at the University of Shimane Prefecture. The two day conference started off with the keynote speech by Professor Emeritus at the University of Tokyo, Haruki Wada, titled "Prospects and Challenges to Northeast Asia Regional Studies". Professor Wada touched upon the positionality of the Northeast Asian region and touched upon how the region itself was constructed in history. The presentation looked at the obstacles that hinder further cooperation in this region which include the North Korean issue, rise of China and traditional bilateral security regimes. Furthermore, the unhealed scars of the past and other historical issues including the comfort women and reconciliation and territorial issues are issues that remain to be resolved. However, there is a glimmer of hope in which the countries of Northeast Asia could and should cooperate on, such as emergency response to natural and man-made disasters, environmental issues as well as economic institutions.

The keynote speech was followed by two commentaries by the Director of NEAR, [Atsushi Inoue](#) and SRC's very own [Akihiro](#)

Iwashita. Atsushi Inoue touched upon the creation of modern space and identity in the Northeast Asian region and how that could be new perspective in approaching the region, and Akihiro Iwashita's posed a rather provocative comments on the possibility of a breakthrough within the Northeast Asian region through a bilateral security alliance between Japan and Korea.

In the discussion, issues such as strategic partnership, the fluidity within the Northeast Asian region, as well as the network of the Korean diaspora were brought up by members of the project unit. All of the issues raised by the project members pose as keywords and possible directions for the project at hand. The next project conference is scheduled to take place in Kokura in Kita-Kyushu in December.

Written by: Naomi Chi
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Haruki Wada, professor Emeritus at the University of Tokyo



Akihiro Iwashita, professor of SRC



Vol. 003 Dutch eyewitness accounts of the Siege of Osaka

"You will know that we here in Sakai are in great disturbance. The reason being that the emperor [Ieyasu] has come with his full might and camped his army in Fushimi and its environs, in order to besiege Osaka with force. Those from Osaka are in good spirits, they are expecting the arrival of the emperor. Most of the citizens of Osaka and Sakai have fled with their belongings to various places". With these words the Dutch trader Melchior van Santvoort starts his letter, written in Dutch on the 29th of November 1614 (the month and the day are in Japanese calendar, December 18 in Gregorian calendar) in Sakai, during the winter campaign of the siege of Osaka.

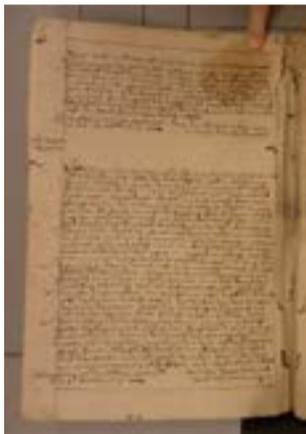
A letter by Elbert Woutersz, a servant of the Dutch East India Company, dated January 29, 1615, describes the ruinous condition of Osaka after the winter campaign. Wouterz arrived in Sakai on the 25th and went to Osaka the next day. "By order of Hideyori, more than 15000 houses were burnt, resulting in a broad square, larger than the shooting range of a canon", Woutersz writes.

Such eyewitness accounts related to the siege of Osaka can be found in 10 letters written by Dutch traders such as Melchior van Santvoort, Elbert Woutersz and Matthijs ten Broecke. These letters were sent from Sakai, Osaka, Kyoto and Murotsu (present-

day Tatsuno city) before and after the battles and transmit what the Dutch saw and heard in those respective places. In these letters the fear and panic of the citizens in those harsh times are clearly recorded. The letters provide us with a rare glimpse of what ordinary citizens experienced, contrary to most Japanese documents, which mainly give us the viewpoint of the Tokugawa bakufu.

The survey of the letters is conducted as part of a joint research project "The Hirado Project" between [Nichibunken](#) and Leiden University. For the period between 1609 and 1633 there have been 524 letters identified so far. These letters contain a wealth of information on the international relations and society of the early Edo period. The goal of this project is to publish annotated transcriptions and Japanese translations of these sources. "The Hirado project" is part of "Japan-related Documents and Artifacts Held Overseas : NIHU International Collaborative Research and Utilization".

Frederik Cryns
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Melchior van Santvoort to Jacques Specx, Sakai, November 29, 1614 (Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Nederlandse Factorij in Japan, nummer toegang 1.04.21, inventarisnummer 276)



Elbert Woutersz to Jacques Specx, Sakai, January 29, 1615
(Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Nederlandse Factorij in Japan, nummer toegang 1.04.21, inventarisnummer 276)



Vol. 004 Niche of Yōkai

The unique attraction of Japanese Yōkai monsters is their slightly creepy appearance, which piques our curiosity and makes us want to see them. In Japan, these monsters have been depicted in paintings since the days of old. They take on a variety of different forms, ranging from Yōkai that look dreadful to those that are simply lovely. What kinds of place are haunted by these monsters?

The National Institutes for the Humanities (NIHU) held the 28th NIHU Symposium entitled “*Yōkai Kukan – Deshouana Basho (Niche of Yōkai)*” in Tokyo on June 11, 2016. At the symposium, a keynote lecture was given by Kazuhiko Komatsu, the Director General of [the International Research Center for Japanese Studies \(NICHIBUNKEN\)](#) Bunkakorosha (Person of Cultural Merit) in 2016.

This was followed by lectures given by Professor Maori Saito of [the National Institute of Japanese Literature \(NIJL\)](#) Emeritus Professor Toru Tsunemitsu of [the National Museum of Japanese History\(REKIHAKU\)](#) and Professor [Manami Yasui](#) of Tenri University. Their lectures discussed how Yōkai monsters enter and leave cities, mansions, human bodies, and other places.

[Summaries of the lectures, which were distributed on the day of the symposium](#) can be downloaded from NIHU's official website. A digest video of the symposium is also available on [YouTube](#).

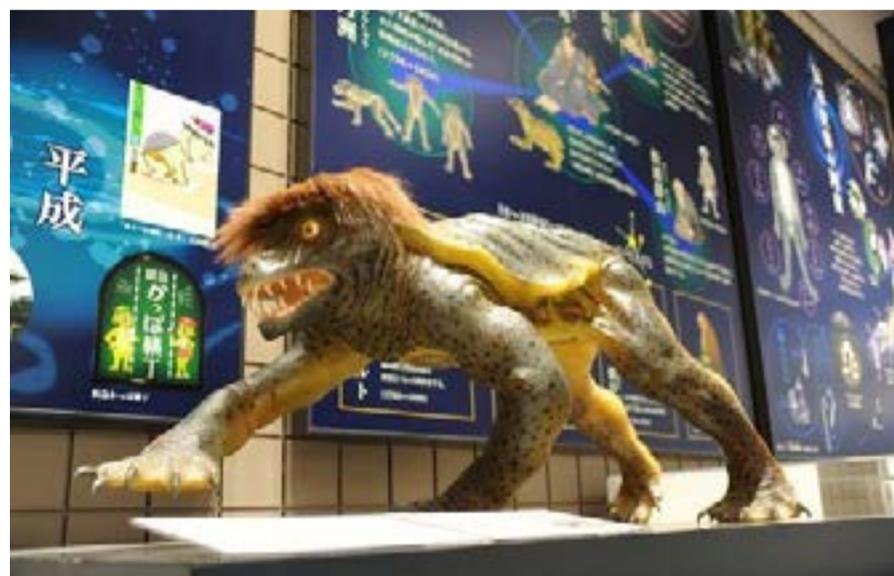
If you want to know more about Yōkai monsters, [databases published by NICHIBUNKEN](#) are useful resources. These include the [Illustrations of Strange Phenomena and Yōkai](#) a collection that contains digitized ultra-high-quality images of 26 Yōkai emaki (picture scrolls depicting monsters), [Paintings of Strange Phenomena and Yōkai](#) which contains 3,660 images concerning strange occurrences and Yōkai depicted in visual materials, and [Folktales of Strange Phenomena and Yōkai](#) which consists of 35,826 items of bibliographic information about cases of strange occurrences and Yōkai reported in folklore research papers and other materials.

In addition, Gallery 4 (Folklore) of REKIHAKU exhibits materials about strange occurrences and Yōkai.

You can also search for various materials on strange occurrences and Yōkai by using the [nihuINT](#) an integrated system for research materials that is offered by NIHU.



28th NIHU Symposium “Yōkai Kukan – Deshouna Basho (Niche of Yōkai)” in Tokyo on June 11, 2016.



Kappa monster, gallery 4 (Folklore) of REKIHAKU exhibit



Vol. 005 Constructing Integrated Studies of Cultural and Research Resources, and Renovating Sharing Infrastructures of Research Resources in Japanese History and Culture

The National Museum of Japanese History (REKIHAKU) opened the Center for Integrated Studies of Cultural and Research Resources to establish its core research project, “Constructing Integrated Studies of Cultural and Research Resources”. This project offers unique insight into a variety of studies and Japanese historical resources, through multidisciplinary collaboration with universities, museums, and other institutions. Here, we share information on the following topics.

“Integrated Studies of Cultural and Research Resources” approaches Japanese historical resources through interdisciplinary study in the humanities and sciences using information infrastructure. Classifying various cultural and research materials into time periods, regions, and research fields, and analysis with an interdisciplinary scope can lead to more advanced sharing infrastructure and additional cooperative studies.

“The Research Circulation Access Model” is formulated in line with the aim of the REKIHAKU’s core project: to enable access to resource information based on a research result supports another new research. Moreover, creating an environment that enables access to resource information in Japan can ensure ease in referring to “the original evidence” of various research results. REKIHAKU implements a “museum-based research integration” using the research results as permanent or special exhibits and promotes interdisciplinary studies and educational activities in the humanities and sciences. Such accumulated expertise supports the foundation of the Research Circulation Access Model.

Workshop 1 aims to create an environment of information infrastructure that enables access to resource information in Japan. In this workshop, knowledge is analysed and accumulated to support access to resource information based on research results. Focusing on Japanese historical resources as “materials”, Workshop2 aims to conduct interdisciplinary study in the humanities and sciences.

As such, this workshop further applies richer information taken from each resource to various research fields. In cooperation with institutes, Workshop 3 aims to create a model applying research results based on “Integrated Studies of Cultural and Research Resources” to regional societies. Using the results of Workshops 1 and 2, this workshop explores local histories and cultures, with the collaboration of institutes. It also conducts outreach activities, such as education programs and exhibitions focused on REKIHAKU’s research results.

With this project, REKIHAKU emphasizes collaboration with relevant local and international institutes. Cooperative studies with universities and the renovation of a digital network through collaboration with institutes will also enable a backup of resource information in case of disaster, further supporting infrastructure. Moreover, we are developing an English translation of the available resource information and creating an environment that enables access to resources in Japan. We plan to conduct cooperative research, exhibitions, and international symposiums.

REKIHAKU is constructing and developing a digital network and English translation of the available resource information through collaboration with relevant institutes in Japan. The goal is to create an environment that enables access to resources in Japan. A backup of resource information, including non-disclosure for various reasons, will further support and restore infrastructure in case of disaster. We welcome any relevant information and appreciate cooperation in the construction of integrated studies of cultural and research resources and renovation of this digital network.



<Workshop 2 at NMJH on Jun. 5, 2016>



The National Museum of Taiwan History and NMJH conducted a research meeting for the further research collaborations in Taipei on May 26, 2016



The 27th annual conference of the EAJRS (European Association of Japanese Resource Specialists) "International Cooperation Between Japanese Studies Libraries" at the Central University Library, Bucharest, Romania, on Sep.14-17, 2016.



Vol. 006 National Institutes for the Humanities (NIHU) Northeast Asia Area Studies Project University of Shimane NEAR Center Project "Formation of Modern Spaces and their Impact"

1st International Symposium 2016 Northeast Asia: The Embryonic Stage

The symposium mentioned above took place over the course of a weekend, on November 19 and 20, 2016. Due to space constraints, I'm sure you will understand that I cannot go into full detail of all comments and questions during the event.

The first symposium as part of this project, and the first held at the Institute for North East Asian Research (NEAR Center), the event consisted of three sessions and a general debate, with the first two sessions taking place on the Saturday, and the third session and debate on the Sunday. The symposium was based on the premise that the period up to the 18th century (mainly the 17th century) in Northeast Asia was an "embryonic stage," during which the foundations were laid for the "preliminary stage" from the 19th century onwards, as modernization began to sweep across the region. Discussions revolved around the situation in each country in the region during that period, approaching the subject from three key perspectives; "perceptions," "ruling philosophies" and "exchange."

The first session was chaired by Xiao Dong Li (University of Shimane). Entitled "Perceptions: Self-Perception or History," it featured four reports, followed by comments and questions with Hiroki Oka (Tohoku University). A report from Tomoyasu Iiyama (Waseda University), entitled "12th-14th Century Northern China – the Borderland Between Mongolia and China," went back further than the 17th-18th century focus of the symposium to look at the northern part of China during the 12th to 14th centuries. He discussed the fact that northern China was strongly characterized as a borderland between the typically "Northern Asian" aspects of Mongolian culture and the Jiangnan region of China. Osamu Inoue (University of Shimane) meanwhile gave a report entitled "Research into Mongolian Chronicles and their Effects on Subsequent Generations." He provided an overview of numerous "Mongolian chronicles" written from the 17th to the 19th centuries, and outlined a direction for continuing research in the future. The next report, from Atsushi Inoue (University of Shimane), was entitled "Differing Perceptions between Korea and Japan." He talked about the impact that the Mongol invasions of Japan had on perceptions in both Japan and Korea, referring to sources such as the "Goryeosa (History of Goryeo)," "Annals of the Joseon Dynasty," "Taiheiki (Chronicle of Great Peace)" and "Jinno

Shotoki (Chronicles of the Authentic Lineages of the Divine Emperors).” Yoshikazu Nakamura (Professor Emeritus, Hitotsubashi University) gave a report on “The Utopia Legend (*Belovodye*) of the Russian Old Believers.” He spoke about the “Old Believers” (former followers), who emerged from the mid-17th century movement to reform the Russian Orthodox Church, and their fascination with the east, which they passed on through the generations by maintaining belief in the legend of utopia.

The second session, chaired by myself, was themed around “ruling philosophies,” and once again featured four reports followed by comments and questions with Xiao Dong Li. Takeo Kuryuzawa (Professor Emeritus, Hokkaido University) gave a report entitled “Ruling Philosophies in Russia during the Embryonic Stage.” He provided an overview of Russian history from 9th century Kiev onwards, and discussed key aspects of Russia’s relationship with Asia. This was followed by a report by Toshio Motegi (Tokyo Woman’s Christian University), entitled “Chinese Philosophies on Order.” He discussed the shape of order in China during the pre-modern era, while also looking at various “transformations” that have occurred in the modern era. Hiroki Oka gave a report on “The Qing Dynasty’s Rule over Mongolia in the Context of Mongolian History.” He explained that there was no “inner and outer” structure between the Qing Dynasty and Mongolia, highlighting the multifaceted nature of rule under the Qing Dynasty, based on a concurrent yet different historical context. Hyeon-Cheol Do (Yonsei University, South Korea) gave a report on “The Relationship between Neo-Confucian Ruling Philosophies under the Joseon Dynasty and China.” He discussed the reasons why Neo-Confucianism became the norm under the Joseon Dynasty, the inner workings of public opinion and politics during that era, and perceptions of the tributary-investiture relationship with China.

The following day, the third session on the 20th was chaired by Jianhui Liu (International Research Center for Japanese Studies) and was based on the theme of “exchange.” It featured two reports, followed by comments and questions with Tsuneo Namihira (University of the Ryukyus), Naoki Amano (Yamagata University) and Osamu Inoue. The first report was from Dong Yu Han (Northeast Normal University, China), entitled “The Academic Debate Surrounding the Issue of Self-Control in Pre-Modern Japan and China.” He discussed how the concept of “self-control” was portrayed in classical Chinese literature, and how it was received and understood when it came over to Japan. Akira Yanagisawa (Waseda University) then gave a report entitled “Russian-Chinese Diplomacy and Intermediary Languages in the 17-19th Centuries,” focusing discussion on which languages were used in negotiations between Qing Dynasty China and Russia during the 17th to 19th centuries, while also looking at translation systems and translator training.



<Participants discuss issues during a session>

This was followed by a general debate, chaired by Atsushi Inoue. The session began with a summary debate between a panel of four speakers, with Hiroki Oka, Naheya (Inner Mongolia University, China) and Eduard Baryshev (University of Tsukuba) joined on short notice by Yuki Konagaya (NIHU), before moving on to a question and answer session with speakers who had given reports. Yuki Konagaya summed up the symposium using the phrase “civilizations (i.e. the foundations that different cultures share) coming together.” She commented that, while there is real diversity between regions within Northeast Asia, embracing that diversity makes it possible to achieve a sense of stability, and pointed out that these two key points were evident in each of the reports. She also recommended taking into account the concepts of space and location when thinking about the Northeast Asia region on a conceptual level, and commented that working with the National Museum of Ethnology would be a viable option when it came to examining how different cultures come together.

Hiroki Oka referred to the “curious stability” and “diversity” of Northeast Asia, before raising the two questions of how to view Northeast Asia as a region and how to tackle research into the region. He stressed the importance of “paying more attention

to the north,” particularly in Japan. Naheya meticulously commented on and questioned each of the ten reports, while Eduard Baryshev singled out the “presence and dynamism of Mongolia” as one of the overriding features of the symposium. He also commented that Northeast Asia is a geographical reality and a space that is transforming itself, as it moves further away from the issue of ethnicity, and pointed out that Northeast Asia as a space depends on the relationships between those who make up the region. He finished by underlining the “presence and significance of the north,” and posing important questions regarding the symposium’s lack of any “western” input and the position of Japan within Northeast Asia.

I am already running out of space, but would just like to briefly share my thoughts on this event. As you can tell from the above, this symposium was an extensive, far-reaching affair, with western representatives from Kiev and Moscow alongside eastern counterparts from the Korean Peninsula and Japan, and a timeframe ranging from the 9th to the 17th centuries. It was an opportunity to experience “the contents of four conferences in one” (Konagaya). Although I myself chaired the second session, I must confess that I did get a little lost when the subject of the symposium turned to the west and the north. Having focused largely on the history of relations between Japan and Korea myself, I found I had trouble absorbing what was being said. Needless to say, this was due to my own lack of knowledge about the west and north, or moreover down to a lack of study on my part. Although, I wonder if this was also due to the absence of perspective on the entirety of Northeast Asia and method to consider Northeast Asia in a systematic manner.

How should we structure the history of Northeast Asia, or the history of Northeast Asian thought, which is not a collection of histories of each nation? There is a common saying “it’s always darkest before the dawn.” I think that describes this symposium perfectly. The more discussions progressed, the less clear things became. The key to overcoming this issue can be found in some of the ideas raised during the general debate. These include “the importance of the north (Mongolia/Russia)” and “mechanisms to enable us to accept differences and embrace diversity,” which after all is one of the defining characteristics of Northeast Asia. I may be wide of the mark, but personally, I found myself wondering if it might be worth re-reading Tadao Umesao’s “An Ecological View of History,” to avoid falling into the trap of focusing on “transhistorical notions.” The symposium gave me a real sense of the impact that lifestyles in Mongolia had on culture. I hope we can use this symposium as a stepping stone towards tackling this issue in the future, so that we can all welcome in the dawn.

(Note: This article is an edited version of a piece with the same name, due to be published in NEAR News No.51 (March 2017), the official newsletter of University of Shimane NEAR Center.)

Toru ISHIDA, University of Shimane



The symposium was held at the University of Shimane



Vol. 007 Reformation of Local Community through Recordings and Researches of Dialects

With advances in science and technology, human society has undergone huge changes. Language is no exception. In fact, it is claimed that the number of languages spoken in the world will be halved by the end of the 21st century. It may be difficult to imagine that languages will become extinct, but this claim may be more understandable if we replace the word “languages” with “dialects.” I suspect that most of us would say that the language we speak now is clearly different from the language our grandparents spoke (or speak). In this sense, it is conceivable that regional dialects are, to a greater or less degree, in danger of extinction. The National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics (NINJAL) is engaged in activities to make recordings of such dialects in the research unit entitled “Reformation of Local Community through Recordings and Researches of Dialects” which forms part of the Multidisciplinary Collaborative Projects - NIHU Transdisciplinary Project between NIHU and NINJAL called “Change of Local Communities and Reconstruction of Community Cultures after Disasters in Japanese Archipelago.”

Research into dialects is necessary to clarify the historical development of the Japanese language, among other reasons. However, this is not only an academic imperative. Local people also often express the view that they would like to make recordings of their dialect. It is the universities in the region that are the first to hear these views. However, the universities do not necessarily have the knowhow to make recordings of dialects, and it is fair to say that there is a high level of demand for such knowledge and technology. NINJAL is, therefore, trying to transfer its knowhow to regional universities and increase activities to make recordings of dialects.

As part of these activities, last year NINJAL conducted a survey in Okinoshima-cho, Shimane Prefecture in collaboration with Shimane University's Faculty of *Law and Literature*. Eight students from Shimane University and three graduate students from other universities took part in the survey. Since most of the students had no experience of a dialect survey, NINJAL provided preliminary training before embarking on the survey. In this preliminary training, researchers from the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa of Tokyo University of Foreign Studies and NINJAL delivered a short course on survey methods. This was the first time Tokyo research institutes and regional university had teamed up to conduct a survey in this way. In the actual field survey, the students took an active part in gathering 600 dialect words and data on accent and verb inflection. NINJAL plans to continue making recordings of dialects and contributing to educational activities at universities all over Japan through similar activities in the future.

HARADA Souichiro

Project Assistant Prof., Center for Transdisciplinary Innovation, NIHU



Students from Shimane University listening to recordings they had gathered in the preliminary training



Researchers and students asking participants questions in the Okinoshima survey



Vol. 008 Eco-health Colloquium 2016

NIHU jointly organized the Eco-health Colloquium 2016 (January 11-12, 2017) in Basel, Switzerland in collaboration with the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science Bonn Office (JSPS-Bonn) and the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute (Swiss TPH).

The Eco-health is a holistic approach which integrates human health alongside environmental considerations such as sustainability is the more proactive choice.

For example, one effective way of controlling insect-borne *disease is to eradicate the insect that carries the disease, and yet mass spraying programs using DDT have a severe impact on surrounding ecosystems. Though not the focus of a great deal of attention in Japan, which has comparatively little involvement with livestock, the importance of integrated infectious disease prevention for livestock and people has been brought to the forefront of people's minds through the emergence of Avian Influenza and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease.* Based on an awareness of these issues, NIHU launched a research project called “Rethinking Eco-health in Asia” in 2016, with one of its members the Research Institute for Humanity and Nature (RIHN) as the representative organization.

At the colloquium, 17 researchers mainly from Japan and Switzerland held impassioned discussion and debate for two days on the themes of “Eco-health in the 21st Century,” “Food and Safety” and “Africa Session.” Incorporating the *Science Café Method of debate, participants were divided into three groups, allowing them to have a more intensive exchange of opinions. One of the features of the recent colloquium was the incorporation of the issue of “food.” The issue of food is also often taken up in NIHU's research projects, and food is a central part of healthcare as seen in the Japanese term Ishoku-Dogen, which literally means “medicine and food coming from the same source”. It stands to reason that food and health are inextricably linked and this colloquium also brought this message home strongly to participants.*

Above and beyond the themes, an area in which many researchers showed interest was ethics. In previous natural sciences-based research, research that relates to health tended to focus on examination in terms of medical technology. However, in the case of problems that relate to health or food, humanities such as ethics and religious studies must also play a part. Especially when we try to think about returning profit to society through the utilization of research results in policy measures to build a better society, the deployment of research results or their imposition from a medical technology perspective alone is, if anything, even harmful. With regard to ethics, the vague idea that there will be no Eco-health research in the future without an examination in terms of intergenerational equity in the utilization of resources, bioethics and such like appeared to be the undercurrent among researchers, and this colloquium served as an opportunity to tap into this idea.

Other participants from Japan besides NIHU (RIHN) were the University of Tokyo, Tohoku University, Rakuno Gakuen University and Nagasaki University.

SATO Yo-Ichiro
Executive Director, NIHU



Group photograph of participants (January 11, 2017, TPH lecture room)



Vol. 009 Sustainable Use of Resources in Northeast Asia

On January 18, 2017, the Center for Far Eastern Studies (CFES) of University of Toyama hosted the international symposium “Sustainable Use of Resources in Northeast Asia” as a part of the efforts in CFES for the National Institute for the Humanities (NIHU) Area Studies Project for Northeast Asia. The symposium was jointly organized with NIHU and supported by the Toyama Prefectural Government. Within the project, CFES engages in the studies of economics and related fields. In the fiscal year 2016, in particular, CFES has conducted research mainly on the international division of labor in forestry and wood resources and on the sustainable use of these resources in the Northeast Asian region. Inviting researchers from Japan, China, Korea and Taiwan and an officer of the Toyama Prefectural Government, the symposium was held for the principal purposes of improving the research level through discussions among researchers and releasing the research findings into society through the open session. With the help from within the university and outside as mentioned above, the symposium offered a rich variety of research presentations and lectures related to the Northeast Asian region and forest and wood resources.

The symposium was featured in the four newspapers including the *Kitanippon Shimbun* and the *Yomiuri Shimbun*. This reflects the high level of interest in the Northeast Asian region and in forestry and wood resources in the prefecture.

Researcher Session

The researchers from Renmin University of China, Kangwon National University, Korea, and National Taiwan University, as well as the National Museum of Ethnology and University of Toyama participating in the NIHU Northeast Asia Area Studies Project gave presentations and had an active discussion in the researcher session. The session was rich in its multidisciplinary, given that it included presentations on not only theoretical and empirical researches based on the economic approach but also on studies based on the approach of cultural anthropology, and that Toyama faculty members of the natural science departments participated in the discussions. Professor Hsu Shih-hsun of National Taiwan University reported a theoretical assessment on the likely impact of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) on Taiwan’s forest and wood-related industries drawing on an economic model, or the general equilibrium model, and numerical simulations. Utilizing an econometric approach, Professor Zhao Guoqing of Renmin University of China and Professor Ma Jun of University of Toyama each reported empirical studies on the fluctuations of fossil fuel prices and timber trade in Japan, China and Korea. Professor Kim Joon-Soon of Kangwon National University delivered a presentation on the evaluation method of the eco-system and the environment based on an economic approach and its application to the forests in Korea. Subsequently, Professor Kazunobu Ikeya of the National Museum of Ethnology gave a presentation on the use and management of non-timber forest products based on the findings from a cultural anthropological perspective and surveys.



Discussion in the Researcher Session



Lecture in the Open Session

Open Session

The open session began with a greeting from Professor Hiroko Imamura, director of CFES. It included four lectures with a focus on the timber- and forest-related industries and trade in Japan, China and Korea. In the first half of the session, Professor Kim Se Bin of Chungnam National University, Korea delivered a lecture “Development and Prospects of the Korean Timber Industry: An Industrial Organization Theory Approach”. It was followed by a lecture entitled “Wood Supply for 70 Years in Post-World War II Japan and the Current State of Forests” from Professor Shin Nagata of the University of Tokyo. These two lectures clarified the history and current state of the timber industry in Japan and Korea, as well as the fact that both countries are facing similar policy issue of promoting the use of domestically produced timber products.

Professor Kong Xiangzhi of Renmin University of China gave a lecture entitled “Study of China’s Forestry Policy and Wood Circulation System” to review the current status of forest and wood-related resources and trading in China as well as policy issues including forest conservation. Subsequently, Mr. Makoto Shimizu, councilor for the Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Department of the Toyama Prefectural Government, presented a lecture focused on Toyama Prefecture under the title “The Cyclical Use of Forestry Resources by Encouraging the Use of Timber Produced in Toyama Prefecture”. The lecture explained the current circumstances surrounding timber produced in the prefecture, including timber demand, industry and prices, as well as the prefectural government measures concerning the utilization of timber products grown in Toyama prefecture, including promoting wooden public buildings and subsidization for the new construction and renovation of wooden residential houses using local timber products.

CFES within the NIHU Northeast Asia area studies project will continuously endeavor to organize international and interdisciplinary academic conferences and distribute and return the achievements to society.

Gaku Ito

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Vol. 010 Renewal of the Advanced Collaboration/Integrated Search System “nihuINT”

■ What is nihuINT?

The operation of [nihuINT \(nihu INTegrated\) retrieval system](#), began in 2008. nihuINT is as an integrated search system that allows easy access to research resources owned by the various bodies of the National Institute of Humanities (Phase I nihuINT). It allows for a one-stop, comprehensive searching of humanities databases with a wide variety of structures and includes a spatio-temporal search function that can return search results for a specific spatio-temporal range on a timeline or a map.

Currently, it offers access to the regional research database nDP (nihu Data Provider) operated by the Institute and the six bodies of the institute; moreover, it has also collaborated with the databases of external bodies such as the National Diet Library Search (NDL Search) and the Center for Integrated Area Studies, Kyoto University (CIAS) , thereby expanding the search range to 172 databases (phase II nihuINT).

■ Phase III nihuINT

Phase III nihuINT, which involved major upgrades to provide support for improved search speeds and smart devices, was announced in March 2017. Some of its features are introduced as follows.

(1) Goal-oriented search

A function to filter a target database has been introduced to more accurately provide the data that a user wants from large quantities of diverse data. However, this mechanism contradicts the cross-search feature known as an unpredictable discovery, so this issue will need to be further investigated.

(2) Smart device support

Because it was extremely difficult to view results on the small screen of a mobile terminal and the search results required considerable time to be displayed, access from a PC was envisaged in phase II of niHuINT. The aim in phase III of niHuINT was to provide a “powerful search tool that university undergraduate and graduate students studying humanities can use casually from their smartphones.” Therefore, the size of the displayed text was considered and a search function for mobile terminals that would allow agile and rapid cross-searches, instead of narrowing down functionality, was provided.

Furthermore, in phase III of niHuINT, a function to enable the transmission of search results on social networking sites, such as twitter or Facebook, was stipulated; this being an effort to enhance communication.

■ Continually Evolving niHuINT

Furthermore, we shall continue to add convenient features to the current phase III of niHuINT in operation.

(1) Expanded collaboration with the databases of external institutions

Currently, we have achieved a cross-search function linking databases from various institutes, such as the

National Diet Library and the CIAS, and shall further expand the collaborative databases to develop an information foundation that encompasses all humanities fields.

(2) Collaboration with repositories

Thus far, the focus of niHuINT has been on improving access to research materials; however, moving forward, we plan to collaborate with institute repositories and provide search services that enable bi-directional access to both research materials and research results.

(3) Improved cross-search functionality

To improve the standard of collaboration and cross-searches between a wide variety of databases, we are developing technology to not only align the format of metadata in advance but also create metadata to read the data contents.

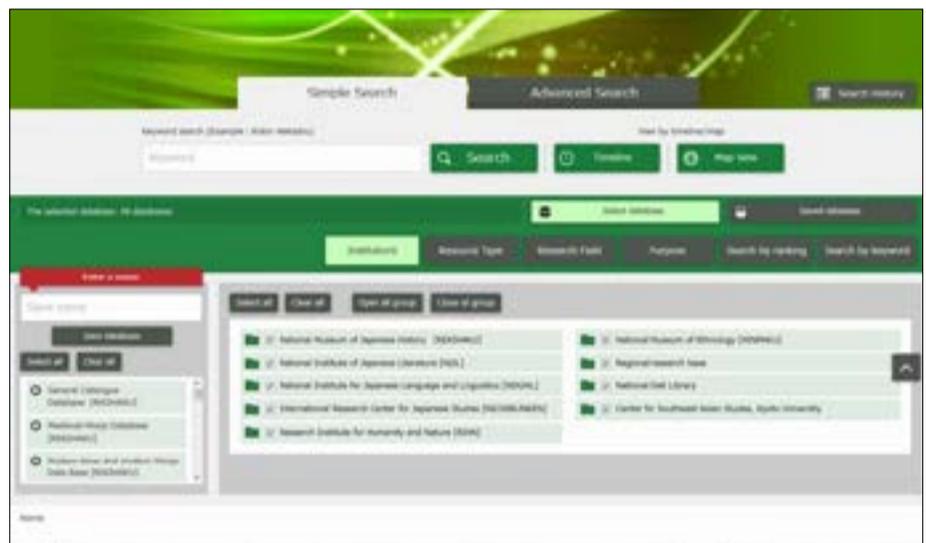
(4) Support for Linked Data

Recently, we have begun database structure research using Linked Data from the perspective of flexible integrated search, as well as simple collaboration with other institutions, and reuse for the purposes of data mining. To date, we have used commonplace methods of searching databases, wherein a word is searched, and the results are selected from a list of results. Furthermore, it is expected that we shall be able to link these search results to various linked data.

(5) Support for multimedia

niHuINT began with support for inventory-type databases and supported map images with positional information in phase II. It is not yet compatible with sound sources or videos, so we shall investigate the use of multimedia in future.

When niHuINT began its service aimed at humanities resource sharing, its attempts at cross searching were not so commonplace. However, recently, information services using cross-search are being used in a wide variety of areas such as hotel reservation systems and electrical appliance price comparisons. In phase III of niHuINT, a goal for the cross-search function, as it enters its practical phase, is to make it faster, more convenient, and more refined in regard to its search services for all people interested in humanities.





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