

SHASHI



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Abstracts of the Shashi Group Sponsored AAS Panels from 2011 to 2016

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The Japanese Company Histories Interest Group (Shashi Group) consecutively organized and sponsored workshop and panels at annual conferences of the Association of Asian Studies (AAS) from 2011 to 2016. One of the primary purposes of this journal was publishing papers presented at the panels. Unfortunately, a variety of circumstances prevented the publication of many of these papers. Therefore, we have compiled the abstracts of panels and papers and any relevant information about subsequent publication here for the record.

Workshop at 2011 AAS in Hawaii

Researching with Shashi: A Workshop on Using Japanese Company and Institutional Histories and Archives

Thursday, March 31, 2011
Hawaii Convention Center, Honolulu, HI

Workshop Description

Japanese company and institutional histories open windows into the past. Richly illustrated and packed with information, chronologies and data while layered with corporate and societal values, shashi provide rich research value. Corporate and institutional archives preserve sources used for the histories along with extensive primary resources of administration. While most corporate archives in Japan are not open, some have moved to collective repositories, now accessible to researchers. Shashi are useful for research in many fields and disciplines as well, providing information that creates context, allows three-dimensional views of individuals, and illuminates case studies. This workshop explores the research potential of shashi and archives, as well as the limitations that make them challenging to use, along with practical workarounds that can help.

Organizer/Chair: Hiroyuki N. Good, University of Pittsburgh

Discussant: Tokiko Bazzell, University of Hawaii at Manoa

1. Panelist: Yasuhiro Eguchi, Gakushūin Women's College

Paper title: A Study of Practical Uses of Company Histories (*Shashi*)

Abstract

My paper will discuss approaches to increase the collecting of shashi, a challenging task due to their autobiographical nature and their distribution via non-commercial channels. Strategic actions (IR • PR, CS R, M & A, branding, etc.) are required of today's companies, so the strategic implications (mission) for shashi has increased. Therefore, I will discuss what meaning shashi hold for users, and reconsider the position and meaning of shashi for stakeholders. My analysis will show that by considering three types of value creation (pleasure), namely the pleasure of discovering and collecting, the pleasure of cataloging, and the pleasure of being used by users, we can recognize the importance of switching from archeological values to marketing values when discussing shashi.

2. Panelist: Masataka Yano, University of Tokyo

Paper title: Corporate data (*kigyō shiryō*) and Archives, focus on company histories

Abstract

From a viewpoint of an archivist, I will differentiate corporate data (*kigyō shiryō*) from its function (creating entity, contents, etc.) and form (media, etc.). From this differentiation, I will show that there are many different levels of *kigyō shiryō*. Then, I will introduce the *kigyō shiryō*, which are held by the Resources and Historical Collections Office, Library of Economics, University of Tokyo, according to such differentiation. I will also introduce trends related to the material collected, the state of preservation, and the status of access to the library by the public. Pros and cons related to external institutions holding *kigyō shiryō* are discussed. The relationship between shashi compilation project and external archives will be discussed using selected materials from the collection.

* His paper was published in *the Annual Bulletin of Resources and Historical Collections Office*, vol.2, 2012-03-31,

https://repository.dl.itc.utokyo.ac.jp/?action=pages_view_main&active_action=repository_view_main_item_detail&item_id=27674&item_no=1&page_id=28&block_id=31

* Related essays

- “An Essay about the Relationship between Access to and the Characteristics of Media in Museums, Libraries, and Archives: From the Collections at the Resources and Historical Collections Office, the Library of Economics, the University of Tokyo (Japanese),” *Journal of the Japan Society for Archival Science*. vol. 20, 2014.5.
- An Essay about the Preservation of Media: Introduction to the Way of Long Term Use of Digital Media (Japanese), *Journal of Information Science and Technology Association*, vol.66, no.4, 2016.4, https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/article/jkg/66/4/66_160/_article/-char/ja/

3. Panelist: Maureen Donovan, Ohio State University
Paper title: Japanese Company Histories as Repositories of Tacit Knowledge

Abstract

With the Japanese economy continuing to languish in the doldrums, a special issue of *The Weekly Toyo Keizai* (commemorating 115 years of publication) carried an article urging businessmen to consult Japanese company histories to find the tacit know-how they need to re-start the economic engines of the country. This paper examines the role that Japanese corporate histories play in preserving a company's hard-earned tacit knowledge, embedded in stories meant to last for generations, and why this is making them increasingly relevant in the 21st century, not only for businessmen but also for scholars.

* Her research note was published in *Shashi* Vol.4 no.1 (2016)
<http://shashi.pitt.edu/ojs/index.php/shashi/article/view/31>

4. Panelist: Ann Sherif, Oberlin College
Paper title: Technologies of Printing and Regional Literatures in Hiroshima, 1945

Abstract

When war, political upheaval, and economic and material scarcity disrupt a publishing industry, how do writers find their way back into print? I will explore the ways that technologies of printing and politics intersected with literary and media discourses in World War II and post-atomic bomb Hiroshima. An examination of the regional publisher Chugoku Shimibun and renowned poet Toge Sankichi allows us to see the dynamics of regional publishing and cultural consumption, in contrast to the dominance of the Tokyo literary establishment and publishing industry.

* Her paper was published in *Shashi* Vol.1 no.1 (2012)
<http://shashi.pitt.edu/ojs/index.php/shashi/article/view/4>

Panel at 2012 AAS in Toronto

Researching Early Modern and Modern History of Japan with *Shashi* (Japanese Company Histories)

Sunday, March 18, 2012
Sheraton Center, Toronto, Canada

Panel Description

More than 50,000 Japanese companies are over 100 years old. Among them, 3,886 businesses are over 200 years old. World oldest company, *Kongôdo* was established in 578 in Kyoto, Japan. Since the Meiji period, many Japanese companies have published *shashi*, or company histories. *Shashi* contain not only the company's history, but also that of their industries. They reflect changes in culture, conditions and social environment. *Shashi* also present history going back to the medieval and early modern periods, since so many Japanese companies have experienced extraordinary longevity.

This panel will examine approaches to using *shashi* as research resources. Charles Andrews raises questions about early modern origins of Japan's modern communications networks identified in a close reading of the company history of Nippon Express, a global transport and logistics corporation founded in the late Tokugawa period. Yuriko Kadokura looks into various *shashi* to find how Japanese companies, and Japanese society as a whole, dealt with difficulties following the Great Kanto Earthquake, how they chose

their path to recovery, and how they recorded these actions to share with future generations. Martha Chaiklin investigates how western footwear was adopted and produced in nineteenth century Japan by researching *shashi*, newspapers, magazines and literary sources. Bringing these three papers together as a panel provides an opportunity for critical discussion of the potential and limitations of *shashi* as resources for various kinds of academic research.

Organizer: Hiroyuki N. Good, University of Pittsburgh

Chair: Richard Smethurst, University of Pittsburgh

1. Panelist: Charles Andrews, Transylvania University
 Paper title: The Limits of an Indispensable History: Nittsū's Company History as a Guide to the Early Modern Origins of Japan's Modern Communications

Abstract

The researcher of modern Japanese economic or business history will undoubtedly run across references to commemorative in-house histories of specific organizations--*Shashi*--in the initial stages of research. The utility of these histories to the researcher will of course depend on a variety of factors, but as they become increasingly available in the West through the collaborative efforts of librarians and scholars both in the US and Japan, examples of how such materials have informed specific research should encourage scholars to explore their potential.

This paper introduces the company history of Nippon Express (Nippon Tsūun Kabushiki Kaisha, or Nittsū), now a global transport and logistics corporation. While Nittsū's 1962 company history commemorates the 25th anniversary of the company as a post-war private business, this *shashi* directly traces Nittsū's origins to the late Tokugawa period (1600-1868), and indirectly to the emergence of the great merchant transporters of Edo, Osaka, and Kyoto. For the researcher of Japan's early modern communications Nittsū's history is an indispensable guide to the emergence of major transporters and their relationships to their clientele, the Tokugawa government, and to each other. But in drawing both explicit and implicit connections with the foremost transporters of early modern Japan, Nittsū's history leaves the researcher with compelling questions about the extent of Tokugawa Japan's interconnectedness and development of competing transporters as Japan modernized.

* His paper was published in *Shashi* Vol.1 no.1 (2012)
<http://shashi.pitt.edu/ojs/index.php/shashi/article/view/3>

2. Yuriko Kadokura, Shibusawa Eiichi Memorial Foundation
 Paper title: The Great Kanto Earthquake as Seen in *Shashi*

Abstract

Since the Meiji period, companies throughout Japan have published *shashi*, or company histories. *Shashi* contain not only the company's history and business, but also numerous descriptions of the contemporary social environment including the effects of disasters and war. *Shashi* show how various companies, and Japanese society as a whole, dealt with the difficulties they faced, how they chose their path to recovery, and how they recorded these actions to share with future generations. Following the Great East Japan Earthquake, the category "Disaster and Revival as Seen in *Shashi*" was added to the Research Center for the History of Entrepreneurship's blog. The category allows users to access information from the "Company History Index Database Project," which is currently under construction, and introduces *shashi* including articles on "Disaster and Revival", especially the Great Kanto Earthquake.

* Her research note was published in *Shashi* Vol.1 no.1 (2012)
<http://shashi.pitt.edu/ojs/index.php/shashi/article/view/7>

3. Martha Chaiklin, University of Pittsburgh

Paper title: The March Forward: The Mechanization of Shoe Production in Meiji Japan

Abstract

One of the most iconic images of modernization in Japan is the photograph of Sakamoto Ryoma in full samurai regalia, except for his feet, which were shod in brogans. Nevertheless, Ryoma's boots were not a symbol of modern production, but instead were probably custom-made by hand using time-honed techniques. Images of Japanese people dressed in Western clothing are commonly used to exemplify modernization, yet the shift from traditional dress forms was neither immediate or linear.

Shoes represent one important aspect of this change and in terms of technological development are a more interesting case study than clothing. Specifically, weaving and sewing are some of the earliest mechanized technologies, but shoe construction is complex and requires a number of steps that require different technologies.

This paper will examine how western footwear was adopted and produced in nineteenth century Japan. Contemporary newspapers, magazines, company histories and fiction will be utilized to place mechanization within a social, political and economic context. It will discuss the interaction between the Meiji government, especially the Ministries of the Army and Navy, and the private sector and the introduction of technologies that led to a from traditional footwear produced by burakumin or as a by-industry on farms to cordwainers, cottage industry and ultimately mechanized mass production.

* Related presentations and publications:

- The March Forward: The Mechanization of Shoe Production in Meiji Japan in *Science, Technology, and Medicine in East Asia: Policy, Practice, and Implications in a Global Context*, Ohio State University, October 7-9 2011
- "Traditional Japanese Footwear: purity and pollution" in *Shoes: A History from Sandals to Sneakers* edited by Peter McNeil and Giorgio Riello. Oxford and New York: Berg Press, 2006.
- "Zori and Flipflop Sandal" *Iconic Design: 50 Stories about 50 Things* edited by Grace Lees-Maffei. London: Bloomsbury Press, 2014.

Panel at 2013 AAS in San Diego

The Shiseido Culture: Design, Fashion and Marketing

Sunday, March 24, 2013
 Manchester Grand Hyatt, San Diego, CA

Panel Description

Shiseido Cosmetics Company commemorated its 140-year anniversary in 2012. The company has built originality that is worthy of being called the Shiseido Culture with its excellent business sense and design and becomes world renowned brand. The company has cultivated and re-edit and continually communicate the Shiseido Culture within and outside of the company and it makes contributions to society

through design and marketing. The company has also considered the Shiseido Culture and its history to be an important management asset and has published more than 60 titles of shashi, or company history books, and publications related to design and advertisement since 1957. For researchers who study art history, cultural history and business history, these publications are very important primary resources. This panel invites four researchers to discuss how the Shiseido Culture have had effects on history of design and advertisements in Japan, relationship between imperial Japan and women's fashion, and Japanese marketing in colonies.

Organizer: Hiroyuki N. Good, University of Pittsburgh

Chair: Gennifer Weisenfeld, Duke University

Discussant: Sarah Frederick, Boston University

1. Panelist: Rebecca Nickerson, Independent Scholar

Paper title: Designing Women: Miss Shiseido, Tanaka Chiyo, and the Making of Imperial Style in Japan

Abstract

This paper analyzes how Komai Reiko—the first “Miss Shiseido”—and Tanaka Chiyo—“Japan’s first fashion designer”—shaped modern ideals of femininity and transformed women’s cosmetic and fashion practices in 1930s Japan. In 1933, Shiseido recruited Komai to work as a full-time consultant to launch the company’s “Miss Shiseido” marketing campaign, designed to bring Shiseido’s image of feminine beauty directly to consumers through beauty demonstrations. A prominent advocate for working women’s rights, Komai accepted Shiseido’s offer precisely because she knew it would increase her visibility as an example of the progressive Japanese woman—she subsequently gained fame as a beauty expert who was at once a wife, mother, and successful, working woman. In 1932, Tanaka began her career at Kanebō, where she taught women how to use the company’s textiles to make Western-style clothes and quickly became a leading expert on women’s fashion. Like Komai, Tanaka balanced her career with her duties as a wife and mother and she fiercely disagreed with the notion that Japanese women should wear kimono for the sake of the nation or Japanese tradition, arguing instead that women deserved the right to choose clothes that suited their modern lifestyles. Komai and Tanaka did not identify themselves as feminists, but their careers enabled them to challenge traditional feminine norms and empower Japanese women to act as subjects with the capacity to shape ideals of femininity through their consumption practices and the choices they made in assembling their appearance.

2. Panelist: Annika A. Culver, University of North Carolina at Pembroke

Paper title: Shiseido’s ‘Empire of Beauty’: Marketing Japanese Modernity in Manchukuo, 1932-1945

Abstract

During the 1931-45 Japanese occupation of northeast China, Japanese businesses, including Shiseido, extended their reach into Manchukuo, where the Japanese modernity they sold communicated success and prosperity under imperial Japan's auspices. In 1931, the company's first outlet opened in Dairen, and by 1937, its Mobile Beauty Salons traversed the Japanese empire with "Miss Shiseido" representatives passing through Manchurian cities. Throughout the colonies, Shiseido expanded a view of Japanese women's flawless white skin, along with their willingness to embrace modern, scientific rational practices to improve domestic life. The company's vision of imperial beauty for the continent emphasized a harmonious melding of Japanese science and Chinese tradition, beginning with the Blue Bird line (seichō

in Japanese, qingniao in Chinese) of soaps, detergents, and toothpaste made by Mitsui for "Manchurian" customers and exported to Manchukuo after 1932. Shiseido targeted marketing strategies specifically to colonial Japanese and "Manchurian" consumers, with Blue Bird's signature yellow boxes featuring Japanese script instead of English to communicate Japanese modernity. In 1940, after the company built its own Manchukuo-based factory, Japanese-born Manchurian Film Association star Ri Kōran even posed for cosmetics posters as the archetypal Chinese modern girl with bobbed, permed hair. Shiseido's unique modernist visual culture sold images of an empire of beauty, where women consumers on the continent helped support an emerging politics of national identity in their product choices. The company's intersection of modernist advertising and national propaganda reveals the multifaceted interests of organizations like Shiseidō involved in marketing the Japanese empire and its appealing modernity.

* Her paper was published in *Shashi* Vol.2, no.2 (2013)
<http://shashi.pitt.edu/ojs/index.php/shashi/article/view/16>

3. Panelist: Gennifer Weisenfeld, Duke University

Paper title: Shiseido and Transwar Design: The Case of Yamana Ayao

Abstract

Renowned designer and art director, Yamana Ayao (1897-1980) worked for Shiseido on and off from 1929 until 1969. When he first joined the Shiseido design division, critics humorously asked, "Will Yamana become Shiseido-ized or will Shiseido become Yamana-ized?" They quickly came to the conclusion that Shiseido was Yamana-ized, as the designer's distinctive style became synonymous with Shiseido advertising all the way through the early postwar period. While the war often stands as an insurmountable divide that seemingly severs cultural developments in Japan right at mid-century, the transwar continuities can be more striking than the ruptures. This divide is particularly apparent in the history of design, despite the fact that advertising and propaganda production seamlessly traded places through the war, and the same roster of professional designers and advertising specialists who worked throughout the 1930s and 40s reconstituted the design world immediately after the end of the Occupation. As a founding member of the important advertising design associations: the Tokyo Advertising Art Association (1931), Nippon Kōbō (1933), and the influential Japan Advertising Artists Club (1951), and as a key designer for Shiseido and many major corporations into the postwar period, Yamana's enormous contribution to the public visual sphere across the twentieth century is indisputable. Thus, his work for Shiseido provides a valuable opportunity to explore often neglected transwar connections, illuminating how postwar design and advertising was built on a deep foundation of practice and a professional network developed in the prewar and wartime periods.

* Related Papers

- Weisenfeld, GS. "Shiseido Chic: The Cosmopolitan Aesthetics of Japanese Cosmetics." *Crossing the Sea: Essays on East Asian Art in Honor of Professor Yoshiaki Shimizu*. Ed. G Levine, A Watsky, and G Weisenfeld. Princeton, P.Y. and Kinmay W. Tang Center for East Asian Art, Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University in association with Princeton University Press, 2012. 159-179.
- Some of the transwar material will be incorporated into a book project in progress which has not yet been published.

Panel at AAS 2014 in Philadelphia

Moral Vision and Economic Organization: Shibusawa Eiichi and the Re-Invention of Capitalism in East Asia

Sunday, March 30, 2014
Philadelphia Marriott, Philadelphia, PA

Panel Description

The circumstances of the global economy since the Lehman Shock have provided opportunities for reflection on the sustainability of the capitalist economy. In this turbulent economic context, it is worth revisiting the ideas of Shibusawa Eiichi (1849-1931), the father of Japanese capitalism, and exploring his vision of capitalism and its application in East Asia. Tracing the process of “reinventing” capitalism by Shibusawa and those who were inspired by him enables us to see capitalism in a comparative perspective, across societies and over time. Such a comparative perspective on the impact of capitalism on East Asian societies in the late 19th and early 20th centuries makes this topic of direct relevance to contemporary issues of capitalism, and can shed light on the kind of capitalism that should, or could, emerge in the future.

In this panel, John Sagers discusses Shibusawa as institutional entrepreneur through his public statements and financial contributions. The following two papers are concerned with Korea and China, two countries strongly influenced by Shibusawa through his visits and his business and other relationships with people there. Myungsoo Kim takes up the case of Choseon businessman Sangryong Han, and analyses Shibusawa’s influence on him and on the Choseon economy. Chen Yu delves into Shibusawa’s vision for a developing economy and discusses how Shibusawa was received when he visited China in 1914. Making reference to the ideas of Adam Smith and Michael Porter, Kazuhiro Tanaka analyses Shibusawa’s doctrine of “inseparability of morality and economy” and its relevance to capitalism today.

Organizer: Hiroyuki N. Good, University of Pittsburgh

Chair: Izumi Koide, Shibusawa Eiichi Memorial Foundation/University of Tokyo

Discussant: Janet Hunter, London School of Economics

1. Panelist: John Sagers, Linfield University

Paper title: Shibusawa Eiichi and the Ideological Foundations of Japanese Capitalism

Abstract

Shibusawa Eiichi (1840-1931), one of the most important financiers and industrialists of Meiji Japan, is also remembered for his use of Confucian language to promote the “Unity of Morality and Economy.” While Shibusawa's speeches, publications, and contributions to business education were efforts to improve the behavior of future business leaders, they also served the critical purpose of improving the status of capitalism in Japanese society.

In his autobiography, Shibusawa recalled that, growing up in a prosperous family, he had been appalled by the attitude of “revere officials and despise the people” which was prevalent in Tokugawa Japan. Joining the Japanese delegation to the Paris International Expo in 1867, Shibusawa found that commercial and industrial leaders enjoyed much greater prestige in European countries. For Japan to prosper, Shibusawa concluded, the status of merchants in Japanese society would have to improve.

Economic historian Douglass North has noted that when entrepreneurs find established institutions and social norms to be obstacles to their objectives, they may “attempt to devote resources to restructuring the rules at a higher level.” Through an examination of Shibusawa's statements and financial contributions, we will see that Shibusawa was indeed an institutional entrepreneur focused on changing the rules of

Japanese society to create a more favorable environment for commerce and industry. By promoting commercial ethics using Confucian principles, Shibusawa was not only giving sermons to improve business behavior, but also conducting a public relations campaign to make commercial investments and business careers more respectable in Japanese society.

* His paper was published in *Shashi* Vol.3 no.1 (2014)

<http://shashi.pitt.edu/ojs/index.php/shashi/article/view/24>

2. Panelist: Kim Myungsoo, Keimyung University

Paper title: Sangryong Han's Reading Shibusawa and Application to Colonial Korea

Abstract

The Choseon Business Club (CBC) was a business organization established in Choseon (Colonial Korea) in March 1920. At first, the CBC consisted of only Korean businessmen. As the number of Japanese participants increased, the CBC's character changed into a political organization campaigning for a *naisen ittai* (内鮮一体, Japan and Korea are one) policy. Sangryong Han, leader of the CBC, was called the 'Shibusawa of Choseon'; he was an active organizer in the Choseon business world and also tried to implement Shibusawa's ideas in Choseon. Naoji Kada, advisor to the CBC and president of the Choseon Chamber of Commerce & Industry, regarded Han and the CBC as key figures realizing Shibusawa's ideas on 'business morality', education, and *naisen ittai*. Han fell under Shibusawa's influence and guidance after an initial meeting in 1902, and subsequently introduced to Choseon various features of capitalism such as the insurance, trust and banking systems. Through his Hansung Bank he took part in establishing many companies with other Choseon people. It can therefore be said that Han's life as a businessman was nothing but 'following Shibusawa'. This paper makes use of the limited data available to answer the following questions. Firstly, in the political context of Japanese imperialism and colonialism, what did Han learn from Shibusawa and what were his plans for the Choseon economy? Secondly, what influence did Shibusawa have on Choseon society and economy through Han, and what was the role of the CBC?

* Related Paper

- Sangryong Han," Shibusawa Ei'chi, and the transfer of banking expertise from Japan to Korea," World Business History Conference, March 17, 2014, Frankfurt am Main, Germany, http://www.worldbhc.org/files/full%20program/A5_B5_KimpaperWBHC2014revised.pdf

3. Panelist: Yu Chen, Yokohama National University

Paper title: How did Eiichi Shibusawa View China?

Abstract

Eiichi Shibusawa has been known as the pioneer who promoted the progress of capitalism in Japan. He had learned the Chinese Classics since his childhood. Moreover, after his resignation from Ministry of Finance in 1873, he continued to be devoted to Confucius. With respect to Japan's relationship to China, Shibusawa believed that Japan, as a leader of East Asia, should increase its friendship with China and attempt to improve the Chinese economy. Did his attitude toward China correspond with his grand vision to develop Japanese capitalism? Were his ideas effective to deal with the relationship with China at the time?

To find the answers to the questions above, the first part of this presentation focuses mainly on Eiichi Shibusawa's visions to improve the country by developing industry and commerce, not military power. It touches on the links between his visions and activities with Confucius, as well as his stance on the proper relationship between government and business in Japan.

The second part deals with Eiichi Shibusawa's viewpoints on China by examining his words and actions related to the management of Sino-Japanese joint company and the other organizations. His visit to China in 1914 and his attitude toward anti-Japanese agitation arising in China at that time will also be investigated.

The last part argues the problems that Eiichi Shibusawa was faced with by reevaluating the so-called "same race and same script" idiom which indicated the intimate relationship between China and Japan at the time. Meanwhile, this part fosters a debate on the possibility of a form of diplomacy to be undertaken by industrialists instead of official governments.

4. Panelist: Kazuhiro Tanaka, Hitotsubashi University

Paper title: Prioritising Public Interest: The Essence of Shibusawa's Doctrine and Its Implications for the Re-invention of Capitalism

Abstract

Eiichi Shibusawa advocated and practiced the doctrine of 'inseparability of morality and economy' which he developed based on Confucian teachings. This consisted of two assertions: (a) Economy is congruent with morality; (b) Morality is congruent with economy. 'Morality' includes both *passive* morality prohibiting certain acts and *active* morality urging a person to do what one should do.

Shibusawa's argument concerning the relationship between morality and economy in the capitalist world has key things in common with those of Adam Smith and Michael Porter, who argue that (1) pursuit of self-interest by individuals can lead to, and even be vital for, social value creation and social prosperity, but (2) it should be allowed as long as they comply with justice or passive morality. There is one thing, however, on which Shibusawa would not have agreed with Smith and Porter, and which distinguishes him fundamentally from the other two. As a Confucian, he placed paramount importance on the practice of benevolence (active morality) and, in this context, expected each and every person in business to make a *conscious effort* to contribute to the welfare and advancement of society. Shibusawa certainly championed pursuit of self-interest itself, but regarded it as a means to an end, namely the promotion of public welfare.

For the capitalist economy to be sustainable, there need to appear a succession of business people of this kind who eagerly seek their own profit but at the same time prioritize over it the interest of others and of society at large.

Panel at 2015 AAS in Chicago

The Business of Interwar: Japanese Companies and the Construction of Markets

Sunday, March 29, 2015
 Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Towers, Chicago, IL

Panel Description

This panel explores how Japanese companies shaped regional and global markets during the interwar period. WWI marked a turning point for Japanese commerce as Japan increasingly became an important regional and global exporter. Amidst increasing global trade during the 1920s, Japanese firms nevertheless continued to operate in an environment of inter-imperial competition. In this panel, we examine how Japanese firms carved out a niche for commodities to distinguish their products from domestic and European competitors. Japanese businesses interacted with state authorities in a wide range of areas from regulating the quality of exports to overturning overseas patent rights. Through three case-studies of Japanese companies, we explore how domestic, regional, and global markets were re-defined through

attempts at product differentiation. The activities of Japanese firms and government not only reveal Japan's imperial interests but also the process of how markets are constructed during the interwar period.

Kjell Ericson examines how the pearl cultivator Mikimoto Kokichi sought to regulate the quality of pearls leaving Japan, even as European countries attempted to track Japanese pearls in European markets through distinctions between "cultured" and "natural" pearls. Timothy Yang uses the case of Hoshi Pharmaceuticals to demonstrate how the interwar drug industry often depended upon state authorities for legal protection, subsidies, overseas markets and resources, and even innovation. Ti Ngo focuses on how state support helped a monopolistic Micronesian sugar company to overcome Javanese competitors by distinguishing the quality of its sugar to match the changing taste of Asian consumers.

Organizer: Ti Ngo, University of California, Berkeley

Chair: Madeleine Zelin, Columbia University

Discussant: Elisabeth Köll, Harvard Business School

1. Panelist: Timothy Yang, Pacific University

Paper title: Japan's Pharmaceuticals Industry and the First World War

Abstract

Japan's pharmaceuticals industry did not fully come into being until World War One. Although some businessmen began importing Western medicines as early as the mid-nineteenth century (at a time when the majority sold Chinese herbal medicines), most drug merchants became manufacturers only after the outbreak of the First World War disrupted imports of European, particularly, German, medicines. With Europe mired in conflict, Japanese companies seized the moment to manufacture their own Western-style medicines. Under the banner of "self-sufficiency" (*jikyū jisoku*), which identified the shortage of essential medicines as a threat to national security, the Home Ministry voided overseas patent rights, ordered state laboratories to reveal drug formulae to private firms, and provided monetary incentives to promote domestic production. Government intervention during the war led to a rapid expansion in the pharmaceutical industry, as firms old and new rushed to satisfy the demand at home and carve out new markets abroad. In a six-year period, the total production of pharmaceuticals had increased almost three-fold, from 19.9 million yen in 1914 to 51.2 million yen in 1920. This paper uses the case of Hoshi Pharmaceuticals, one of the largest and most influential drug companies at the time, to show how the industry emerged in an interwar global context defined by uncertainty, scarcity, competition, and most of all, state sponsorship.

* Related paper

- "Selling an Imperial Dream: Japanese Pharmaceuticals, National Power, and the Science of Quinine Self-Sufficiency," *East Asian Science, Technology, and Society*, Volume 6, Number 1, 2012, <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/472140>

* He is presently revising a book manuscript related to this topic.

2. Panelist: Kjell Ericson, Connecticut College

Paper title: Two Geographies of Control in the 1930s Pearl Empires

Abstract

The interwar world witnessed a profusion of efforts to track the movement and labeling of trade goods. Spherical "cultured" pearls, objects of adornment produced inside surgically manipulated shellfish,

became a high-profile target of this surveillance impulse. This paper compares two styles of 1930s-era trade control as they operated in Europe, where some of the world's richest pearl entrepôts could be found, and in Japan, where virtually all cultured pearls were produced. During the 1920s, pearl dealers across Europe sponsored technical and legal methods to distinguish "cultured" pearls from the "natural" ones they bought in the Persian Gulf and elsewhere. Amid the financial turmoil of the following decade, British and French governments pursued active roles in overseeing cultured pearls throughout their empires. European pearl protectionism took on the trappings of border control (contrôle)--in the French case, complete with gem passports. In Japan, established cultivators linked falling cultured pearl prices to domestic overproduction. The largest among them, the "Pearl King" Mikimoto Kôkichi, experimented with ways to keep "poor quality" pearls from leaving Japanese ports. Mikimoto spearheaded attempts to group large cultivators (and their smallholder competitors) under state-authorized control associations (tôsei kumiai). Institutions of pearl control reflected parallel visions of local commercial order amid inter-imperial competition. If backers of European import control strove for separation of "natural" and "cultured" markets by policing newcomer merchants, their Japanese export counterparts tried to maintain a distinction between "good" and "bad" cultured pearls by policing newcomer cultivators. Their ethos, personnel, and apparatus persisted in reconfigured postwar forms.

3. Panelist: Ti Ngo, University of California, Berkeley

Paper title: Cornering the Sugar Market: The South Seas Development Company and Japanese Imperial Interests in Southeast Asia

Abstract

As appetite for sugar soared in the 1920s from 13 to 24 million metric tons, consumers in Asia increasingly preferred a newer "factory white" grade of sugar which they deemed to be more hygienic and "modern" than less processed brown sugar. When Japan acquired the Mariana, Marshall, and Caroline Islands as a League of Nations mandate in 1920, Japanese administrators saw the islands as an opportunity to further extend Japanese market share in the lucrative market for sugar in continental Asia. Japanese officials such as Tezuka Toshiro, the first director of the South Seas Government, subsidized the creation of a sugar company in Micronesia, the South Seas Development Company (Nanyô Kôhatsu Kabushiki Kaisha or Nankô). Utilizing Nankô as a case-study, this paper explores how the South Seas Government worked alongside Nankô to make the islands another outpost of sugar production alongside Taiwan. As consumer tastes gravitated towards white sugar, Nankô's founder, Matsue Haruji, believed he could compete with Javanese sugar, which was cheaper in price but required further processing to become "factory white" grade. The history of Nankô reveals how inter-imperial competition in an age of increasing global trade took on the form of controlling regional markets through state support of industries and the enactment of greater quality control. The ultimate success of Micronesian sugar production enabled Nankô to expand its enterprises into other industries in Indonesia, making sugar production a fulcrum for later Japanese economic activities in Southeast Asia during the 1930s.

* Related Paper

- "Mapping Economic Development: The South Seas Government and Sugar Production in Japan's South Pacific Mandate, 1919–1941," *Cross-Currents: East Asian History and Culture Review*, no.2, March 2012, <https://cross-currents.berkeley.edu/e-journal/issue-2/framing-economic-development-japanese-imperial-maps-south-pacific-and-their-implic>

Panel at 2016 AAS in Seattle

Exporting Postwar Japan: Japanese Business and Culture Abroad

Saturday, April 2, 2016
Washington State Convention Center, Seattle, WA

Panel Description

Most historical studies of Japan's phenomenal postwar economic growth have revolved around how government-driven developments in the archipelago rippled through world markets. However, our panel argues that much of the success of Japanese exports can be attributed to initial grassroots corporate efforts in the U.S. markets. Diverging from typical economic histories, we use various postwar Japanese commercial exports to examine the networks, discourses, and methods behind the intersection of business and cultural construction processes that have made Japan resonate with American audiences.

William Chou shows how Japanese automobile manufacturers used technical and marketing collaboration with U.S. partners to create images and responses to the Japanese "small car" in the American market. Alisa Freedman demonstrates how misrepresentations of Japan on American television comedies have perpetuated national stereotypes while verifying Japan's international influence. Robert Hegwood highlights the role of Japanese Americans in shaping cultural images of Japan and in helping Japanese food corporations Kikkoman and Aji-no-moto re-establish a presence in the American market. Yoshiko Nakano explores how Japan Airlines inaugurated its international service with Orientalist images created in conjunction with American market researchers and advertising firms. Discussant Sayuri Shimizu contributes her expertise on U.S.-Japanese cultural and business relations. Through examination of the business models these case studies represent, our panel re-evaluates the history of Japanese growth, peers into the dynamics behind the evolving image of postwar Japan abroad, and contributes to discussions of Japan's current soft power projects.

Chair/Discussant: Sayuri Guthrie Shimizu, Rice University

1. Panelist: William Chou, Ohio State University

Paper title: The Appeal of the Small Japanese Car: Transpacific Construction and Reception from 1957-1982

Abstract

The continued market dominance of Japanese automobiles is an enduring icon of Japan's successful postwar economic development. Yet existing accounts of the automotive industry's growth and penetration of the U.S. market isolate their attention on Japan-centric production processes to the exclusion of advertising and marketing. Moreover, these business-only studies also ignore the larger diplomatic and cultural circumstances in which Japanese automotive exports advanced. An approach that integrates a wider set of factors and contexts can explain how sustained engagement between Japanese automobile manufacturers and U.S. government officials, businesses, and consumers created reputations for quality and appeal for Japanese small cars.

This paper focuses on the Japanese automobile industry across 1957-82, arguing that transpacific technological exchanges, market research, cultural reception, and trade negotiations were central to the industry's development and evolving global strategies. By using a multidimensional approach that integrates diplomacy, business, and consumer culture, it situates Japanese automotive exports within concurrent developments such as the Cold War security environment and the postwar consumer boom. This creates a more holistic understanding of postwar U.S.-Japanese relations, and also speaks to ongoing research on national-branding discourses and local approaches to globalization.

2. Panelist: Alisa Freedman, University of Oregon

Paper title: TV Japan: Screaming Samurai Join Anime Clubs in the Land of the Lost

Abstract

I will discuss the serious political, economic, and cultural issues underlying misrepresentations of Japan in American comedy television from the 1970s through today. I will focus on the United States because of the global domination of American television and because many Japanese marketers have viewed brand familiarity in the United States as a benchmark for success. Television reacts things in the public eye and tends to perpetuate rather than subvert dominant discourses. Television cannot take controversial stances as easily as novels, fine arts, and other media due to the need for mass audiences, advertisers, and state support of commercial networks. I will focus on three well-known examples representing different genres and comedic forms: samurai parodies (prevalent in the 1970s), Bubble Era in "Sesame Street's Big Bird in Japan" (1988), and "Cool Japan" parodies (especially after 2010). These examples show changing patterns of cultural globalization and different views of Japan in the American imagination; they perpetuate national stereotypes while verifying Japan's international influence. Parody, which works only when the subject is mainstream enough for audiences to easily get the joke, shows the extent of the export of Japanese culture and cements fan communities through shared jokes. Parody also renders possible competitors less powerful by exaggerating their characteristics and making them laughable. Television comedies can be viewed as an alternative history of American fascinations with and fears of Japan.

3. Panelist: Robert Hegwood, University of Pennsylvania

Paper title: A Natural Affinity for *Shōyu*: Japanese Americans and Food Exports to the United States, 1945-1965

Abstract

The 2014 designation of *washoku* on UNESCO's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage has fueled the already lively field of culinary history and cultural diplomacy. Indeed, the decision is merely a recent reminder of the enduring popularity of Japanese food among foreign consumers --a popularity that has long worked to the advantage of Japanese food corporations. However, historians have tended to treat this phenomenon as merely part of the rising tide of popularity of Japanese culture in postwar America, with little explanation of how Japanese food was popularized at the social level. Japanese food products did not merely flow into American markets as a result of cultural exchange, it was the result of a transnational network of collaboration between Japanese corporations, Japanese government officials, and Japanese American entrepreneurs.

Through an examination of corporate histories, nikkei community histories, and oral histories, I examine how grassroots collaboration with the Japanese American community was essential to the success of Aji-no-moto and Kikkoman Soy Sauce corporations' reentry into the American market in the 1940s and 1950s. Particularly, nikkei-owned *sukiyaki* restaurants and trading companies provided an initial foothold for marketing efforts to win over American palettes. Drawing on the insights of studies linking the cultural dimensions of the Japanese empire to the colonial periphery and a burgeoning field of transnational studies of the Japanese diaspora, I argue the nikkei community served as a vital social foundation for these corporations' efforts to reshape the American image of Japanese food, one bite at a time.

4. Panelist: Yoshiko Nakano, University of Hong Kong

Paper title: Orientalism in the Sky: Japan Airlines' Kimono-Branding in the 1950s

Abstract

In 1954, Japan Airlines (JAL) launched its first international service from Tokyo to San Francisco via Honolulu. JAL's first advertisement in the U.S. proclaimed, "Even before you leave Golden Gate, you're *in Japan*." On board, the flight attendants served drinks in kimonos, and distributed paddle fans emblazoned with images of Mt. Fuji.

This paper considers JAL's Orientalism in the 1950s, and illustrates how it was the outcome of an interactive approach, shaped by input from Japanese as well as American PR strategists. In 1953, the newly established national flag carrier was faced with the pressing issue of how to present and represent Japan in overseas advertising and in the air. JAL ultimately followed the suggestions of their American ad agency partners to feature the "romance and mystery of the Orient," which often included a vision of kimono-clad "geisha girls." The person behind this Orientalist strategy was marketing psychologist Ernest Dichter, who would later facilitate the successful launch of the Barbie doll. The introduction of the kimono was also a branding exercise aimed at distinguishing JAL from its competitors, Pan American Airlines and Northwest Orient, who both benefited from access to a substantial public relations budget. JAL went on to embrace its own brand of Orientalism, and by 1959, began to run a series of ad campaigns to subtly "de-geishanize" the kimono by emphasizing the flight attendants' cultural sophistication and education. Using various archival documents and promotional materials, I consider how JAL's Orientalist representations were negotiated across the Pacific.



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