

OBOEGAKI

Newsletter of the
Early Modern Japan Network

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FIRST EMJ NETWORK MEETING

About a dozen participants in the Early Modern Japan Network gathered in New Orleans at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies on April 12. Those attending included Mary Elizabeth Berry (history); William Hauser (history); Herman Ooms (history); Louis Perez (history); Edward Pratt (history); Mark Ravina (history); Luke Roberts (history); Barry Steben (religion); Ronald Toby (history); Bob Wakabayashi (history); Anne Walthall (history); Karen Wigen (geography); Diana Wright-Foss (history of religion); as well as your humble reporter, Philip Brown (history).

We discussed a wide variety of issues:

Name and Purpose: The organization is now formally called The Early Modern Japan Network.

Although no formal statement was adopted there was a consensus that our principal objectives are:

- 1) to facilitate cooperation among early modern Japan specialists in all disciplines in research, publication, and teaching
- 2) to provide greater visibility to the field beyond the ranks of Japan specialists
- 3) to promote generally the advancement of early modern Japanese studies.

To this end we shall provide timely information on research, professional activities, resources, and publication outlets across a variety of related disciplines.

We welcome the participation of graduate students and specialists in research, teaching, archival, museum, and related activities whose work involves entry into and departure from the early modern era as well as those whose work lies entirely within it.

Organization: A loosely structured administrative body, the YORIAI was established. Current members (addresses are included at the end of this newsletter) are Philip Brown (Ohio State), Ed Pratt (University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee), and Mark Ravina (Emory).

The Yoriai is working with the Association for Asian Studies staff to establish the Network as a formal committee of the AAS. This will allow the Network to use AAS bank accounts for its basic needs (collection of subscriptions, income from grants, and disbursement of funds to pay expenses).

Activities: The following activities will be undertaken by the Network:

- 1) Publish a newsletter (tentatively titled OBOEGAKI) to be mailed to paid subscribers.

Publication will be erratic and free until a) the OSU history department loses its patience and funds; b) a bank account is established; c) the number of participants becomes overwhelming; d) the Yoriai has a better feel for the volume of newsletter contributions.

We hope to begin regular publication in spring, 1992 at the latest.

Once up to speed and based on a projected sixty page, semi-annual format, suggested subscription rates were \$15 for regular subscribers, \$5 for students. (Please forward any suggestions or comments on this proposal to Philip Brown.)

2) Operate an electronic mail network. The base site will be Ohio State University. The E-mail net involves no cost to the Network and provides quick dissemination of information on an international scale (see below for more information).

3) Publish a directory of early modern Japan specialists. For those who were not at the AAS meeting, a copy is enclosed. A supplemental list is enclosed for everyone.

4) Hold an annual meeting in conjunction with the Association for Asian Studies. It was suggested that the Network sponsor a discussion of the state of the field as part of its annual meeting activities.

5) Professors Mary Elizabeth Berry (Berkeley) and Ronald Toby (Illinois) agreed to seek funding for a network-sponsored workshop on reading early modern documents. The workshop will be designed to help both graduate students and faculty.

OBOEGAKI and E-MAIL: A CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Dissemination of information constitutes one of the major activities of the Network. The two major vehicles for providing news are OBOEGAKI and the electronic mail network.

Content: Please submit notices of the following kinds of activities (yours; others):

Conferences (Subject, theme, dates, place, sponsors; relevant paper summaries, etc. if possible)

Papers presented (Title, author, affiliation, dates, place)

Notices of recent publications/art catalogs (full bibliographic data and synopsis)

Exhibition notices (theme, dates, place)

Brief notices of videos, instructional and reference aids (full bibliographic and purchase information)

Brief notices of recently completed dissertations, theses (synopsis)

Calls for papers/panel formation

Research inquiries

Other research/teaching activities (e.g., grants available/received)

Please bear in mind that our aim is to encompass a wide array of international activities and to stimulate broadly based cooperation beyond our typical area studies and disciplinary boundaries. Professional activities involving an early modern Japan component for groups outside Japanese and Asian studies would be of particular interest as examples of outreach.

Submissions: Please submit materials formatted according to the Chicago Manual of Style. In addition to hard copy, submissions may be by E-mail (the fastest way to get information to others) or on IBM-Format floppy discs (5.25" or 3.5"). E-mail and floppy submissions minimize problems in text preparation and editing. Please be concise (100 to 200 words maximum?).

Volunteers Needed: Those of us who assembled in New Orleans widely agreed that OBOEGAKI and E-mail could provide a valuable service if they became effective media for disseminating recent bibliographic information. This might work best if there were coordinators for each major discipline. If anyone would like to work in this capacity, please contact Philip Brown (address below). The only recompense would be formal listing as coordinator.

USING ELECTRONIC MAIL

For many of you the idea of electronic mail is new and perhaps intimidating. If you are used to operating a PC, Mac, or similar machine, however, you have a base of knowledge which should make it easy for you to capitalize on E-mail's wonderful potential.

E-mail provides these advantages to Network participants:

- 1) Messages are free.
- 2) Communication is virtually instantaneous.
- 3) Messages provide access to a wide audience.

Once you learn the basic techniques, E-mail can open up a wide array of research tools including major university library catalogs and other professional news networks.

Equipment You'll Need:

- 1) A mainframe computer account at your institution (usually free or available with a "funny money" budget). Contact the department or university computing service representative for

registration details and basic instruction in use.

- 2) Either a "dumb" terminal which only gives access to the mainframe

OR

a PC equipped with a modem (which permits your PC to telephone a mainframe) or an ethernet board (which allows direct access to the mainframe). Public access terminals are available at most institutions, so you don't need your own PC. However, for those who do or who have an office PC, a modem can be installed for \$60-\$80. Some universities encourage use of ethernet boards in institutionally-provided PCs. In any event, institutional support often is available.

- 3) Communications software (if working with a PC, Mac, etc.). Again, this frequently is available through your institution at no charge (site licensed).

Procedures:

- 1) Learn to access the mainframe and E-mail locally. The instructions for logging on to the mainframe and getting into your E-mail account vary from institution to institution. The most encouraging word I can offer is that learning the basics of E-mail is simpler than learning the word processing software with which you currently feel so comfortable! My own experience is that the rewards repay the effort!

- 2) Register with the list. Send a brief message to:

emjnet-request@magnus.ircc.ohio-state.edu

or

owner-emjnet@magnus.ircc.ohio-state.edu

(Note: these addresses are each a single, continuous line)

3) A confirming message will be posted to the list and your account once your name has been added. (Note: I will try to arrange for posting new additions over the summer, but I will not be in Columbus again until September. Consequently, there may not be any confirming messages until then. PCB)

4) Make contributions. To send a message to everyone on the list, address it to:

emjnet@magnus.ircc.ohio-state.edu

(Note: the address is a single, continuous line)

RECRUIT!!! (PARTICIPANTS, NOT SCANDAL)

Historians comprise the vast majority (about two dozen) of our current participants. While we have a respectable smattering of art historians and others, we seek broad participation by literature, religion, and social science specialists.

Please encourage your colleagues to sign on. A member information form is attached. Please feel free to duplicate it.

DIRECTORY

The Network directory provides a useful means to identify other participants who can assist in research, teaching, and formation of panels for professional association meetings. To

maximize its utility we will list specialists who are not subscribers to OBOEGAKI. However, to be effective each entry must include descriptions of areas of expertise and research interests. If you have not completed an information form, please do so and return it today!

YORIAI

All three Yoriai are currently historians, largely due to the demographics of participants in New Orleans. We actively seek representatives from other disciplines!

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