

The Japanese Studies Centre was formally established in 1981 as a non-profit organisation incorporated in the State of Victoria. Established by academics from four tertiary institutions in Melbourne, which teach and conduct research about Japan – La Trobe University, Monash University, the University of Melbourne and Swinburne Institute of Technology (now Swinburne University). In 1989 the Centre became one of the affiliated centres of the Monash Asia Institute at Monash University.

The Centre is housed in its own building which was designed by Monash University architect Alan Scott, and erected in 1983 with generous funding from the Commemorative Association for the Japan World Exposition, the Toyota Motor Corporation, Conzinc Riotinto of Australia, and Monash University.



It was officially opened in 1984 by then Premier of Victoria, John Cain, who described it as a valuable opportunity to raise the awareness of Japanese society and culture in the community, and who further expressed the hope that more Australian companies might recognise the

importance of such centres in bridging the wide cultural gaps between Australia and other countries.

The building and the Centre were established with the express purpose of providing a focus for the study of Japan and of promoting Japanese studies and the understanding of Japan in Victoria. Its resources have been available to all those interested in Japan, especially those with an academic or professional specialisation in Japan.





In 1996, the overall ambience of the building was enhanced by the addition of a Japanese garden consisting of a dry landscape and stone garden. All materials were imported from Japan, except for the plants and large rocks, which were

selected by one of Japan's master gardeners, Mr. Hajime Watanabe. The construction of the garden was supervised by Mr. Watanabe with the assistance of Mark Denovan from Sydney.

In 1997, the Melbourne Centre for Japanese Language Education (MCJLE) was established with a large endorsement to Monash University from the Nippon Foundation.

Background of Japanese Studies in Australia

Japanese Studies in Australia began in the first decades of the century. However, the major developments took place from the second half of the 1960s when a number of universities initiated extensive programs in the Japanese language as well as in the study of various aspects of Japanese culture and society.

In the 1970s Melbourne became a leading centre for the study of Japan, with regard to the variety and number of courses, and the numbers of teachers and students involved. During that time, too, there was a considerable broadening of academic contacts with Japan, and a large number of Japanese scholars were active on both a long and short term basis at La Trobe, Melbourne and



Monash Universities, Swinburne Institute of Technology (now Swinburne University and Victoria University of Technology (now Victoria University).

Within this context the goal of the Japanese Studies Centre was to promote the development of Japanese Studies in Melbourne and Victoria, within an inter-institutional and inter-disciplinary framework.



In keeping with this charter the Centre has actively supported, co-hosted and participated in numerous exchanges throughout its history. In conjunction with other departments and institutions, it has developed an impressive range and cross-pollination of activities including public lectures, seminars, publications and research projects. The Centre provides a means through which research, teaching, and exchange activities can be stimulated, co-ordinated and integrated. It has also supported a number of on-going kenkyukai (study groups) in areas such as music, and interpreting and translating.

In 1982 **The International Colloquium on the Comparative Study of Japan** was the first such event held in Australia and attracted participants from Japan, the USA, Europe and Asia for a week-long 'dialogue-fest' on alternative models and approaches for descriptions of Japanese society. Under the joint auspices of Griffith University, La Trobe University and the Japanese Studies Centre, it was organised at Noosa Heads in Queensland by Ross Mouer and Yoshio Sugimoto, who in 1987 edited the Japanese version of the proceedings for Gakuyo Shobo under the title *Kojin Kanjin Nihonjin*.



1983 Colloquium on Changing Aspects of Postwar Japanese Democracy, with special guest Rokuro Hidaka, the distinguished Japanese pacifist, humanist and scholar from Seika University who delivered a lecture on Democracy in Post-War Japan. For two and a half years, he had been refused an Australian visa on the grounds of his alleged links with the Japanese Red Army. Professor Hidaka's (right, second from left) visit in 1983 provided the basis for a volume entitled *Democracy in Contemporary Japan* edited by Yoshio Sugimoto and Gavan McCormack.



THE RESEARCH PROGRAM

Since its foundation the Japanese Studies Centre has made notable achievements in many areas of research, and research conducted by members of the Centre (who are drawn from the numerous institutions engaged in Japan-related research) has had an impact on both Japan specialists and the general public.

1. The Morwell Project

The establishment of the Brown Coal Liquefaction Pilot at Morwell in the LaTrobe Valley, and the resulting presence of a substantial number of Japanese expatriate families in the town, offered the Centre researchers an opportunity to undertake a comprehensive study of a unique Australian-Japanese contact situation. The project focused on a number of key domains: work, education, commercial transactions and family life. The research team, which included Jiri Neustupny, Ross Mouer, Alina Skoutarides, Kohei Fujie, Kuniko Yoshimitsu, Hitoshi Mabuchi and Takako Asaoka, made a significant contribution towards the study of Australian-Japanese contact situations through a series of conference papers and publications. Three

chapters were included in the 1996 monograph *Language and Cultural Contact with Japan*, edited by Helen Marriott and Morris Low; and a paper by David Edgington, University of British Columbia, entitled 'A Short History of the Brown Coal Liquefaction Pilot Plant at Morwell, Victoria' was published in 1987.

2. The Pilot Bilingual Project for Primary Schools

This project was undertaken in co-operation with the Victorian Ministry of Education, from 1988 to 1990. The research involved a survey of the teaching of Japanese at the primary level in Victoria. Emphasis was placed on the bilingual mode of teaching

which represented the most progressive paradigm in the discipline.

Co-ordinated by Ms Junko Glynn and subsequently by Ms Yukiko Saegusa, the project produced various materials and organised a number of study groups for teachers.



3. Course Development for Distance Education

Funded by DEET, as part of a national project to develop curriculum for distance education in the Asian language, the component located at the Centre involved the production of four units for the study of Japanese. The aim was to develop a course of study, which would cover the equivalent of two years of tertiary study. The project built on the text developed in the Department of Japanese Studies, and involved the compilation of additional print-based work for private study, and the production of audio and video tapes.

4. The Japanese Language Project

This important project aimed at producing a full profile and analysis of Japanese language learning and teaching at all

levels in Australia. It formed one component of the Key Languages Project of the National Languages Institute of Australia, and was lead by Jiri Neustupny and Helen Marriott.



5. Interaction in Australian-Japanese Contact Situations

Organised by Jiri Neustupny, this project studied the rules which govern the behaviour of individuals in 'contact situations' between Australians and Japanese, extending beyond modes of communication to all aspects of social and cultural interaction such as the conduct of everyday life, education, religion and work.

6. English-Japanese Vocabulary Project

Carried out under the direction of Helen Marriott, this project involved the compilation of a list of basic English to Japanese vocabulary to complement *A Classified List of Basic Japanese Vocabulary* edited by Jiri Neustupny and was designed primarily for HSC and first-year tertiary students of Japanese.

7. Profiling Successful Learners of Japanese (1993-1999)

Co-ordinated by Ross Mouer and Alina Skoutarides (right), this longitudinal study tracked students in 3-year tertiary courses at the five constituent universities of the Centre and in the University of Ballarat, and some special courses. It has surveyed students' progress, covering a vast number of variables which contribute to success in learning Japanese language. Funded by



Monash, Swinburne and Melbourne Universities, and the Japanese Studies Centre, it has already produced 14 conference papers, a Masters thesis and two joint publications, and will shortly result in a substantial monograph.

8. Australia-Japan Relations (1996-2006)

This project of the Japanese Studies Centre to foster the study of Australia-Japan relations resulted in the monograph, *Changing Histories – Australia and Japan*, edited by Paul Jones and Pam Oliver and published in 2001. It contains some of the papers given at the first symposium held in 1997, including Pam Oliver's assessment of the Japanese trading company network in Sydney before World War 2, and Les Oates' examination of the Australian experience as members of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force after the surrender of Japan in 1945.

Symposia have been held in 1997, 1999, 2000 and 2001.

The first symposium on Australia-Japan Relations looked at A Century of Japanese Presence in Australia from 1860s-1960s.

In the second symposium, there were three panels:

- The History of Japanese Language Teaching in Australia (1997)
- Pre-war Commercial and Diplomatic Interactions (1999)
- Australia-Japan cultural interaction (2000-2001)

whilst the theme of the third symposium was Memories & Life Stories.



9. Japanese Background Speakers in Victoria 2000-2001

With a Japanese Studies Centre seeding grant, Mariko Kubota (Melbourne University), Takako Asaoka (La Trobe University) and Jun Yano (Monash University) are currently conducting research that aims to investigate the number of Japanese background speakers at high schools in Melbourne and the degree of their diversity. There has been no previous research conducted in this area and the findings will benefit the high school curriculum development.

10. Australia-Japan Modernism Study Group

In 2000, a seeding grant was given to Eiichi Tosaki, a PhD student at Melbourne University, who set up a study group devoted to a comparison of modernity in Japan and Australia.

11. The Gasshuku

Beginning in 1988, a series of **Gasshuku**, held over a weekend in rural or historic settings, presented a further opportunity for members to report on their current or recent research activities by presenting papers and lively discussion around the proposed themes.



1991 Portsea Gasshuku

‘Functions of Japanese Language Education’– explored the reasons why Australians were studying Japanese and the consequences for the individual students, and the broader ramifications in terms of how Japanese Studies were developing. Compilations of papers were edited and published.

1992 Grampians Gasshuku

'Issues in Japanese Language Teaching and Studies Program –
New Technologies and Bridging the Gap between School and
University'

VISITING FELLOWS

An important component of the Centre's program is the working environment it has provided for a significant number of overseas academics visiting Melbourne for short or long term periods.

It has been important that its visiting fellows represent a broad cross-section of the social sciences, that they have an opportunity for exchanges with colleagues at various institutions in Melbourne and that they contribute to the research activities of the Centre through their relevant expertise, by giving public seminars, teaching and contributing a paper for publication.

The long list of such visiting researchers includes the following:

TAKABATAKE Michitoshi, (right) a political scientist with a long and distinguished academic career and the author of many publications, taught a postgraduate course on Japanese politics whilst at Monash during 1988 –1989.



TSURUMI Shunsuke, one of the most distinguished scholars in the field of mass culture and history of thought, taught at Kyoto and Doshisha Universities and, in 1982 presented a paper on 'Japanese Conceptions of Asia'. His *A Cultural History of Post-war Japan 1945-1980* was published by Kegan Paul International in the series edited by Yoshio Sugimoto.

YOSHINO Kosaku from Tokyo University, was a Visiting Fellow from October – December 2000 ‘Nationalism in Contemporary Japan – the Role of the English Language Industry’



YAMAUCHI Yamauchi (left) from Kyoto Seika University been working on a book on Ecological Philosophy bridging Western and Eastern views on Nature.

PUBLIC LECTURES AND SEMINARS

Since it was founded in 1981 the Japanese Studies Centre has continued to provide a series of public lectures for the academic and general community. Visitors have included many internationally prominent Japanese Studies researchers who have presented a rich tapestry of seminars such as:

Chalmers Johnson	The Japanese Economy
Ronald Dore	How Corporate is Japan Inc?
Joy Hendry	The Orient Strikes Back – a Global View of Cultural Display
Peter Kornicki	The Emergence of the Printed Book in Japan
Brian Moeran	25 Years in a Japanese Pottery Community
Alan Rix	The Re-opening of Australia’s Trade with Japan after 1945
Arthur Stockwin	Beyond the Left-Right Spectrum: the Japan Case and Others
Judy Wakabayashi	Teaching Translation
Shunya Yoshimi	The Cultural Politics of Techno-Nationalism
Yayori Matsui	The Historical Significance of Women’s International War Crimes Tribunal 2000

THE PUBLICATIONS PROGRAM

Since its inception, the Centre has maintained an active publications program. It publishes three series of papers:

1. 'Occasional Papers of the Japanese Studies Centre' commenced in 1981 under the editorship of JV Neustupny and Yoshio Sugimoto.

2. 'Working Papers in Japanese Studies', which in 1992 replaced the earlier series Working Papers of the Japanese Studies Centre

3. 'Japanese Language Series' – although this is the smallest of the three, the items in this series have been used for teaching Japanese at a number of institutions in Melbourne and are in constant demand.

In 1982, the London publishing house, Routledge Kegan Paul, requested Yoshio Sugimoto to serve as chief editor of their Japanese Studies series, in conjunction with the Japanese Studies Centre.

In addition to its role as an academic publishing house, the Centre hosts visiting Japanese researchers; runs a program of research seminars and lectures; offers short courses of Japanese language, studies and the arts for the public; coordinates a number of research projects involving researchers from Japanese Studies institutions in Melbourne (these are usually projects related to Japan, Australia and other Asian countries); and houses and works closely with the Melbourne Centre for Japanese Language Education.



THE TEACHING PROGRAM

With the support of the Japan Foundation, the Centre implemented its Summer School in 1986, and was the first in Australia to offer a variety of high quality non-award Japanese studies subjects as well as language. The success of the first summer school led to the courses being offered on a continuing basis throughout the year.

Intensive corporate courses also have been offered to the Victorian business community engaged in trade with Japan. The 1988 'Introducing Japan' program was designed for companies such as General Motors Holden, to provide a socio-economic context for the study of the Japanese language.

It also offers space to the Japanese Music Archive for the teaching and practice of Japanese music (koto and shakuhachi), the Australia-Japan Society, the Japan Club of Victoria, and has provided working space for postgraduate students in various departments and faculties, working on Japan.



The success of the Japanese Studies Centre over the last twenty years is a tribute to the hard work of its many members and demonstrates its leadership and expertise in co-ordinating and enhancing the development of Japanese studies in Victoria.

The work of the Centre has reflected the progression of Japanese Studies in Victoria, from its earlier emphasis on language teaching and linguistics to a greater focus on Australia-Japan relations and, since the late 90s, the additional dimension of cultural studies.



The following further illustrate the breadth and scope of its aims throughout its recent history:

❖ In 1993, the Centre was one of the major sponsors of the Fourth Women in Asia Conference at which about 100 papers were presented to 43 panels. Several of these formed a number of chapters in *Feminism and the State in Modern Japan*, edited by Vera Mackie and published in 1995 by the Centre.



Of particular interest was the seminar by leading feminist and sociologist Chizuko Ueno (left - with Ross Mouer) who spoke about research that was being done on the comfort women during the war.

❖ The **Tenth Biennial Conference of the Japanese Studies Association of Australia**, on the theme of ‘Japanese Studies: Communities, Cultures, Critiques’, was hosted by the Japanese Studies Centre in 1997 and resulted in the publication of a series of four books and two volumes of working papers, with the support of the Japan Foundation, who has continually and generously supported the Centre with several library acquisitions grants. The keynote speakers were Masao Miyoshi, Norma Field and Toshio Okazaki.

❖ In 2001 the symposium ‘A Cross Section of Japanese Studies in Australia at the turn of the Millenium’ was jointly sponsored with Nichibunken (International Research Centre for Japanese Studies, Kyoto).



- ❖ As part of the 2001 13th Congress of the International Society for Folk Narrative Research held at the University of Melbourne, the Japanese Studies Centre presented two concert programs of Japanese narrative music featuring the genres of heike and rokyoku storytelling, together with two panels on Japanese musical narratives.



- ❖ Inter-cultural communication programs for Japanese universities, whose students complete a specialized program of study focusing on Australian Studies, inter-cultural communication and English language



For a detailed list of the Visiting Research Fellows and all Publications, visit <http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/mai/jsc>