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# Johnsonian News Letter

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Printed in Canada

less money, the Beinecke also purchased lot 334, a small collection of English and Scottish newspapers with many entries relating to Johnson or Boswell. All five of the Horace Walpole letters were purchased by Quaritch, suggesting an institutional buyer.

There were competing buyers (see Harvard above) who seemingly would not be stopped when it came to letters and annotations of Hester Lynch Thrale Piozzi. This interest was signaled early on when the Burney to Piozzi letters fetched hammer prices way in excess of the maximum estimates. Lot 191 sold for \$8,000 vs. the \$3,000 to \$5,000 estimate. Yet only the Burney letters to Piozzi or those concerning Dr. Johnson fetched these premiums. Two letters from Burney concerned with her novel, *Cecilia*, sold for more than double the high end of the estimates (\$7,500 and \$6,500). But other Fanny Burney letters outside the Johnsonian Circle sold for close to the minimum estimates.

McGill University was very pleased to land nine lots of Burney material that will support their Burney project.

James Cummins, the New York dealer, purchased many lots, most at relatively low prices, perhaps simply for future stock. These purchases included many of the works of Maria Edgeworth.

British autograph dealer, Michael Silverman, bought six letters for stock, most notably a Lord Chesterfield letter and a Boswell letter.

The day did not belong exclusively to institutions and dealers. Some individual collectors were able to prevail on a few lots. Among them were Loren Rothschild (an important Burke letter to Fanny Burney), Lorna Clark (Burney Society member) who bought several Burney books and one letter, Paula Stepankowsky (president of the Burney Society) who won an early Burney letter, and yours truly who bought a Boswell letter and a book once owned by Boswell.

One item of particular interest for which I have not been able to identify the buyer was lot 379, a large portrait of Mrs. Thrale in a Yellow Dress at a Writing Table, sold for \$48,000.

JNL members who have additional information or want additional information on the auction results are welcome to email me.

—TERRY I. SEYMOUR  
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## A Johnsonian in Japan

Outside of the English speaking countries, Japan has long been the bastion of scholarly interest in Johnson and English literature of the long eighteenth century. The Samuel Johnson Society of Japan has been in existence since 1964, and even though its origins are associated with James Clifford, and some American scholars have addressed the society over the years, few have personal experience or a clear appreciation of its impressive scholarly undertakings and its role in promoting the study of English literature in Japan. In May 2009 I had the privilege of lecturing at four Japanese universities and giving the plenary lecture at the forty-second annual meeting of the Johnson Society of Japan, held at the Arcadia Ichigaya in central Tokyo. Readers of the *Johnsonian News Letter* will be interested to have more information about this accomplished, hard working, and very collegial group of people.

The approximately 200 members of the Johnson Society come from all parts of the Japanese academy and represent a variety of scholarly and publishing interests over the long eighteenth century. Associated with the society is a smaller Samuel Johnson Club of Japan, founded in 1988 by Daisuke Nagashima, former Professor of English at the University of Osaka and member of the board of trustees of Dr. Johnson's House, London. Consisting of twenty to thirty members who specialize in Johnson, Boswell and their Circle, the Club might be considered as the engine room of the larger Johnson Society and also of the related, yet still broader English Literary Society of Japan, representing a wider series of literary, critical, and theoretical interests. Japanese Johnsonians have been responsible for a remarkable number of important scholarly projects over the years, such as the one volume facsimile reprint of the first edition of Johnson's *Dictionary* (1983), Yoshiyuki Nakano's translation of Boswell's *Life of Johnson* (1982), 3 vols., Yoshiko Kawachi's *Shakespearean Criticisms* (1994) (including a translation of Johnson's *Preface to Shakespeare*), Hitoshi Suwabe's translation of the *Life of Savage* (1975), and the translation of *A Journey to the Western Island of Scotland* by Hitoshi Suwabe, Yasuo Ichikawa, Hideichi Eto, and Shigeru Shibagaki (2006).

These texts are part of a long tradition of reading and translat-

ing Johnson in Japan since the mid-nineteenth century. Over the last century other works by Johnson have been translated into Japanese, including *Rasselas*, the *Life of Richard Savage*, the life of Pope, the life of Dryden, the letter to Chesterfield, *London*, and *The Vanity of Human Wishes*. Most of these are now out of print and only available in antiquarian bookshops (which happen to be found in great abundance on Yasukuni-dori, Tokyo's "street of shops," reminiscent of a previous age and economy). Continuing, active interest—and the attention given to the Johnson tercentenary—has seen a spate of new translations and other important projects come to fruition, and these clearly demonstrate Johnson's continuing appeal to scholars and students alike in Japan. In September 2009, Chikuma (Tokyo) will publish a translation of the major *Lives of the Poets* (Cowley, Milton, Dryden, Pope, Swift, Savage, and Gray) by Katsuhiko Engetsu, Noriyuki Harada, Akio Kobayashi, Yutaka Semba, Masaaki Takeda, Yuri Yoshino, and Koji Watanabe. At the same time, the enterprising and indefatigable Nori Harada, co-director (with Masaaki Takeda) of the Johnson Society of Japan and Professor of English at the Tokyo Women's Christian University (with a co-appointment at Keio University), is translating *Rasselas*, due from Iwanami (Tokyo) in paperback in 2011. Professor Harada is already the translator of *Gulliver's Travels* (2006) and of the forthcoming version of *Pamela* (Tokyo: Kenkyusha, 2010), and he is one of the translators (with Daisuke Nagashima) of Pat Rogers's *The Samuel Johnson Encyclopedia* (1999), which contains an introductory essay in Japanese by Nagashima on Johnson studies in Japan.<sup>1</sup>

To some extent, Daisuke Nagashima's *Johnson the Philologist* (1988), partly the product of the gatherings of the Johnson Club and Society, stands at the beginning of the modern wave of scholarship from Japanese scholars, and Professor Nagashima's work opened the way to the broader interest in eighteenth-century literature, history, and culture that has materialized and been influenced by new contemporary critical methodologies. This interest is sustained at the curricular level and in the classrooms of many Japanese universities, and it is supplemented on a scholarly level by the publications of Edition Synapse ([www.aplink.co.jp/synapse](http://www.aplink.co.jp/synapse)). Synapse, and its subsidiary Eureka Press, admirably run by Takahiko Kaneko, produces editions with Japanese introductions and apparatuses of less readily accessible literary, artistic, historical, cultural, and political documents, including the following collections:

Japan in Eighteenth-Century English Satirical Writings, 5 vols.  
A Collection of Early English Books on Tea, 5 vols.  
Asian Images in the Nineteenth-Century British Reviews, 6 vols.  
Japan in English Books for Boys and Girls, 1819-1935, 6 vols.

Eureka Press, for its part, publishes facsimile reprints, with Japanese introductions and apparatuses, of such works as Strype's *Survey of London* (1720), 3 vols., Allan Cunningham's *The Lives of the Most Eminent British Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, 6 vols., *Books on Children in 16th-18th Century Britain*, 2 series, 8 vols., and *Women's Travel Writings: 1750-1850*, 8 vols. The backlist of both imprints is long and impressive.

Complementing these specialist scholarly texts, Japanese publishing has produced inexpensive paperback editions in Japanese of *Gulliver's Travels*, *A Tale of a Tub*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Pamela*, *Tom Jones*, *Tristram Shandy*, *A Sentimental Journey*, many Gothic novels, all of Austen's novels, and others, suggesting an enviable general level of intellectual literacy to complement the more scholarly engagement with the literature and ideas of the long eighteenth century. Nori Harada and I hope to appeal to these interests by editing a special issue of critical, historical, and bibliographical essays by Japanese scholars for *1650-1850: Ideas, Aesthetics and Inquiries in the Early Modern Era*. Among those who are likely to feature in this volume, Noriyuki Hattori (University of Osaka), Kaz Oishi (University of Nagoya), Sho Okochi (Tohoku University), and Nori Harada (Tokyo Women's Christian University and Keio University) hosted me on my recent visit to Japan. I was the beneficiary of their great generosity and collegiality, and my experience at their universities has left me full of admiration for their scholarly energy and dedication, and for the high level of engagement and seriousness among their students, both undergraduate and graduate. Although ultra modern in many ways, Japanese academic audiences are not jaded when it comes to eighteenth-century texts, but approach them with an excitement and sense of possibilities that is very refreshing. I was able to meet and engage with students in several venues, in two classes I taught at Keio University in Tokyo—one entitled "History and Things in *Robinson Crusoe*" (undergraduate) and one on the eighteenth-century gothic (graduate)—as well as in the extensive discussion sessions that followed my lectures at Nagoya University ("All and Nothing: Enlightenment Comprehensiveness and the Pleasures of Resistance") and Tohoku University in Sendai ("Literature, Ends, and the Possibility of Happiness"). A further talk on Johnson and Children for the Kansai Study Group at Doshisha University in

<sup>1</sup> See also Daisuke Nagashima, "Johnson in Japan," *The Johnson Society* (Lichfield) (1993), pp. 14-19. Japan: A Fragmentary Sketch," *Transactions of*

Kyoto had to be cancelled because government concern over the flu lamentably closed the university, but having the opportunity to visit the ancient temples and gardens (and the modern restaurants) of Kyoto in the company of Professors Hattori and Harada was ample compensation.

Finally, my lecture to the Johnson Society—"Orientalism, the British Eighteenth Century, and the Example of Samuel Johnson," a baggy monster within which I tried to discuss the place of Japan and China in the eighteenth-century imaginary—was generously received by a large audience.<sup>2</sup> An earlier symposium on the Duchess of Devonshire had evidently primed attendees for discussion, and the response to my lecture both during the question and answer period as well as at the marvelous reception afterwards (with the stunning view of Tokyo from the English Department on the twenty-fifth floor of Hosei University), was penetrating, challenging, and helpful with regard to new directions in which I hope to take my investigation of the impact of Japan and China on eighteenth-century minds, including Johnson's. Several publishers exhibited their books at the Johnson Society gathering, including Edition Synapse, Bucknell University Press, and Cambridge University Press, and it was on the CUP table where I caught the first glimpse of the new collection of essays, *Samuel Johnson after 300 Years* (CUP, 2009), which the Japanese Johnsonians, under the supervision of the irrepressible and enlightened Nori Harada, will seek to translate for publication with Chikuma Publishing in Tokyo.

For further information about the Johnson Society of Japan the reader might contact Professor Noriyuki Harada at [nnharada@bd5.so-net.ne.jp](mailto:nnharada@bd5.so-net.ne.jp) or visit their web site at <http://johnson-society-japan.hp.infoseek.co.jp/>.

—GREG CLINGHAM

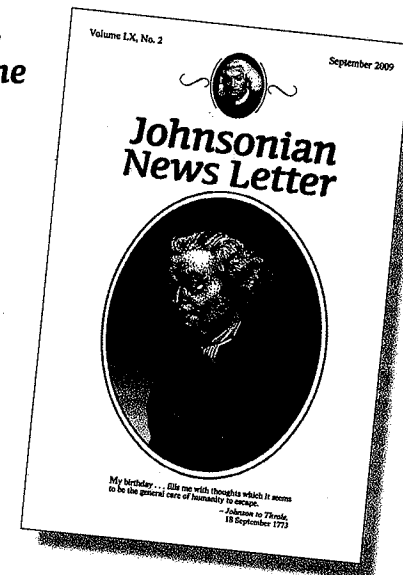
<sup>2</sup> After leaving Japan, I gave a version of this talk as a plenary lecture at the 7th International Conference on New Directions in the Humanities, sponsored by Common Ground Publishing, Beijing China, 2-4 June, 2009. For

Common Ground, see their web site: <http://www.commongroundpublishing.com/books/>, and for the Beijing 2009 conference, see <http://2009.thehumanities.com/>.

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