



# HUB OF KNOWLEDGE

Kyoto University,  
Institute for Research in Humanities

## The Institute's Aims

Since the foundation of the Institute, we have been eagerly pursuing knowledge in a variety of fields, through the close reading of ancient manuscripts and the minute analysis of contemporary resources, as well as detailed field investigations that have taken us into the very midst of contemporary society. Through its continuous efforts which have yielded widely recognised results, the Institute has earned its place as one of the front-runners of research, in Japan and in the world. Simple “common sense” might tempt us to play down the importance of human relations in research—but it is the subtle differences among individuals, and the way they can be transformed into the energy necessary for exchange and communication, that constitutes the driving force of all human activities, from politics to economy, from religion to philosophy, from literature to art, and from entertainment to consumption.

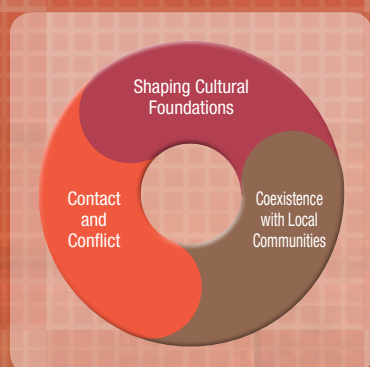
Interconnected phenomena are to be approached via cooperation—one could indeed say that the true merit of joint research is the intellectual excitement that is born out of the relations fostered among the participants. Recently, at the Institute, the scope of joint projects has been expanding steadily, and recruitment-based or international joint research teams are no longer exceptions. It has also become common practice for us to share the results of our work with the general public. The opinions and questions we receive from the audience during such public events transform the “ending” of a project into a new “beginning”, by helping us come up with further topics for investigation; they have thus become an indispensable stage in our research activities.

The rapid development of science and technology is lately being regarded as a self-sufficient phenomenon, unrelated to inter-human relationships; its sole purposes seem to be optimising results and furthering convenience. Nevertheless, scientific progress is a phenomenon directly tied to the current state of our society, and, as such, has to be considered in connec-

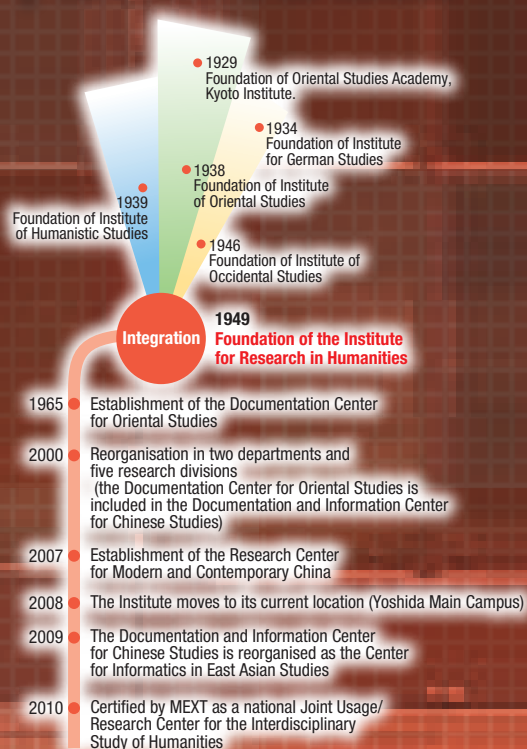
tion to inter-human relationships. The irrevocable harm caused by neglecting this aspect is fresh in our mind and need not be evoked here again.

As previously stated, there have been numerous advances in science and technology, and the way we see nature has changed as a result; as far as society is concerned, here too the situation is complex, as the push for homogenisation is always counterbalanced by a search for originality. Thus, it would not be surprising at all if the same discussions we engaged in in the past were to lead us to completely different conclusions today. Needless to say, there are no topics that can be exhausted after being brought up just once.

The various activities the Institute is involved in, including our joint research projects, are not, so to speak, playing to the gallery. We feel we have engaged on a path worth following, led by Walter Benjamin's words: “Opinions are to the vast apparatus of social existence what oil is to machines: one does not go up to a turbine and pour machine oil over it; one applies a little to hidden spindles and joints that one has to know.” (*One Way Street*)



## The History of the Institute



# The Institute's Distinctive Features

## The Search for Knowledge

### A Tradition in Fieldwork

Going beyond conventional philological studies, what gives further depth to the research in human sciences that we engage in at the Institute is the uncovering of heretofore unknown cultures and societies via fieldwork, as well as the constant development of cutting-edge methods of pursuing knowledge.

Our university has been known to be an “exploratory” one; this tradition of exploration has begun with the archaeological survey of Chinese stone cave temples. The 1938 survey of the Yungang Grottoes, which continued for seven years, is thought to have set the example for all further systematic international surveys carried out by Japanese specialists in the field.

The 33 reports on our finds, published in Japanese and English after the war, have attracted the attention of the international academic community and are currently being prepared for publication in Chinese, too. In the last decades, our researchers have widened their field of interest, and engaged in the hands-on exploration of regions such as Central, South and Western Asia, Europe, etc, with methodologies ranging from anthropology to sociology, and from religious to linguistic studies.

In recent years, through the collaboration with foreign academic institutions and international scholars, we are working both on unearthing archaeological remains, and on preserving oral and material records passed down from generation to generation among the common people.

Thus, by pursuing joint research projects that transcend the boundaries of country and specialisation, we aim for the conservation of tangible and intangible cultural assets, and strive to widen the horizons of knowledge.

## Knowledge and Cooperation

### The Joys of Joint Research

Joint research has been at the core of the Institute's pursuit of knowledge ever since its foundation. Numerous researchers from all over the world have gathered here to exchange information and opinions, and to pursue new knowledge. In other words, our joint research projects have offered opportunities for dialogue among contemporaries.

At the same time, they have also been a place for conversing, as it were, with the dead: another fundamental way of interacting with knowledge at the Institute is organising study groups whose members meet from two to four times a month in order to read and discuss the words of generations past.

Recently, after becoming a national Joint Usage and Research Center, the Institute has started accepting proposals for projects and research group members from outside the university, thus paving the way to establishing a stronger connection with society at large, and initiating discussions that often lead to discovering new topics for research.

The difference between the Institute's joint research projects and various types of government-subsidised research does not lie only in the frequency of study meetings or in the closeness of the relationships among group members. Nor is it solely a matter of refusing to accept easy compromises, instead placing great weight on individuality. In a nutshell, what we aim for is the steady and creative transmission of knowledge. The mission of the Institute is to build, for the next generations, a strong foundation of knowledge, and to propose new ways of engaging with that knowledge.



## Organisational Structure

### Director, Deputy Director

#### Research divisions

##### Department of Humanities

Cultural Research Methodologies Division  
Cultural Processes Division  
Cultural Interrelationships Division

##### Department of Oriental Studies

Cultural Representation Division  
Cultural Composition Division

#### Administrative Division

General Affairs Section  
Library Section  
Office for the Center for Informatics in East Asian Studies (CIEAS)

## Attached Research Centers

### Center for Informatics in East Asian Studies (CIEAS)

The Documentation and Information Center for Chinese Studies was recently reorganised as CIEAS, so as to align with today's advancements in IT technologies and their growing number of applications to society at large. CIEAS aims to integrate informatics with humanities, while also preserving and improving the results of previous projects analysing Chinese texts, and to create language corporates and all-purpose databases.

### Research Center for Modern and Contemporary China (RCMCC)

RCMCC was established in April 2007, with the aim of promoting modern and contemporary China studies. Its main activities, carried out regularly, include joint research, fostering young scholars, and disseminating knowledge via international exchanges. Moreover, in order to firmly lay the foundations of future research, it has established a “Base for the collection of materials and information about modern and contemporary China”.

# The Institute in Figures

Approximately **25** research groups are organised yearly, as part of the Institute's Joint Research Centre activities.  
(recruitment-based groups: 50%; group leaders from outside the university: 5)

Every year, circa **10,000** people take part in the Institute's joint research meetings,  
of which **500** are official members of established research groups.  
(scholars from other universities: 65%; master's, doctoral and post-doctoral students: 100)

Every year, the Institute hosts **30** foreign scholars, as well as **60** postdoctoral and trainees.

Around **400** symposia, lectures, workshops and seminars are organised at the Institute yearly.  
**7,500** persons take part every year in the projects aimed at researchers,  
and **3,000** people participate in those organised for the general public.

**610,000** books are stored  
in the Institute's library (Japanese books: 170,000;  
Western books: 93,000; Chinese books: 347,000)

**9,500** kinds of magazines are  
in storage in the library (in Japanese: 5,150; in European  
languages : 1,690; in Chinese: 2,450; in Korean: 210)

**160,000** academic and scientific materials are stored at the Institute.  
(archaeological materials: 100,000; Chinese stone carvings: 10,000; Chinese and Taiwanese paintings: 7,200;  
geographical and ethnographic materials: 375,000, etc.)

The Institute's library has **6,000** annual users.  
Every year, **705** persons use the library's electronic copying service.  
Total income from usage fee : ¥ **543,677** (averaged for 2010-2014)

Online traffic on databases (per academic year; averaged for 2010-2015)

Database of Chinese characters from stone-rubbings : **14,505,978**

Database of the Chinese Classics in Japan: **3,809,458**

## Access

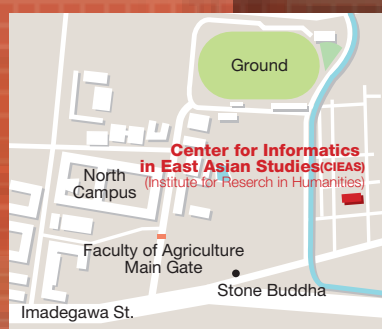
### Main Building (Yoshida Campus)

Yoshidahonmachi, Sakyo-ku, Kyoto 606-8501  
Tel: +81-75-753-6902  
Fax: +81-75-753-6903  
<http://www.zinbun.kyoto-u.ac.jp>



### Annex Building

The Center for Informatics in East Asian Studies (CIEAS)  
47 Higashiogura-cho, Kitashirakawa,  
Sakyo-ku, Kyoto 606-8265  
Tel: +81-75-753-6997 Fax: +81-75-753-6999  
<http://www.kita.zinbun.kyoto-u.ac.jp>



Main Building: exterior



Main Building: lobby

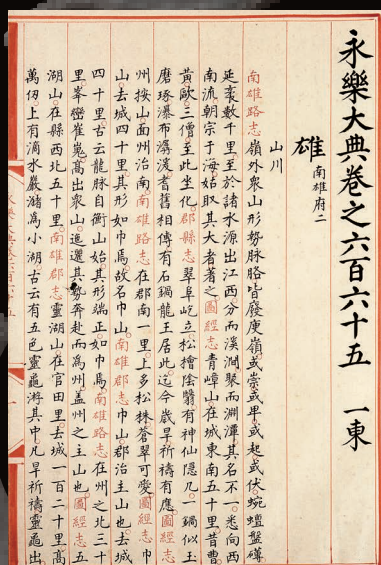


Annex Building: exterior



Annex Building: lobby

## Classical Documents, Archeological and Historical Resources



Yongle Encyclopedia [永樂大典], chapters 665-666. Hand-written copies from the reigns of Jiajing 嘉靖 (1522-1566) and Longqing 隆慶 (1567-1572)

In the library stacks of the Institute's Annex, classical Chinese books are stored according to the Chinese bibliographical classification. Along with the valuable collection of 97,272 volumes it has inherited from its precursor (the Institute of Oriental Studies), the library of the Oriental Studies Division boasts an impressive collection of 240,000 books (some of them in storage in the Institute's main library).



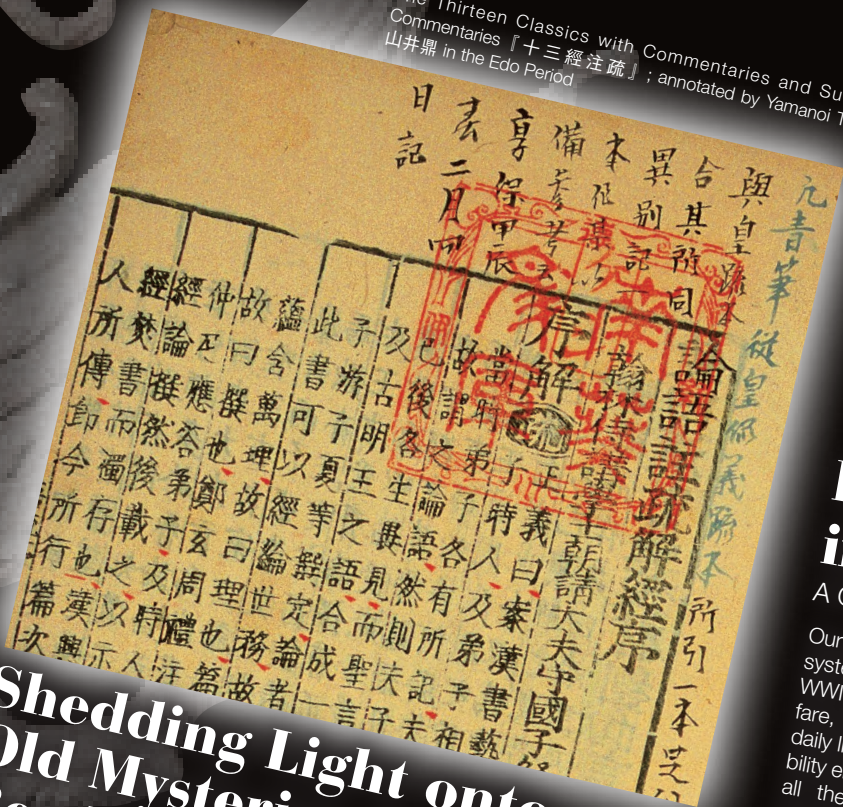
Antoine-François Prévost (éd.), *Histoire générale des voyages*, Paris, Didot, 1748-1789, 20 vol.

The first edition of the 20 volumes of *Histoire générale des voyages*, by Abbot Prévost, is an overview of all the voyages undertaken by Europeans during the Great Age of Exploration, classified by region and period. It conveys the way Europe's gaze turned away from itself and discovered "the world"—a development that went hand in hand with the advances in international trade and with colonisation. The copy in storage in the Institute's main library stacks was printed before 1815 and, being a rare book, can not be removed from the premises.

# The Institute's Search

Guided by the infallible compass of our insight into the knowledge of today, sketching with

The Thirteen Classics with Commentaries and Sub-Commentaries [十三經注疏]; annotated by Yamanoi Tei-shan 山井鼎 in the Edo Period



## Shedding Light onto Old Mysteries through Reading and Discussion

Specialists from different fields gather together to carefully read old originals, thoroughly investigate sources, and engage in fruitful discussions. The essence and beauty of learning lie in the way new developments are sparked by the contact with the wisdom of old, and in the discovery of knowledge worth passing down to the next generations.

## Investigating Cultural Assets

In collaboration with the Department of Archaeology and Museums in Pakistan, we have been able to bring back to Japan some of the stone objects dug out from Gandhara's Buddhist temples, and are currently analysing them from different points of view.

Kokotsubun, or oracle bones, are Shang Dynasty inscriptions on cow bones and tortoise shells. At the Institute, almost 3600 such inscriptions, excavated from Yinxu (near the modern city of Anyang, in the Henan province), are stored. The latest research methods in Chinese script are being used to interpret them.

Objects excavated from the temples of Gandhara

## Recovering in L

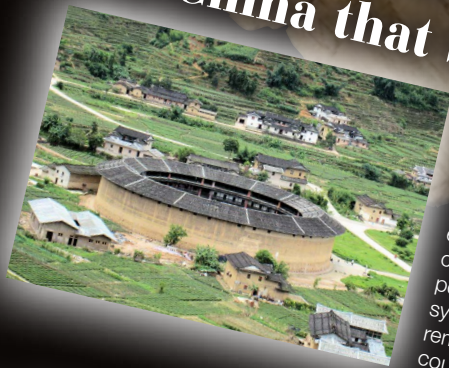
A Compro

Our world today is a system created after WWI. World affairs, the infiltration of daily life, the capability engendered by all these issues pressed during the period, but among us like With more than and spanning eight joint project has and insightful results post-WWI world.

# Search for Knowledge : The Map of a

Inquisitive spirit, we engage in a timeless quest to connect the wisdom of the past with a sure hand the blueprints of the future.

## The China that Changes, the China that Stays the Same



Our research project on the history of modern and contemporary China looks from a variety of angles at the changes undergone by this country during the tumultuous modern era; also, it takes into account the continuity with China's pre-modern period, allowing us to investigate systems and institutions that have remained unchanged through the country's centuries-long history.

## Reconsidering the Present, Light of a Century-old Tragedy

Comprehensive Study on the First World War

Today is still part of a century-old tragedy. In the wake of the First World War, wide internal war broke out in China. Changes in sensibility by the war—changes were supported by the war—were reappearing. The ghosts, now, are reappearing. 100 members of the war, our members, have yielded rich results about the



Jimbun Shoin Lecture Series (12 volumes): 『第一次世界大戦を考える』 (Daichiji Sekai Taisen wo Kangaeru; [Reconsidering the First World War])

## Miyako Project

This project aims to collect, analyse, and disseminate materials related to the academic endeavours carried out in Kyoto (=miyako) as a capital of knowledge and culture in the post-Meiji Restoration era. These materials include resources concerning social movements, agricultural economy, and French-Japanese relations in Kyoto, as well as the works of art donated for preservation at Kyoto University, and the research archives of Kuwabara Takeo, Umesao Tadao, et al.



Gandhara, crossroad of civilisations

Culture  
Read  
Gaze  
Compile  
Collection

# an Adventure

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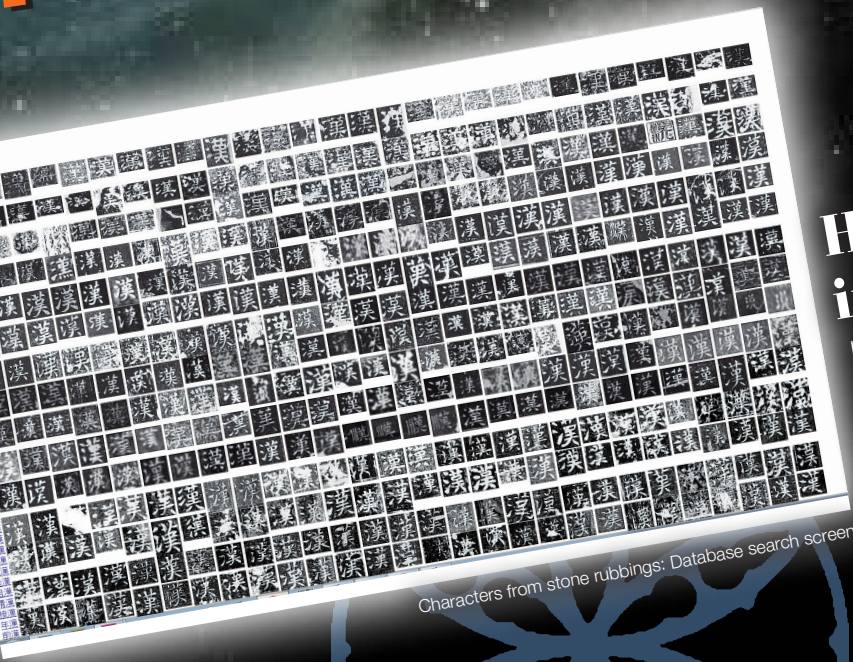
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Characters from stone rubbings: Database search screen



Stone relief of Buddha entering Nirvana; excavated from the ruins of the Gandhara Temples

## To Live, to Think

The Studies of Umwelten  
For living things, what does it actually mean, "to live"? By attempting to reinterpret the idea of "human being" from the point of view of non-human beings, in other words, by looking at the contours and boundaries of humanity, we hope to be able to grasp more accurately what human life is— this is the fundamental question we aim to answer through our research.



## Learning through the Five Senses

Anthropology

Beginning with Imanishi Kinji and Umesao Tadao, anthropology at the Institute has a long tradition of extensive fieldwork. The main charm point of fieldwork is that it allows one to learn using their entire body. It is an opportunity to experience first hand principles that differ from everyday "Common Sense", and learn to think about the world in all its complexity. The Institute's anthropologists travel to remote places to study a wide array of topics, from military practices to religious ceremonies for the spirits.

## Humanities in the Age of IT

In this day and age, we can easily use computers to perform comprehensive searches, as well as data analysis of digitised materials. For this project, specialists in informatics work together with philologists to develop new research methods. We also value the traditional methods of philological investigation, and strive to keep alive the energy of old and valuable manuscripts.

## Jinbunken\* Academy : The Challenge



Lectures and concerts, cooking (and eating!) practice with high-school students and the general public, literary cafés, meetings where we reread and reinterpret the classics: all are popular events organised by the Institute, quite different from those one would find at a culture centre. They constitute our very direct approach to forging knowledge outside the narrow confines of the Institute.

\*Jinbunken = 人文研, the nickname of the Institute

## Appeal to Popular Wisdom

Connecting Academia with Society

## Invitation to Chinese Philology

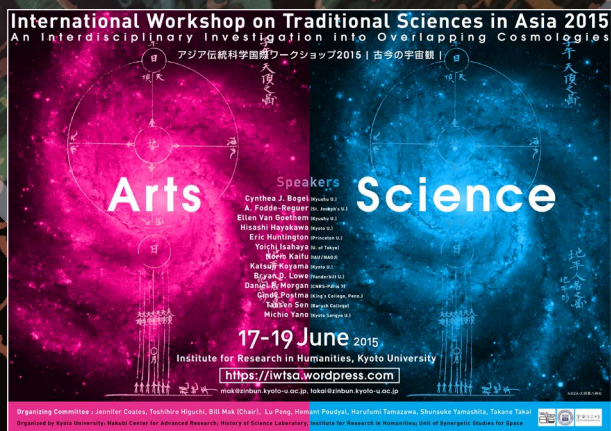
Every year, we organise beginner and intermediate courses for librarians working with Chinese books. We also offer seminars ("TOKYO Chinese books SEMINAR", "Summer school for high-school students") for the general public interested in Chinese philology and the kanji (Chinese script) culture.



# The Fostering and Exchange of Knowledge

## Making Academic Results Available to the Public

The results of our joint research projects have been published in numerous volumes, abounding in new ideas. The Institute also publishes several academic periodicals, such as the *Journal of Oriental Studies*, the *Journal of Humanities*, and *ZINBUN*.



Special lecture meeting, celebrating 80 years since the foundation of the Institute, November 5, 2009

## Multilateral International Academic Communication

At the Institute, we welcome a great number of foreign scholars and actively encourage meaningful international exchange and communication. Also, via the numerous symposia and conferences organised every year, we make the results of our research known to the entire world.