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Through the generosity of the Japan Foundation the results of the third survey on Japanese studies in the United States are being published in both English and Japanese. It is hoped that by making the survey's findings available to the field as a whole, the survey can play a useful role in helping to shape discussions of the field's future needs and goals. In preparing this brief interpretative report, the Joint Committee on Japanese Studies has not attempted the definitive analysis of the survey's data, but rather is offering its observations on what the committee's members consider to be some of the significant points raised by the present survey, in the hope that this too will stimulate discussion and debate within the field.

The first survey, published in 1970 by the Joint Committee, reported on conditions in the academic year 1969-70. Being the first comprehensive study of its kind, it helped to establish the general contours of the field for subsequent comparisons. The second survey, published in 1977 by the CULCON Subcommittee on Japanese Studies, was conceived of as a five-year update of the 1970 survey. It covered the year 1974-75. This, the third survey, is once again the work of the Joint Committee, and it reports on data from the year 1982-83.

The basic dimensions of the Japanese studies field established for comparative purposes by the 1970 report have, for shorthand purposes, customarily been reduced to three general measures:

1) the number of trained academic specialists;
2) the number of academic institutions at which they work; and
3) the number of student enrollments in Japanese language courses taught at these institutions.

The 1970 report listed 408 academic specialists teaching at 139 institutions, and at that time the Modern Language Association listed 6,620 enrollments in Japanese language courses.

(This report was prepared as a summary of a survey on Japanese studies in the United States undertaken by the Joint Committee on Japanese Studies of the American Council of Learned Societies and the Social Science Research Council, with support from the Japan Foundation. Professor Hall chairs the Committee.)
Modest as these figures appear today, as of 1970 they signalled a remarkable achievement when measured against the almost non-existence of a Japanese studies field prior to 1945. The committee drafting the 1970 report made what it thought was a bold proposal when it suggested that the field should strive for a doubling of its size over the course of the next decade.

It was a matter of some surprise, therefore, when the report of 1977 that brought the analysis up to 1974-75 demonstrated that a doubling of the number of specialists (to 846) had occurred in just five years. Although the teaching institutions that employed these specialists had increased only forty-four percent (to 196), and enrollments in language courses numbered only slightly over 9,600, there were other notable developments that led to a sense of optimism. It was in this short span of time that significant increments of financial support directed exclusively to Japanese studies through new organizations such as the Japan Foundation and the Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission, as well as from Japanese corporations, became available to the field.

This third survey brings our coverage up to 1982-83. Its basic message is that the field continues to grow, but at a slower rate. The survey estimates that the number of Japan specialists now employed by American colleges and universities is 1,025, a roughly twenty percent increase in eight years. (There are questions of comparability between this and the previous two surveys, however, and even this modest rate of increase may be inflated because of the greater thoroughness with which individual specialists can now be identified.) The total number of institutions employing these specialists has remained almost constant at 197, but it should be noted that there has been considerable turnover among the institutions represented within this total, since particularly among institutions with minimal Japanese studies programs some institutions have dropped their programs while other institutions have added programs between 1974-75 and 1982-83. Enrollments in language courses numbered 11,506, a twenty percent increase. Another index of institutional commitment to the field—library holdings of Japanese language materials—also displays a roughly twenty percent growth figure. Clearly there has been a slowing down of the rate of expansion in the base figures that define the size of the field. Although this has come during a period when the United States has been experiencing a remarkable boom of popular interest in Japan, the slower rate of growth in the field of Japanese studies should be seen in the context of the nationwide decline in the rate of growth of American college and university faculties during the late 1970s—a rate calculated at twenty-four percent by the National Center for Educational Statistics.

The first half of the decade of the 1970s were years of rapid growth throughout American higher education. The 1977 survey, which reported a doubling of the number of specialists and significant growth in other components of the Japanese field, described the field as it reached full maturity as one component of newly-erected framework of area studies. The most recent survey gives witness to the fact that the boom is over and that
one should not expect dramatic increases in the numbers of academically employed scholars in Japanese studies, or in the number of institutions employing them, given the probable lack of future expansion of the existing institutional framework of area studies and the present national financial crisis in higher education. However, neither decline nor stagnation are conclusions to be drawn from the 1983 figures. To point to several of its outstanding features, we note the vigor of programs in the field at the ten major institutions that received large bloc grants from the Japan Foundation in 1973. In addition to these programs, another thirty institutions now have full undergraduate programs in Japanese studies. The Inter-University Center for Japanese Language Study in Tokyo, the keystone of the national language training system, has continued to receive the support essential for its survival. The growth in library holdings and services continues at a modest twenty percent rate, and the number of libraries with at least 40,000 volumes of Japanese materials has increased from twelve to sixteen. There has been a growth in regional consortia among colleges and universities to pool library resources or, as in the case of the Associated Kyoto Program, to organize special study programs in the United States and Japan. There are now over ninety formal arrangements between American and Japanese educational institutions, as exemplified in the California-Waseda program, over double the number of programs in 1974. In other words, what we might call the density of the field has measurably increased.

Another feature of the Japanese studies field documented by the 1983 survey is its dispersion, or lateral spread. Educational programs on Japan are now available in nearly every state in the Union. Recent hirings of Japanese specialists by colleges and universities outside the traditional area studies centers have increased the representation of Japanese specialists on faculties in Midwestern, Southern, and Rocky Mountain states. Grants for expansion of library holdings have similarly increased the accessibility of materials on Japan throughout the country. The Regional Seminar Program funded by the Japan Foundation and sponsored by the Joint Committee on Japanese Studies supports seminars in various areas of the country that do not have major centers of Japanese studies, and makes it possible for Japan specialists at smaller institutions to maintain scholarly contacts with their colleagues.

What the 1983 report cannot document through its quantitative methods are the changes in quality of performance that the field has undergone in the last eight years. Some sense of this can be obtained by the answers to survey questions that report increased satisfaction with teaching materials. But another measure comes subjectively from the members of the Joint Committee on Japanese Studies, who have had the opportunity to judge over the years the quality of candidates for predoctoral fellowships and postdoctoral research grants. Clearly there has been a remarkable increase in the quality of language ability and research capacity among the recent candidates for the Ph.D., and an increasing sophistication in the topics and research design of projects submitted by established specialists. Each generation of Japanese specialists in America has demanded a higher standard of scholarship from itself and from its successor. No better index of the quality of scholarship achieved by the field can be found than in the pages of the Journal of Japanese Studies, founded in 1974, and the nine-volume Kodansha Encyclopedia of Japan, published in 1983.
From the 1983 survey there emerges a remarkable picture of the size and capacities of what is literally the largest pool of specialists and the largest mass of educational facilities dedicated to the study of Japan in existence outside of Japan. The present condition of the field is the result of forty years of dedicated effort by special interests both within and outside the academic community. Yet it is still doubtful that this important national resource has reached the capacity to sustain itself without infusions of funds from outside the academic institutions that employ Japan specialists and maintain Japanese studies programs.

The 1983 survey has indicated that, over the last decade, outside funding has appeared to keep pace with the growth of the field. But when the decade is divided into two parts, it becomes obvious that there has been an abrupt deterioration of some forty-one percent in the last five years. Moreover, the sources of funding have changed dramatically. As American all-purpose foundations have pulled away from support of international studies, their place has been taken by Japanese foundations like the Japan Foundation and American organizations with a special interest in Japan, such as the Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission. Overall an increasingly large proportion of outside funding comes from Japan. This is a gratifying development, but it has implications for the future that require careful consideration. Over-reliance on a limited number of chosen funding instruments can have an effect of narrowing the intellectual, financial, and political base of support for Japanese studies.

As we look into the future beyond the conditions depicted in the 1983 survey, what appear to be the basic needs of the field? The answer divides into two main themes: training and employment; and research support.

1. **Training and Employment:** The training of an academic specialist in Japanese studies is still an extremely costly matter. Language study and field research require several years beyond the time required for the average Ph.D. recipient in the U.S. Because of this, and in the face of a seemingly declining academic market for Japan specialists, it is sometimes suggested that steps should be taken not to "overproduce" the number of new Ph.Ds; in other words, not to produce more than can be absorbed into the academic market. A policy of self-limitation is both unwise and dangerous, however, particularly in the face of the increasingly high quality of newly trained specialists, the growing demand for Japanese expertise outside the academic world, and the need for qualified scholars to replace the generation that will soon be retiring from academic institutions.

Although the survey shows a modest increase in the number of Japan specialists employed by colleges and universities, it is important to note that in many cases these increases do not reflect long-term commitments by colleges and universities to Japanese studies per se. Many of the positions occupied by those teaching in the Japanese field are sustained by outside rather than institutional funds, or by funding allocated to a particular individual's position, rather than to a permanent "Japan slot." The 1983 survey finds that there are eighty-three specialists presently employed in U.S. colleges and universities who will retire in the next five years. But the expectation is that only about half of the positions they vacate will be filled by Japanese
specialists. If the field is to hold its own during the next few years, continued outside support for faculty expansion (or simply replacement) remains a necessity, as does support for graduate training.

2. Research Support: Support for basic research on Japan by faculty specialists in America serves two important purposes. It helps to add to the pool of knowledge that the field commands, and it helps to assure that the body of American scholars of Japan maintains its knowledge of the field, strengthens its contacts with Japanese scholars, and stays alive intellectually. The 1983 survey makes it clear that for the Japanese field as a whole, opportunities for continued research and writing are far too limited to sustain the scholarly vigor of its specialist pool. Such scholars, if they are to retain their capacity in language and keep abreast of latest developments, must have frequent opportunities to visit Japan. But such visits are extremely costly. The survey reports that fully thirty-four percent of America's academic specialists on Japan have been unable to visit Japan within the past ten years, primarily for lack of research funds. Even without the survey figures, the Joint Committee on Japanese Studies, as a result of its experience in reviewing applications for its post-doctoral fellowship program, is acutely aware of the insufficiency of funds for this vitally important need. For instance, for the last five years, it has been common for the Joint Committee to receive over seventy applications from established scholars, yet the money available generally permits awards to only ten or twelve applicants. Even were no new specialists added to the field, simply to maintain the capacity of the present pool as teachers and scholars will require an increasing number of opportunities for study, research, and field travel, and, given inflation, at an increasing cost per unit. At a time when public interest in Japan is reaching new heights, and when the knowledge possessed by scholarly specialists on Japan is increasingly more in demand, long-term investment in scholarship is a growing necessity.

In the words of the 1983 survey:

The problems that face Japanese studies now are not substantive ones pertaining to the intellectual rigor of the field, but those that reflect the more pragmatic concerns of academia, such as securing funding, attracting students, and placing graduates. We need only to add the problem of supporting basic research to make this observation complete.

The above report has appeared in a completer form in the Japan Foundation Newsletter of October 1984, pp. 12-16. The full report of 193 pages published by the Japan Foundation is available free of charge to libraries from the Social Science Research Council. For a copy for your library, please write: Japan Program, Social Science Research Council, 605 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10158.

(D.E.P.)