Welcome to the fifth and final April edition of the CJS e-Newsletter – who knew there were five Thursdays in April? This week we bring you hopeful news from Japan as the initial spike in cases seems to be tapering off, although much remains to be done to flatten the curve. In this issue we take a look at the new raft of measures being brought in to fight the virus in Japan along with a new article from Nadine Willems on the ground in Tokyo. For our ‘Piece of Japan’ segment we have recommendations on the theme of historical figures following Shakespeare’s birthday last week and the Buddha’s birthday this week (according to the lunar calendar). You can find a message from CJS Director Professor Simon Kaner on the Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures website and hear more from our SISJAC colleagues on their monthly e-bulletin.

Editor’s note: Japanese names are given in the Japanese form of family name first i.e. Matsumoto Mariko

Amendment: It has come to our attention that there were some errors with Japanese names in our third issue this month. It has since been amended and an updated version can be found in our online archives. We apologise to our readership for this oversight.

Eye on Japan: Overdue Government Action | Mask Mischief | Golden Week ‘Staycation’ 日本の最近情報

As COVID19 cases pass 13,000 in Japan, the government has finally begun to instigate serious measures to combat spread, including the issuing of ‘Abenomasks’, emergency funding for homeless and financially struggling students (JP), listing 10,000 clinics offering online diagnoses for new patients and perhaps even an end to the traditional use of hanko ink stamps used to sign documents to curb infection rates. The slowing growth of infection cases in Tokyo,
largely thanks to the efforts of Governor Koike Yuriko as opposed to the inaction of Abe Shinzō’s government, has given tentative hope that the virus might yet be brought under control. True to Japan’s legacy of creative public service messages, humorous social distancing posters by graphic design company Nosigner have been circulated as part of Pandaid to raise awareness, urging people to stay one tuna apart.

Flaws have started to appear, however, in earlier government initiatives with 1,903 complaints of ‘Abenomasks’ arriving soiled or defective. Complaints, largely from pregnant women, included masks arriving with insects inside, moldy or stained. Perhaps they can be resupplied with overpriced masks seized by the government from unscrupulous vendors. Furthermore, Abe seems to have taken a leaf from a certain individual across the Pacific in using his position to give unfounded medical advice, touting Avigan as a wonderdrug against the virus despite warnings from medical experts of dangerous side effects and unproven efficacy.

Pachinko parlours refusing to close their doors are being called out by officials, leading to bomb threats (JP) following a name-and-shame of non-compliant parlours by controversial Ōsaka mayor Yoshimura Hirofumi. Their long queues and refusal to shut may well have something to do with the blanket ¥100,000 handout announced by the government last week. Pachinko parlours are not the only places still being frequented for leisure, however, as crowds flocked to leisure spots over the weekend. Officials are strongly urging people to exercise restraint as the great national holiday of Golden Week begins, where traditionally the entire nation travels on packed public transport to holiday destinations domestically and abroad, although deserted bullet train stations on the weekend suggest the majority may be respecting the need to stay home. Finally, some news to raise the spirits, the Ue o Muite Sing for Hope Project has seen healthcare professionals around Japan singing Sakamoto Kyū’s Ue o Muite Arukō to send out a message of hope and defiance against the virus.

Written by editor Oliver Moxham

Sources can be found in the ‘News from Japan’ section

Tokyo Days – Report by Nadine Willems

TO FEAR OR NOT TO FEAR IN TOKYO

“Just by washing your hands properly, you greatly reduce the chances of getting infected. But there is something lurking in the depths of your heart that you cannot flush away…”

According to a video message circulated by the Japanese Red Cross, the fear produced by Covid-19 may prove an even deadlier opponent than the virus itself. A sticky and invasive emotion, it leads people to exaggerate bad news and stigmatize other people, threatening to destroy social ties and intensify the spread of the disease. In the current climate, suggests the Red Cross, distancing oneself from fear appears at least as important as social distancing. Even if this message primarily addresses the stigmatization of health workers as carriers of the virus, I also wonder about its wider meaning.

While Tokyo is a full three weeks into a state of emergency, its soft version of a lockdown increasingly constrains my daily life. I am not quite frightened, but I cannot help but ponder about fear in the time of a pandemic. Health experts are confident that infection rates have not reached explosive levels in Japan. Yet, there is little comforting news. The state of emergency, extended ten days ago to the whole country, is expected to persist beyond the 6 May deadline originally announced. Before the weekend, Tokyo Governor Koike Yuriko pleaded again for citizens to “stay home, stay in Tokyo, save lives”. Clearly, the
virus is still with us. How am I to process the constant stream of depressing statistics and conjure the compelling image of a giant city inhabited by millions of masked humans?

It seems that literary classics may offer some help. As in Italy, France, and many other countries, sales of Albert Camus’ *The Plague* have been booming in Japan. The book, published in 1947, presents a metaphor for the rise of Nazism, but its investigation of individual choices in the face of a deadly epidemic in the Algerian city of Oran remains thought-provoking. Camus’ plague is devastating, unforgiving. It affects adults and children alike. Entirely cut off from the rest of the world, a whole city in lockdown waits for the pathogen to vanish. One character’s assumption, however, is that pestilence lies within everyone and that “no one in the world, no one, is immune.” The point is that “we must constantly keep a watch on ourselves to avoid being distracted for a moment and find ourselves breathing in another person’s face and infecting him.” It is a metaphor, but when one’s world is turned upside down and certainties are crumbling all around, Camus’ tale of suffering and human resilience is indeed uplifting in any language.

The Japanese are perhaps more familiar than most with natural calamities – earthquakes, tsunami, droughts and epidemics, such as cholera, typhoid fever and smallpox, mark the country’s history. Still today, local folklore acts as a reminder of nature’s potential wrath. Many travellers to Japan will have heard of, or even experienced the magnificent Gion festival in Kyoto, held every summer since 869, which originated as a religious ceremony performed in appeasement of the gods during an epidemic outbreak. One of the festival’s main Shinto deities is the Gozu Tennō, literally “bull-headed heavenly king”, thought to inflict disease as well as willing to cure it in certain circumstances. The associated gōryō cult, meant to ward off evil spirits, developed at a time when epidemics spread rapidly in densely populated cities, such as Nara, and later Kyoto. When I realise that the Gozu tennō has also a dedicated shrine in Tokyo, we decide to pay a visit.

It is not that simple though. The shrine is located near Haneda airport, and since we are discouraged from using public transport, we have to settle for riding two old bicycles that were hidden away in the cellar. Under a gorgeous blue sky, it takes us a good two hours to reach Haneda shrine and the adjacent Jishōin, a Buddhist temple also linked to Gozu. One thing is sure, we are far from travelling through a ghostly
People flocking to ramen rather than shrines in a time of crisis

There are more stories to tell about Gozu, including that he was historically conflated with Susanoo, the temperamental brother of Amaterasu, the founding goddess of Japan. But that is for another time. For now, I follow the advice of the Red Cross to “ignore the whispers of fear” ... and wash my hands!

Written by Nadine Willems, Lecturer of Japanese History at UEA.
All photos taken by the author.
For more contagion-related classical literature, director general of the National Institute of Japanese Literature (国文研) has created a list available on Youtube in both English and Japanese.

Piece of Japan

Each week, we will bring to you some fresh recommendations from CJS members to help bring a piece of Japan to you at home through film, books, anime, manga and more. This week we bring you recommendations on the theme of historical figures following Shakespeare’s birthday last week and the Buddha’s this week (according to the lunar calendar). If you have any suggestions for themes or other recommendations, send us an email at cjs@uea.ac.uk.

Editor’s note: English e-books and Japanese e-books on Amazon can largely only be purchased on amazon.co.uk and amazon.co.jp respectively, meaning that English and Japanese e-books cannot be purchased on one account. You can read in both languages on your computer, but it is necessary to have two accounts. Furthermore, if you wish to read on a Kindle you must log in with either an English or Japanese account. Switching accounts on a Kindle will delete any content already stored on the device, so choose wisely!

Books

Recommendations by Hannah Osborne, Lecturer of Japanese Literature at UEA

The Goddess Chronicle by Kirino Natsuo (2011)

Under the theme of historical figures this week, I wish to recommend Joshinki, a story of love, betrayal, murder and revenge by the bestselling crime writer, Natsuo Kirino. Translated in English as The Goddess Chronicle by Rebecca Copeland, Natsuo uses a contemporary tale through which to revisit, and reimagine the myths surrounding Izanami and Izanagi, the god and goddess said to have given birth to the islands of Japan.

Available in English and Japanese paperback on Amazon.

Recommendations by CJS Director Professor Simon Kaner

Books on William Adams

My selected historical personage is Miura Anjin, Will Adams, the first Englishman to arrive in Japan, who became shipbuilder to the first Tokugawa Shogun, Ieyasu, whose family, if Norwich cathedral guides are to be believed, has some East Anglian connection (there is a dissertation waiting to be written on this). Not only did he inspire James Clavell’s ‘Shogun’ (1975) and the deliciously awful TV miniseries of the same name (with Richard Chamberlain playing the lead role – though not named Adams). I renewed my interested in Adams when I met colleagues from Hirado when we hosted the British Association of Japanese Studies at UEA back in 2012 – they were looking for an archaeologist to go and visit Hirado as they were planning to reinvestigate the purported grave of Adams – a school teacher in the 1950’s having reported
finding ‘very long bones’ in the remains of a tomb in the town. I spent a very enjoyable birthday there savouring the uchiwa-ebi and beach-front onsen, but sadly there were no long bones to be investigated at that time. Subsequent research, however, lead on to further investigations as reported in the press just over a year ago. Hirado is well worth a visit (and the long trip from Sasabo, including a wonderful narrow train tunnel), with its many temples and a superb reconstruction of the Dutch factory there. Books I have particularly enjoyed on this (in addition to Clavell’s Shogun of course, include Giles Milton’s Samurai William (2003) and William Corr’s Adams the Pilot (1995). For the atmosphere of Dejima, where the Dutch factory was moved to, it’s hard to beat David Mitchell’s The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet.

Manga & Anime 漫画とアニメのおすすめ

Recommendations by editor

Saint Young Men (2006 – present) by Nakamura Hikaru 聖☆おにいさん 作者：中村光

Christ walks among mortals again, although not quite how the Book of Revelations predicted – sharing an apartment with Gautama Buddha in Tachikawa, Tokyo to do some sightseeing. In this quirky, light-hearted comedy, Nakamura imagines how these two prophets would make sense of today’s secular world, all the while trying to keep their identities hidden from the unwitting populace, not least their inquisitive landlady.

The manga is available in English and Japanese e-books on Amazon.

Film 映画のおすすめ

Recommendations by the editor

The Wind Rises (2013) by Miyazaki Hayao 風立ちぬ 作者：宮崎駿

Miyazaki’s supposedly penultimate Ghibli film before retirement (he since came out of retirement in 2017), The Wind Rises is a fictionalised biopic of Horikoshi Jiro, designer of the Mitsubishi A5M fighter aircraft and its successor, the Mitsubishi A6M Zero used by the Empire of Japan in the Asia-Pacific War. Prevented from becoming a pilot due to his nearsightedness, Horikoshi turns his passion to aeronautical engineering at Tokyo Imperial University. His life is pockmarked with tumultuous events, including surviving the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923, witnessing the violent antisemitism of Nazi Germany and working under immense pressure to create a fighter plane to compete with the West for technologically backwards and resource-starved Japan at the height of war. Miyazaki’s career-spanning message of the folly of war is tactfully brought into direct contestation with his nation’s wartime history through the lens of one good man who must reconcile his desire to design aircraft with the terrible use for which they were made.

Available in English and Japanese on Netflix.
Miss Hokusai (2015) by Hara Keiichi

Anyone with the faintest familiarity with Japanese art will know the name of Katsushika Hokusai, painter of such iconic pieces as The Great Wave off Kanagawa. However, few may know of his daughter Katsushika Ōi who herself was an accomplished painter who worked as his production assistant. While few of her works are known, Hara deftly interprets this as Ōi leaving much of her work unsigned in the film as well as working to complete works neglected by father. Hara also explores life beyond the celebrity of painting in the Katsushika household, looking at Hokusai’s role as a father and the paternal care Ōi was required to provide in his stead towards her sickly, blind half-sister Nao. A fantastically energetic and colourful production bringing life to the often unsung heroines in history, which hopefully sets a precedent for rock music in Edo-period films.

Available in Japanese with English subtitles on Amazon.

Upcoming Events & Opportunities

Drawing Your Manga Character: Online Demonstration with Kutsuwada Chie

Japan House
Fri 1 May, 14:00 – 15:00
Booking essential, free admission

Japan House London is delighted to invite manga enthusiasts, illustrators and aspiring manga-ka to the first in a series of online drawing sessions led by UK-based artist Kutsuwada Chie.

In this one-hour event, participants can learn how to draw a single character under the guidance of a professional manga artist, while simultaneously following her step-by-step instructions and asking live questions.

After the demonstration, participants are most welcome to share their result on social media and tag Japan House using the hashtag #japanhouselondon, #manga and #MuseumsFromHome. More dates will follow; this page will be updated with information as it becomes available.

*This drawing session is open to all levels and makes use of digital drawing, although participants are welcome to use any drawing equipment that they have available at home.

About the artist

Kutsuwada Chie was born and brought up in Japan. After graduating from the printmaking department of the Royal College of Art, London, she is now based in Brighton, working as a professional manga artist. Her work Moonlight (2008, collected in The Mammoth Book of Best New Manga 3 by Constable & Robinson) was shortlisted in the Manga Jiman competition organized by the Japanese Embassy in the UK. One of her latest projects is a series of illustrated columns for
Mainichi Weekly (published every two months by one of the major Japanese newspaper companies) about life and culture in UK. Her books are available in most English-speaking countries and Japan, and some are translated into Turkish, French, Italian and Spanish. Besides creating manga comics, she runs manga workshops at schools, libraries, and museums, such as the British Museum, the British Library and Victoria and Albert Museum. She has also have worked on projects for Channel 4 and CNN.

**JSPS London Pre/Postdoctoral Fellowship for Foreign Researchers (Short Term)**

Application Deadline: Monday 8th June, 2020
Fellowships must start between: 1st November 2020 to 31st March 2021.

Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) is the leading research funding agency in Japan, established by the Japanese Government for the purpose of contributing to the advancement of science. Our Pre/Postdoctoral Fellowship for Foreign Researchers (Short Term) provides the opportunity for researchers based outside of Japan to conduct collaborative research activities with leading research groups at Japanese Universities and Research Institutions for visits of between 1 to 12 months. Eligible applicants need to be either within 2 years of finishing their PhD at the time of applying to start their fellowship in Japan or have obtained their PhD at a university outside of Japan within the last 6 years (on or after 2nd April 2014). Eligible research fields are not limited.

Please visit the [JSPS London website](https://www.jspslondon.org/) here for further information.

Fellow's experiences from former JSPS Fellows who have taken part in this programme can be found [here](https://www.jspslondon.org/).

**News from Japan**

For a running number of reported COVID19 infections, victims and recoveries in Japan, see the Asahi Shimbun homepage (JP): [https://www.asahi.com/](https://www.asahi.com/)

For non-Japanese speakers, the numbers indicate:

**Nationwide infections:** *Yesterday (total)*  **Deaths:** *Yesterday (total)*  **Recoveries:** *Yesterday (total)*

国内の感染者： + 前日（総数）  死者： + 前日（総数）  退院者： + 前日（総数）

The BBC’s Rupert Wingfield-Hayes took a look inside a makeshift COVID19 unit just south of the capital:

**Coronavirus: Tokyo hospitals trying to stay ahead**

Japan Times:

- Japan lists 10,000 clinics offering online diagnoses for new patients
- Rise in Tokyo coronavirus patients slowing, top expert says
- Japan's 'Abenomask' drive tainted by gripes over mold, stains and bugs
- Japan to seize high-priced masks from unscrupulous sellers
- Abe touts Avigan as COVID-19 treatment despite experts urging caution
- Defiant pachinko parlors show limits of Japan’s shutdown request
• Defying virus warnings, crowds take to Japan's beaches and mountains
• Japan's bullet trains and expressways eerily deserted as Golden Week begins

Mainichi Shimbun:
• 立憲・枝野氏、ホームレスや困窮学生への支援策提案　衆院予算委
• Japan PM Abe directs review of seal-stamping custom, eyeing virus containment
• 店名公表のパチンコ店にネットで爆破予告　大阪府警が業務妨害容疑で捜査

Visit the Pandaid website for comprehensive material for educating on coronavirus. Nosigner has contributed many such manner posters including advising others to stay one tuna apart.

Reuters explains here the constitutional ramifications on Japan’s state of emergency:
‘Lockdown’, Japan-style: Pressure to conform, not penalties for non-compliance

For information on the new government pledge of ¥100,000 to all:

How to get the ¥100,000 coronavirus payout from the Japanese government

For some livestream praying before the Great Buddha at Tōdaiji, see this live (if not somewhat inanimate) broadcast on Niconico Livestream (Japanese only)

For a guide by Japan Times to online traditional Japanese theatre:
Traditional Japanese entertainment joins the digital age

For a Japanese government public service video on coronavirus (Japanese only):
３つの密を避けよう！

For Japanese speakers, here are two articles in English from the Japan Times laying out vocabulary coming out of the crisis:

The Japanese words used to encourage self-restraint

Cancellations, postponements, suspensions — words that define the times

Click here for a comprehensive online document on Japanese universities adopting distance learning.

For more information on Japanese universities see this twitter thread by Rochelle Kopp, professor at Kitakyushu University, for resources.

General Links お役立ちリンク

Embassy of Japan: http://www.uk.emb-japan.go.jp/
Japan Foundation: http://www.jpf.org.uk/
JSPS: http://www.jsps.go.jp/english/
British Association for Japanese Studies: http://www.bajs.org.uk/
Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation: http://www.dajf.org.uk/
Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation: http://www.gbsf.org.uk/
Japan Society: http://www.japansociety.org.uk/
EU-Japan Centre: http://www.eu-japan.eu/
Canon Foundation: www.canonfoundation.org
Applications for JET Programme: http://www.jetprogramme.org/
If you have any contributions for the next week’s e-newsletter, please send them to us by **12:00 Wednesday** to make the next issue.

The CJS office is located in the Sainsbury Centre for the Visual Arts (the mezzanine floor), although the office is temporarily closed as per university guidelines. You can always email us at cjs@uea.ac.uk.

To keep up with goings-on at CJS, follow us on social media:

- [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/CJSUea/)
- [Twitter](https://www.twitter.com/CJS_Uea)

Or visit our website: [www.uea.ac.uk/cjs](http://www.uea.ac.uk/cjs)

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Left: CJS Director Professor Simon Kaner  
Right: Editor and CJS Project Coordinator Oliver Moxham