

A very brief history of Japan’s Economic and Social History Research

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Introduction

Economic history has long occupied a comparatively large field within Japan’s social science areas. Today, there are three separate learned societies in this field: the Socio-Economic History Society, the largest and most broadly based, has 1,400 members, *plus* 900 in the Business History Society, and 1,000 in the Political Economy and Economic History Society. Although the vast majority of the 3,300 have double or triple affiliations, these numbers suggest that Japan’s economic history population is undoubtedly one of the largest in the world.

The field took shape under Western influences and, as a history discipline, settled in departments of political economy of the early twentieth century. Its growth was therefore early even in comparison with other countries: in fact, its professionalisation drive began no later than most of the countries in the West. Collectively, however, the Japanese economic historians share some noteworthy distinguishing features. They are, first, known for their fine, detailed, sometimes meticulous studies of sources, which involve a great deal of archival research. This is true not only in the studies of Japanese data, but of Chinese, Indian or European materials as well. Second, there are relatively more researchers on non-Japanese than on Japan-proper areas. From the very beginning Western as well as Chinese economic history studies have been considered essential in both teaching and research. Third, while many scholars have long been obsessed with Japanese distinctiveness in its development patterns, at least some of them have kept serious interest in global and

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comparative issues in economic history. In recent years, moreover, many have begun to turn attention to specifically Asian questions.

This short essay traces the history of Japan's economic and social history research from the late nineteenth to the beginning of the twenty-first century. It is my hope that the exploration of earlier stages of its evolution would help make sense of the distinct features of economic and social history research in Japan today.

1. The background

It was in the inter-war period that Japan's economic and social history established itself as a modern academic discipline, but its origins may be traced back to the late nineteenth century. From the opening of the country in 1859, not just commodities and appliances but new Western-born ideas and institutions also flowed in: the package included social science and the Western model of historiography. It is often argued that in the pre-World War II period it was the state that took the initiative in defining the academic fields. History writing was expected to serve the national ideal and social science research to provide a weapon for the nation's progress and 'struggle for existence' in the confrontational world of the late nineteenth century. This was evident for social science teaching in Tokyo and its fellow imperial universities as their departments were firmly drawn towards German statist models, although some schools and colleges outside the imperial university sector are said to have absorbed Anglo-American influences and remained more or less Anglophilic ever since.¹

But this interpretation is too simplistic. First, it should be remembered that history compilation had long been a state-sponsored enterprise in East Asian cultures. Second, however, an important development took place among Confucian scholars in the late Tokugawa period: the move was away from neo-Confucian metaphysics, which paved the way towards more empirical research in history.² Third, on the other hand, the oft-mentioned German influence on social science disciplines was probably more widespread than usually thought. It is likely that the influence went beyond the state

¹ A. E. BARSHAY, 'The social sciences in Japan', in T. M. PORTER and D. ROSS, eds., *The Cambridge History of Science*, volume 7: *The Modern Social Sciences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 515-18.

² For the history of historiography in the three East Asian countries, see M. SATO, 'Historiography and historical thought: East Asia', in N. J. SMELSER and P. B. BALTES, eds., *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences* (Amsterdam and New York: Elsevier, 2001), pp. 6776-82, and 'The archetype of history in the Confucian ecumene', *History and Theory*, vol. 46, no.2 (2007), pp. 218-32.

sector, reaching private and non-imperial institutions, such as Keio, where the Anglo-American orientations are said to have been considerable. In short, the actual processes and forces at work, especially in the early phases of the development of our profession, were more complex than usually assumed. I will therefore begin the following account with two separate traditions, one East Asian and the other Western, from which our profession evolved.

However, the state did play an unmistakable, if not active, part in shaping the field of economic and social history research within Japanese academia. For example, the state universities' German-inspired approach to economics teaching was given a tacit endorsement by the successive governments, as a result of which economic history attained an equal footing with theoretical and policy research. Under this tripartite scheme, the curriculum of the pre-World War II years was almost always structured around the three pillars of theory, policy and history, a legacy that was eroded in the post-war period but is nonetheless felt even today. Another role was more practical. After the early trials and errors in development policy the government's approach to the promotion of industry and trade became more or less 'hands-off'. One of such hands-off measures was vocational education in commerce and economics. This approach led some colleges and departments, mostly outside the imperial university sector, to encourage their lecturers and students to undertake field research in and around Japan. Such research trips produced a good deal of data on contemporary regional economies in Japan and other Asian countries. Non-academic institutions set up in later periods also started producing similar materials, which in turn allowed later-day scholars to undertake empirical research. Some of those researchers used, in fact, an historical approach to the Asian economic questions of the day: the topics included financial and trade customs, transaction patterns, taxation and currency systems, and so forth. In other words, issues that are covered by today's business history were already being explored. It is therefore no coincidence that economic historians were not in short supply even in commercial colleges such as Hitotsubashi and economics departments of private higher education institutions like Keio, a university founded by Yukichi FUKUZAWA, the celebrated early-Meiji enlightenment leader.

2. Two disciplines

The first historian who lectured in economic history was Ginzo UCHIDA. He read history, not economics, when he was a student; and his economic history lectures were given as a history subject at Tokyo Senmon Gakko (today's Waseda), and also at the

Imperial University of Tokyo, around the turn of the century. Although he is said to have been seriously interested in the German historical school while he was in Europe, and laid the foundations of Japanese economic history research and teaching at Kyoto Imperial University, where he held a chair from 1906, he was an economic and social historian on the history side.

As seen in UCHIDA's case, the historical origins of economic and social history in Japan are found in two separate disciplines. One was a traditional field of historical learning, which had been under the influence of the Confucian school of 'evidential research studies' (*kaozheng xue* in Chinese, and *kōshō gaku* in Japanese) introduced from Qing China in the latter half of the Tokugawa era. What this philological turn in imperial China brought about was precise textual scholarship. Its emphasis on strict text critique was at odds with the then mainstream, cosmological but more normative interpretations of Confucian learning, particularly the ones advocated by ZHU Xi, and was accepted as a method of giving historical evidence by historians in traditional circles of the late Tokugawa and early Meiji period. As in late imperial China, the rise of evidential research 'marked an initial stage of the "professionalization"' in humanities of late Tokugawa Japan.³ This Sino-Japanese approach to historiography interacted positively with new historical research methods brought from the West into a newly defined Meiji higher education system, through Ludwig RIESS, a German scholar who taught at Tokyo Imperial University from 1887 to 1901. Young historians in the neo-traditional school of textual studies who went to the university's history department found the Western methodology not just accessible but also more or less familiar.⁴

3. Towards professionalisation

The fusion resulted in the professionalisation of the discipline in the Western sense. Emphasis was given to the critical examination of historical sources and the avoidance of value judgements, thus setting a new standard in historical studies of the subsequent periods. This was particularly marked in the field of Japanese history, and one of its leading figures in the Meiji period was Yasutsugu SHIGENO who became a professor in

³ B. A. ELMAN, 'The search for evidence from China: Qing learning and *kōshōgaku* in Tokugawa Japan', in J. A. FOGEL, ed., *Sagacious Monks and Bloodthirsty Warriors: Chinese views of Japan in the Ming-Qing period* (Norwalk, CT: EastBridge, 2002), p. 158.

⁴ ELMAN, 'The search for evidence', pp. 179-80, SATO, 'Historiography', pp. 6779, 6780-81, and M. MEHL, *Historiography and the State in Nineteenth-century Japan* (London: Macmillan, 1998), pp. 97-102. Under the new government, history compilation was downgraded from a state enterprise to a mere academic field within the imperial university. For this change and the establishment of the 'state university' school of history, see MEHL, *Historiography*, chs. 2-4.

the history department of the imperial university in 1888.⁵ Since then, the importance of archival research has always been emphasised. As Georg Iggers has noted, this professionalisation drive took place in about the same period as in most Continental European countries and, in fact, ahead of Britain and the Netherlands.⁶ It should be noted, however, that the Japanese process was not accompanied by any scientific effort to find empirically generalised statements; nor was it characterised by a passionate inclination towards the epic narrative: emphasis was given just to collecting all the evidence to establish the facts.⁷

The other major influence was the German historical school of political economy, which gained prominence from the mid-Meiji period onwards among academics in universities and colleges, despite the advocacy made by FUKUZAWA and other early-Meiji intellectuals of Anglo-American orientations. Its influence was felt most strongly in policy studies; as early as 1897, Japan's Society for Social Policy was founded modelled on the German Verein für Sozialpolitik. But many history-oriented political economy students also gravitated towards German universities. They returned back home, not just with the latest textbook knowledge, methodologies and stylised facts, but also with a sense of new research orientation in economic history and its related fields. An apt example is Tokuzo FUKUDA, then an economics lecturer at Tokyo Higher School of Commerce (Today's Hitotsubashi University), who spent three years in Germany. His dissertation was supervised by Lujo BRENTANO at Munich and published in 1900.⁸ Although FUKUDA himself was a theorist, not a historian, the book was an historical account of Japan's economic evolution over the long-run based largely on the stage theory of the German school. The publication of such an interpretation of Japanese economic history thus led to the acceptance of economic and social history as an independent discipline – and one on an equal footing with theoretical and policy research – even by colleagues in economics departments. However, sources of the

⁵ See J. NUMATA, 'SHIGENO Yasutsugu and the modern Tokyo tradition of historical writing', in W. G. BEASLEY and E. G. PULLEYBLANK, eds., *Historians of China and Japan* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 264-87; M. SATO, 'SHIGENO Yasutsugu', in L. BOIA et al., eds., *Great Historians of the Modern Age: An international dictionary* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), pp.448-49; and MEHL, *Historiography*, passim.

⁶ G. G. IGGERS, *Historiography in the Twentieth Century: From scientific objectivity to the postmodern challenge* (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1997), p. 27.

⁷ MEHL notes that SHIGENO never realised when using the Japanese translation of 'induction', that the original term implied a quest for an empirical law: see her *Historiography*, p. 87. For the narrative style question, see *Ibid.* p. 162.

⁸ T. FUKUDA, *Die gesellschaftliche und wirtschaftliche Entwicklung in Japan* (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1900). Seven years later the book was translated back into Japanese by Yoshizo SAKANISHI, a student of FUKUDA's, as *Nihon keizaishi-ron* (Osaka: Hōbunkan, 1907).

German impact were not confined to European returnees like Fukuda. Even some of the American professors, invited to teach at Japanese universities, were drawn towards the German school. A case in point is Garrett DROPPERS, the first chair in political economy at Keio, 1889-98. He was a Harvard-educated scholar who had studied in Berlin, where he is said to have been immersed in the teachings of SCHMOLLER and WAGNER. At Keio he taught all subjects in economics, but it is no surprise that the only publication he made in his life was an economic history textbook.⁹

One may speculate why both historians and economists in Meiji Japan felt comfortable with the teachings of the German historical school. There is one obvious fact that Japan was a late-comer in the nineteenth-century industrialisation race. Many Meiji economists must have found the school's anti-*laissez faire* and protectionist stance more appropriate.

However, it is likely that there was another factor. It may well be its philosophical underpinning – ‘historism’ – that had more to do with the acceptance of the German historical school.¹⁰ Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century German historians stressed the importance of a special quality which made each nation state unique. Many historians from Leopold von RANKE to Friedrich MEINECKE thought that Germany had little to learn from Britain or France. Precisely speaking, German historism had three separate but mutually related elements: one was the idealistic concept of the state as an ‘individual’, a second the notion the intransferability of national institutions, and a third element the rejection of conceptualisation or the break with the ‘natural law’ belief.¹¹ All the three were present in RANKE’s history thinking. It is well known that subsequent generations of scholars, most notably Karl LAMPRECHT, started criticising RANKE’s position. As far as the second element is concerned, however, even LAMPRECHT and many other social scientists and economists in the German

⁹ G. DROPPERS, *Outlines of Economic History in the Nineteenth Century: A textbook for colleges* (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1923). For DROPPERS’ biographical information, see NISHIKAWA Shunsaku, ‘G. DROPPERS no rireki to gyōseki’, *Mita shōgaku kenkyū*, vol. 26, no. 1 (1983), pp.108-19.

¹⁰ I prefer ‘historism’ to ‘historicism’ for the English translation of *Historismus* because Karl POPPER in his *Poverty of Historicism* (London: Routledge and K. Paul, 1957) made a sharp distinction between ‘historism’, the term he used for historical relativism, and ‘historicism’, which he defined as a Hegelian or Marxian pursuit of historical laws and prediction. See a lengthy discussion in G. G. IGGERS, *The German Conception of History: The national tradition of historical thought from Herder to the present*, revised edn (Middleton, CN: Wesleyan University Press, 1983), pp. 295-98, although IGGERS’s own choice was ‘historicism’ rather than ‘historism’.

¹¹ IGGERS, *The German Conception*, pp. 7-11. For critical evaluations of German *Historismus*, see also C. ANTONI, *From History to Sociology: The transition in German historical thinking* (London: Merlin Press, 1962).

historical school shared the Rankean view: they stressed the nation-specific nature of development, implying that their stage theories were more or less nation-specific and culture-bound. Under influences from such historical social scientists, therefore, modern Japan's professional economic and social historians in the subsequent periods tended to maintain a relativist rather than a monothetic view of history, as illustrated in the contrast drawn for the first economic history professor UCHIDA and his contemporary economic theorist FUKUDA, despite the fact that both received similarly decisive influences from the German historical school of political economy.¹² Given the overwhelmingly methodological focus and, accordingly, the inadvertent neglect of conceptualisation as well as exploring broader implications in both the Sino-Japanese and Riessian approaches to historical research,¹³ it was probably through the writings of LAMPRECHT and other historical social scientists in early twentieth-century Germany that many economic and social historians of the day absorbed the very German way of historical thinking.

4. Institutionalisation and academic currents of the inter-war period

In history circles of Europe and the USA in the 1920s, there was an unmistakable tendency towards institutionalisation and specialisation. Learned societies were established and their journals launched: the German *Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* appeared in 1923, the British *Economic History Review* in 1926, the American *Journal of Economic and Business History* in 1927, and the French *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale* in 1929. The Japanese community followed suit. In Kyoto, Japan's first economic history periodical *Keizaishi kenkyū* was launched in 1929 under the auspice of Eijiro HONJO, a Kyoto University professor, who also established an Institute for Research in Economic History of Japan in 1933.¹⁴ The first

¹² See M. SATO, 'UCHIDA Ginzo', in L. BOIA et al., eds., *Great Historians of the Modern Age: An international dictionary* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), pp.456-57. It should be noted, however, that FUKUDA was a much more complex figure in modern Japan's history of economics. He did not stick to the German historical school doctrines but often expressed keen interests in other theories as well. For example, when Alfred MARSHALL published his *Principles of Economics* FUKUDA was deeply interested in MARSHALL's theoretical position and its implications for welfare economics (see T. NISHIZAWA, 'The ethico-historical approach abroad: the case of FUKUDA', in R. E. BACKHOUSE and T. NISHIZAWA, eds., *No Wealth but Life: Welfare economics and the welfare state in Britain, 1880-1945*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, pp. 136-58).

¹³ There is evidence that some prominent historians in this neo-traditional school, such as KUME Kunitake, were aware that Sino-Japanese *kōshō gaku* failed to present broader arguments on the basis of their own findings. See TAKEMURA Eiji, 'KUME Kunitake to "Shōsho" kenkyū', *Tōyō bunka*, no. 109, 2012, pp. 49-65.

¹⁴ For this Kyoto school, a 'well-trained group of economic historians', see H. BORTON, 'Modern Japanese economic historians', in W. G. BEASLEY and E. G. PULLEYBLANK, eds., *Historians of*

nationwide association, Socio-Economic History Society, was established with 50 signatories to the proposal in December 1930, and its periodical *Shakai-keizaishigaku* (*Socio-Economic History*) appeared in the following year.¹⁵

There were a few more noticeable trends in the inter-war years. The first was the growing influence of Marxian interpretations. As is well known, they exerted a profound impact on both history and economics in the pre-World War II academia. Marxism not only provided a political ideology for socialist movements, but also set out a conceptual framework for historical research. Since the quest for conceptualisation based specifically on social sciences was, as suggested above, totally lacking in the modernised version of Sino-Japanese approaches to history research, Marxism became ‘virtually synonymous with “social science”’, satisfying the historians’ want for social-scientific conceptual frameworks.¹⁶ Thus, despite oppression from the government (under which several imperial university professors were actually purged), the Marxian conceptual framework attracted many historians who tried to place modern Japan’s problematic situation in the perspective of developmental stages in world history. In the 1930s there was a controversy between two separate factions of the Marxist school. One group called the *Kōza-ha* regarded Japan’s path as a deviant from the ‘normal’ course of capitalist development and paid special attention to structural factors, especially extra-economic forces at work in the rural sector, while the other group (*Rōnō-ha*) of scholars took a position similar to the mainstream economic historians’, stressing the importance of historical data and of tracing changes based on assembled sources.¹⁷

The second trend concerns the introduction of Max WEBER’s historical studies, such as *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, as well as his methodological critique of the German historical school. Some read WEBER’s theses as a break with the German paradigms, some as a critique of Marxism, and a few were interested in WEBER’s methodological relations with the Viennese school of economics, but many others found affinities in his thesis of the rise of the West with some of the Marxian interpretations of history. The overall impact was thus deep but not straightforward

China and Japan (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 288-306.

¹⁵ Shakai Keizaishi-gakkai, *Shakai Keizaishi-gakkai gojū-nen no ayumi* (Tokyo: Yūhikaku, 1984), p.4.

¹⁶ BARSHAY, ‘The social sciences’, p. 525. For this interpretation, see also O. SAITO, ‘Akira HAYAMI: a historiographical appraisal’, in A. HAYAMI, *Population, Family and Society in Pre-modern Japan* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. ix-x.

¹⁷ For a brief account of this controversy between the *Kōza* and *Rōnō* schools, see T. MORRIS-SUZUKI, *A History of Japanese Economic Thought* (London: Routledge, 1989), pp. 81-87.

under the repressive circumstances of the wartime totalitarian regime, giving rise to a rather peculiar alliance between Maxian and Weberian intellectuals.

The third trend, less conspicuous but nonetheless significant academically, was that some of those who had read European history in European universities started exploring the non-European cases from the late 1930s on – a move which may be interpreted as a form of manifestations of the above-mentioned quest for nation- or region-specific patterns of development. For example, some Hitotsubashi students (such as Tatsuo MASUBUCHI and Yuji MURAMATSU) under the influence of Shinshichi MIURA, a scholar who had worked with LAMPRECHT in Leipzig from 1903 to 1911, began to have a fresh look at Chinese history during the wartime period in order to reveal very Chinese ways in which its agents, organisations and markets were at work. At Keio, Kanetaro NOMURA, who upon the advice of William ASHLEY had studied under J. H. CLAPHAM in Cambridge from 1923 to 1925, turned his energy to a project of the systematic collection of Japanese historical sources in the Tokugawa period, paving the way towards a well-grounded empirical research in Japanese economic and social history in the post-World War II period.¹⁸

5. Proliferation and developments in the post-World War II period

The effect of the breakdown of the wartime regime in 1945 was the liberation of Marxist academics. Immediately after the war, therefore, the *Kōza-ha* scholars dominated debates in history. Then emerged Hisao OTSUKA of Tokyo University. Unlike those of the earlier generations, he had no opportunity to go abroad for study; he began his work on European economic and social history in the wartime period. He read widely and, having read WEBER's sociology of religion and some of MARX's works, he became deeply interested in the 'spirit of capitalism' question and dwelled on the question for much of his career, in the hope that it would give him a hint for why his own country's modernisation was so retarded. His thesis thus influenced contemporary scholars in Japanese and Western history alike, for much of the post-war period.¹⁹

At the same time, economic history positions in university departments increased as the post-war government expanded the university sector considerably. As the community of economic and social historians expanded, proliferation of research

¹⁸ After the war, NOMURA served as President of the Socio-Economic History Society for 15 years, until his death in 1960 (Shakai Keizaishi-gakkai, *Gojū-nen*, pp. 119-22).

¹⁹ OTSUKA's major articles were later translated into English as *The Spirit of Capitalism: The Max Weber thesis in an economic historical perspective* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1982).

interests took place. At organisational levels it took the form of the founding of new learned societies. In 1948 a Society for Agrarian History was established (strongly *Kōza-ha* Marxian initially and then became the Political Economy and Economic History Society in 2002). The Business History Society was formed in 1964: that period also saw the establishment of study groups in specialised fields such as urban history, transport history, and the history of economic thought. Kyoto's Institute for Research in Economic History of Japan (and its journal) ceased to exist in 1945 but re-opened as part of the Osaka University of Economics in 1959 and the Journal in 1997. Today, the largest organisation, the Socio-Economic History Society, has 1,400 members; many scholars belong to two, three or even more societies, but each of the societies still keeps its own identity in this broadly defined field of economic, business and social history.

In research areas, a few noteworthy developments took place. First, on the Asian front a book on the social organisation of the Chinese economy was published by Yuji MURAMATSU in 1949, the year when communist China was founded. His analysis was not influenced by contemporary developments in China, however. His interest was to identify the distinct behavioural patterns and modal tendencies the Chinese economic system produced. In this analytical approach, one may discern some Weberian or Lamprechtian legacies, or both, but MURAMATSU made use of a wealth of statistics and field surveys of the 1930s and 40s to support his arguments and conceptualisation. Indeed, the book marked a departure from the pre-war tradition: it was more social scientific. Although the book was poorly received by Japanese China specialists of the 1950s and 60s – ‘too conceptually advanced for its day’, as Ramon MYERS put it in an obituary – it has been rediscovered by younger generations of China historians today.²⁰

Second, business history came into the field as a separate discipline in the 1960s, and has grown rapidly during the subsequent decades. This growth took place in the context of the country's strong economic growth. During that period Japanese big businesses' performance was spectacular, which attracted much attention from scholars in history as well as in business and economic studies, inside and outside of the country. Not surprisingly, business historians went global from the very beginning, holding international conferences (known as the Fuji Conferences) beginning in 1974, where not

²⁰ MURAMATSU Yuji, *Chūgoku keizai no shakai taisei* (Tokyo: Tōyō Keizai Shimposha, 1949), built mostly on materials and fact findings made by Japanese scholars and associations in the pre-World War II period. See also R. H. MYERS and B. I. SCHWARTZ, ‘Yuji MURAMATSU (1911-1974)’, *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 33, no. 4 (1974), pp. 651-53.

only big businesses but other topics, such as small businesses and industrial clusters, have also been discussed.

In the area of Japanese economic and social history, there was a quiet revolution in quantification. In the late 1960s Akira HAYAMI, a student of NOMURA's at Keio, started his demographic research by making use of village population registers of the Tokugawa period (some from the NOMURA collection). It was he who applied the methodology of family reconstitution and other sophisticated methods for the first time, thereby providing us with fresh quantitative information about Tokugawa Japan.²¹ In the 1970s he and his fellow historians and economists formed a quantitative economic history (QEH) group. Some of the group members shared the experience of working in a project organised by Kazushi OHKAWA, Miyohei SHINOHARA and Mataji UMEMURA, known as the LTES (Long-Term Economic Statistics) project. The project produced a comprehensive set of estimates of historical national accounts for Japan since the early Meiji period,²² thus bringing macro-economic analysis into the traditional economic history field. However, the QEH group members' attempt went beyond the periods and research areas the LTES estimates covered: macro-level sources in the Tokugawa period were explored, so were micro- and mezzo-level data for both the Tokugawa and Meiji periods. In the 1890s and 90s, the QEH group took the initiative in compiling an eight-volume series of *Japanese Economic History*, which is considered an epoch-making publication in modern Japanese historiography.²³

Third, with such quantitatively oriented works, a growing number of scholars started to make explicit use of economic models. Although the application of social science theories was not necessarily new, neo-classical economics has increasingly been applied to historical studies since the 1980s. Recently, much progress has been made in the field of historical institutional analysis. The new approach has brought novelty into traditional areas of institutional-economic history, where descriptive accounts had long been predominant, in the form of a theoretically rigorous as well as empirical

²¹ For a critical appraisal of Akira HAYAMI's achievement, see SAITO, 'Akira HAYAMI', pp. ix-xv.

²² Altogether 14 volumes were published by Tōyō Keizai Shimposha. There is an abridged English-language publication: K. OHKAWA and M. SHINOHARA, eds., *Patterns of Japanese Economic Development: A quantitative appraisal* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979). Some of its chapters, however, do not reflect workings compiled after its publication.

²³ Published by Iwanami Shoten. The revised English-language version of this Iwanami series is published by Oxford University Press as a four-volume publication. So far volumes 1 and 3 have been published: A. HAYAMI, O. SAITO and R. P. TOBY, eds., *Emergence of Economic Society in Japan, 1600-1859* (2004), and T. NAKAMURA and K. ODAKA, eds., *Economic History of Japan 1914-1955: A dual structure* (2003).

framework: a testable hypothesis derived either from game theory or the economics of transaction costs, or both, and the test which in most cases takes the form of micro-data analysis. So far Japanese historical institutional economists have explored such topics as the relationships between the firm, bank and government sectors, production organisations, and institutional forms of market transactions such as the guild and trade association.

6. Concluding remarks

With all the societies, associations and study groups combined together, today Japan has probably the largest economic history population in the world, with substantial proportions of the population working on countries and regions other than Japan. Although most of them are still conducting research and publishing their results in Japanese only, the Japanese community's international exposure has increased considerably for the past decades.

Since 1976, the Business History Society has published its English-language periodical (initially *Yearbooks*, now renamed as *Japan Research in Business History*) and also proceedings of the International Conferences on Business History, first by University of Tokyo Press, now by Oxford University Press. While the Socio-Economic History Society has been publishing books from Oxford University Press under the series title of Japanese Studies in Economic and Social History, the Society has also announced the launch of a new monograph series from Springer – the first volume will be published by the time of WEHC 2015. The Japanese presence has also risen at international workshops and congresses. The number of Japanese session organisers at WEHC increased strongly since the 1990s, so did that of Japanese session participants. One notable trend in recent years is that increasingly more papers have been presented by Japanese scholars on China, India and other Asian countries. In the field of economic, business and social history, therefore, 'the Japanese academia is better integrated into the international arena today than at any time before'.²⁴

²⁴ K. SUGIHARA, 'The Socio-Economic History Society of Japan', in *Information Bulletin of the Union of National Economic Associations in Japan*, no. 31(2011), p. 99. The paper is downloadable from: <http://ci.nii.ac.jp/naid/110008897306>.