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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THE purpose of this volume is to introduce the social anthropological study of Japan to a readership with a general interest in that country, although it is hoped that anthropologists—who have not, traditionally, paid as much attention to Japan as they have to many other parts of the world—will find it useful to see within a single volume the range of the various approaches to Japan that are current within the discipline. One hundred years ago Japan was commonly thought of in the West as a 'singular' country—because it fitted no obvious Western categories. Even today, some outsiders to the subject may still consider Japan as a special case of some kind, perhaps because of the superficial impression of the relatively uncommon cultural mixture of 'modernity' and 'traditionalism' that tends to strike the casual visitor to the country. The essays presented here clearly indicate the anthropological contribution to analytic studies that do not depend on such a simple dichotomy, and indeed explore the categories on the basis of which adequate interpretations of Japanese society may properly proceed.

The description and interpretation of the details of Japanese social life, and the anthropological interest in setting these within a scheme of explanation that is both capable of expressing a Japanese world-view and at the same time suitably intelligible to a Western readership, represent therefore not only a Western exercise in cultural translation. It is also necessary to be reminded that an awareness of a supposed category of 'Japaneseness' (and the problem, in turn, of how to define it) is still very much a live preoccupation among the Japanese themselves. How far, of course, such a preoccupation, and the solutions proposed, should influence the categories used by anthropologists in offering their own interpretations is an empirical matter for which no simple rule-of-thumb can be proposed—but in general the reconstruction of such perspectives is a valuable end in itself and characteristic of a good deal in contemporary anthropological writing. On the other hand, Japan has for a long period also

'looked to the West', and has adjusted itself to those consequences of Western thinking that flowed from romantic, 'Orientalist' interest in its supposedly unique, 'exotic' character, or even perhaps latter-day ethnological fascination with cultural survivals and traditional modes of behaviour.

Our objective in drawing attention to the existence of these various levels of interpretation is to some extent symbolised in the choice of a nineteenth-century photograph of the first Japanese Ambassador to France as an illustration for the cover of this book. An ambassador of Japan, to a Western country, at an early phase of Western political and anthropological interest in its 'singularity', is perhaps symbolic of the subject of this book in more than one sense. Hence we are particularly pleased to begin our acknowledgements here by recording the generous help of Elizabeth Edwards of the Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford, in showing us this hitherto unpublished photograph, and to the Curator of the Museum for his kind permission to reproduce it.¹

Certain features to be found in this book indicate, furthermore, a mixture of approaches to be expected perhaps from a joint editorship where one of us is an anthropologist specialised in Japanese studies and the other an anthropologist with only a general interest in the subject of Japan. Thus for example (with the exception of the maps) we have used macrons where they occur in Japanese personal names, place names and particular terms referred to—but not for Tokyo, Kyoto etc. (more properly Tōkyō, Kyōto), on the grounds that such names are to be considered as part of the English-language cultural domain. Similarly, we have followed the Japanese naming practice of putting the family

1. The portrait is of Ikeda Nagaaki, Chikugo-no-Kami, photographed in Paris in 1862 by Louis Rousseau. A number of Japanese delegations visited Europe and the United States in the early 1860s to negotiate and observe, following Japan's trade treaties with Western powers and its abandonment of the previous policy of seclusion (cf. George Sansom, *A History of Japan: 1615-1867*, London 1964). The delegation to France aroused much interest and excitement in Paris and was photographed by a number of photographers, as was the custom with visiting celebrities and 'newsworthy' people (see the *British Journal of Photography*, Vol. IX (1862), p. 178). The way in which this delegation was photographed by Rousseau, in full face and profile, suggests that an ethnological application was also envisaged for the photographs, and Rousseau's known interest in anthropology would bear this out. However, the portraits of the Ambassador and some of his senior officials do not conform precisely to this formula, and some of the photographs in the series (some 80 in all) are imposing character studies.

French photographers of the mid-nineteenth century had a high reputation for portrait photography, which is remarked upon by various contemporaries. Rousseau himself was an important figure in French photography. He was a founder member of the Société Française de la Photographie in 1855 (John Falconer, personal communication, 1985). He was particularly interested in natural history and anthropology and was attached to the Jardin des Plantes in Paris, for which he undertook photographic work. He appears to have worked in conjunction with M. Pouteau (see Ernest Lacan, 'Foreign Correspondence', *British Journal of Photography*, Vol. IX (1862), pp. 52-3), whose collection forms a major part of the early photographic material now in the collection of the Musée de l'Homme in Paris, including the series of the 1862 Japanese delegation.

[The text of the above note was supplied by Elizabeth Edwards; interested readers may also wish to consult her article on the Pitt Rivers Museum's photographic collections, which includes further reference to Rousseau, in B.A.L. Cranstone and Steven Seidenberg (eds.), *The General's Gift: A Celebration of the Pitt Rivers Museum Centenary, 1884-1984*, Oxford: JASO 1984 (JASO Occasional Papers, no. 3).]

name first, but with certain exceptions—viz. the names of those individuals (the two Japanese contributors to this book are a nice case in point) who have identified themselves as being equally content with the usual English style. However, all Japanese authors mentioned in lists of References are supplied with a comma after the family name, following our Western practice. Such typographical inconsistencies may not ordinarily be visible, so to speak, to the naked eye—but their presence in this book nonetheless serves a useful symbolic purpose.

The inspiration for this collection of essays came from a conference on the social anthropology of Japan held in Oxford at the University's Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies in March 1984, though this book is not the proceedings of the conference as such since not all the delivered papers appear here and, in addition, other papers not delivered at the conference have been included. The group that came together these two years ago formed a Japan Anthropology Workshop, to promote research in the field, principally by anthropologists but also including geographers, sociologists and ethnographers ('anthropology' in its Continental sense, perhaps?); its original Oxford anthropology connection has been appropriately signalled by the publication of this book in the Occasional Papers series of *JASO*, the *Journal of the Anthropology Society of Oxford*.² We are glad, therefore, to acknowledge the hospitality of the Nissan Institute—and especially its Director, Professor Arthur Stockwin—for the duration of the conference, the organisation of which was aided by the invaluable practical help also of Brian Moeran, Mary Picone, Arne Røkkum, Valerie Saunders, Michael Shackleton, and Professor and Mrs Teigo Yoshida. The conference was supported financially by the Japan Foundation Endowment Committee and the Nissan benefaction to Oxford University, to which we owe a debt of thanks for thus making it possible for JAWS (as the Workshop has inevitably become known) to get off the ground and thereby to lead to the publication of this book.

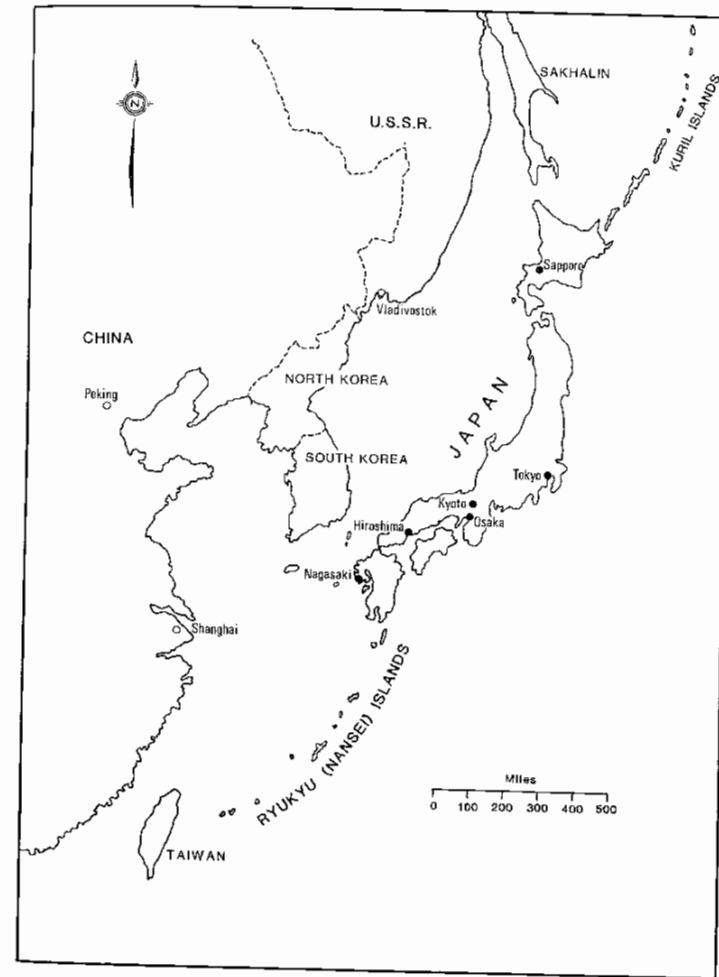
The list of individuals who have assisted at various stages in the editorial process is a long one, and it is a pleasure to reckon the size of the support and goodwill we have encountered along the way: Nick Allen, Roger Goodman (who prepared the Indexes), Noriaki Hashimoto, Yoko Hirose, Lola Martinez, James McMullen, Chihoko Moran, Brian Powell, Irene Powell, Arthur Stockwin and Ann Waswo—all of these have been very kind and helpful to us. On the technical side, we owe a great deal to the patience and care shown by Stephen Ashworth, who typeset this volume at the Oxford University Computing Service, supported also by Stephen Cope; the maps were produced by Chris Topley at the Department of Geology and Physical Sciences, Oxford Polytechnic; and the whole project was assisted throughout by Robert Parkin and the other members of the editorial team of *JASO*. Kodansha Ltd. of Tokyo kindly gave permission for us to publish (on page 51 below) a modified version of a diagram that first

2. *JASO* also published a special issue on Japan, to mark the conference (Vol. XV, no. 2 [1984]); it includes a short article on Japanese Studies in Oxford, together with various other papers, two of which (those by Brian Moeran and Ok-pyo Moon Kim) have been republished in this volume.

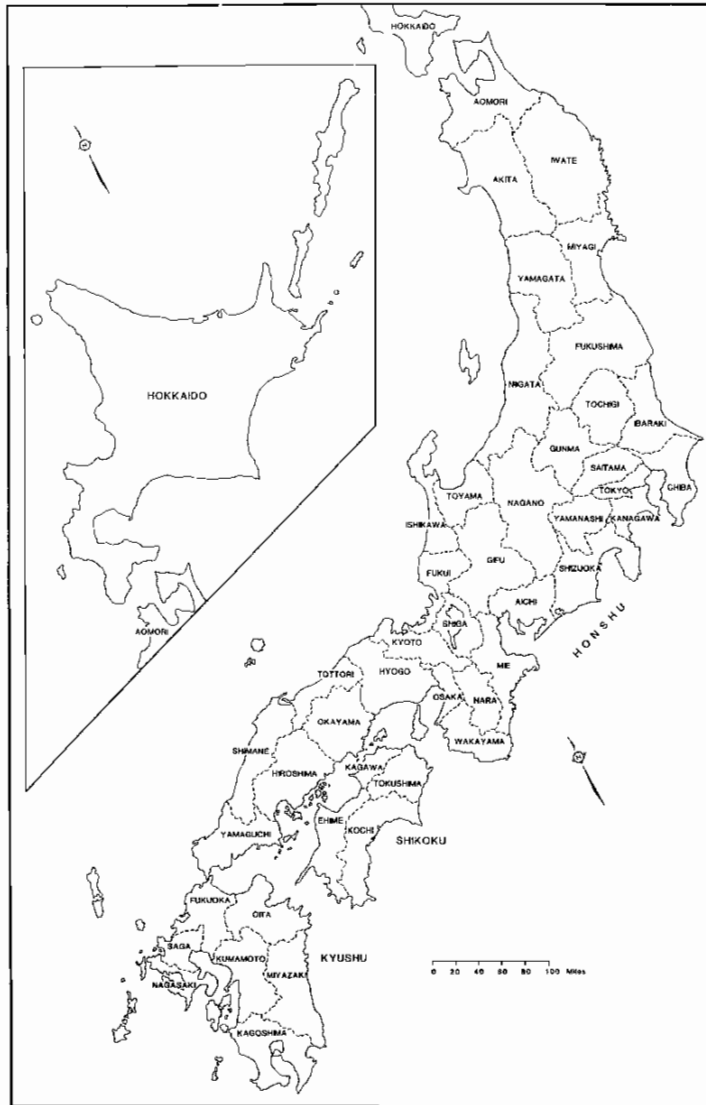
appeared in a work by Nakane Chie in 1972. Finally, of course, we gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Japan Foundation in Tokyo and the Japan Foundation Endowment Committee administered by the University of Sheffield; and we declare our special debt of gratitude to Sue Henny, of the Japan Foundation's London office, whose continuous interest in this publication gave us much encouragement. Responsibility for the content, opinions and conclusions expressed in the papers that follow lies solely, however, with the individual authors and not, of course, with the institutions and persons mentioned above who have so generously supported this project.

J.H.
J.W.

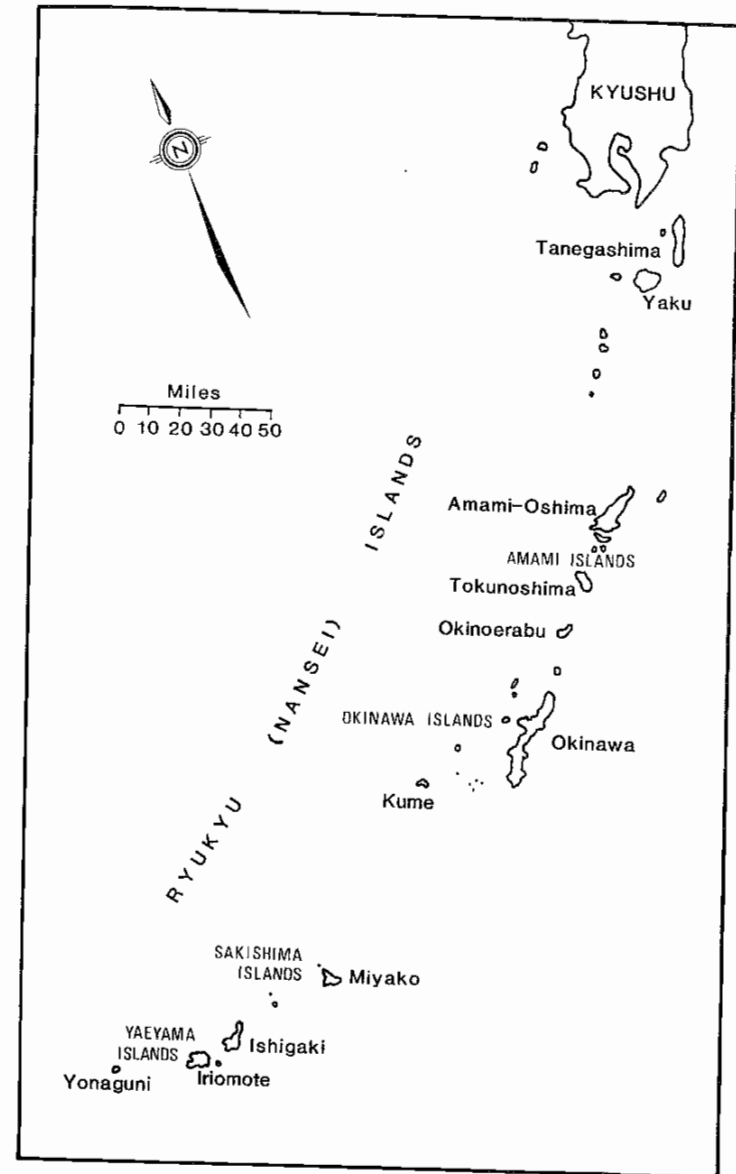
Oxford, February 1986



JAPAN



JAPAN: PREFECTURES
(excluding Ryukyu Islands)



RYUKYU (NANSEI) ISLANDS:
JAPAN'S SOUTHWESTERN ARCHIPELAGO