

# Calligraphy and court culture in pre-modern Japan project Calligraphy and Court Culture in Premodern Japan

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**概要** 本サブ・プロジェクトは、立命館大学21世紀COEプロジェクト「京都アート・エンタテインメント創成研究」とイギリスのセインズベリー日本芸術・文化研究所とのジョイントプログラムである。日本書跡の変遷や特質について、美術的に、また歴史的に解明していくことを基本とする。さらにデジタル技術を駆使して、書体の比較など、これまでともすれば勘と経験に頼っていた部分について、科学的な光を照射し、分析方法を確立することを目指す。

## Calligraphy and court culture in pre-modern Japan project Calligraphy and Court Culture in Premodern Japan

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**Abstract** The *Kyoto Art Entertainment Innovation Research Project* has been a joint venture between the COE Program at Ritsumeikan University and the Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Art and Culture at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

This project aims to better situate the history of Japanese calligraphy within its historical context and to bridge the gap between artistic and scientific analysis. New digital technology will help us better analyze particular calligraphic styles in order to shed more light on information that before could only be determined by inference or convention. Our sub-projects are listed below.

### はじめに

本サブ・プロジェクトでは、財団法人藤井永観文庫が所蔵する宸翰・古筆などを素材として、日本の書跡の変遷や特質を解明することを目的としている。同文庫には、30点の宸翰(内、重文1点)、70件の墨蹟・古筆・古文書(内、重文1件)が所蔵されており、時代は平安時代後期から明治にまで及んでいる。特に宸翰は、鎌倉時代の後深草天皇から幕末の孝明天皇、明治の昭憲皇太后まで、20名の天皇の宸翰が所蔵されている。

2005年12月開催予定の宸翰に関する展覧会の準備作業として、2004年度、月2回の研究会を開いて、宸翰の解読と内容検討を行ってきた。この作業は2005年度も行う予定となっているが、この研究会には、例えば6月7日には、コロンビア大学名誉教授で、同大学の中世日本研究所の所長B・ルーシュ氏も出席するなど、外部の研究も出席して意見を交換した。

### 展覧会の開催

2005年度12月に開催予定の宸翰を中心とした展覧会では、図録を発行する予定となっているが、この図録は日本語と英文とを併記する。

## Calligraphy and Court Culture in Premodern Japan

Coordinator:

John T. Carpenter      School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London  
Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures

Participating Scholars:

Kawashima Masao      Art Research Center, Ritsumeikan University  
Akama Ryô              Art Research Center, Ritsumeikan University  
Matsumoto Ikuyo      Art Research Center, Ritsumeikan University  
Barbara Ruch          Columbia University & Institute for Medieval Japanese Studies

Sponsored by the

**Art Research Center, Ritsumeikan University**

in cooperation with the

**Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures,  
London and Norwich, UK**

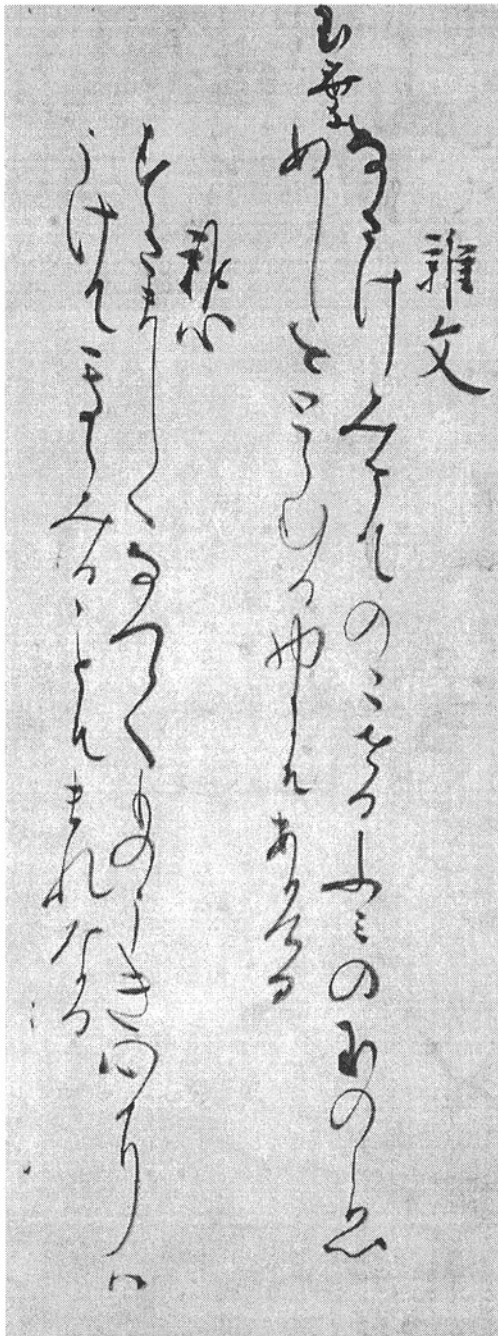
### Overview of project:

This innovative research project will be conducted at various levels of scholarly interaction related to the study of Japanese calligraphy. It will support individual and collective research projects, the development of new courses at the University of London and the international program at Ritsumeikan, as well as colloquies and international symposiums to be held in Kyoto and London. A fundamental goal of the project is to introduce the art of Japanese calligraphy to students and specialists in the West. Although calligraphy is one of the most important traditional arts in the East Asian tradition, it has been neglected even as other related areas of study such as tea culture and performance arts are receiving serious scholarly attention. This project also aims at publishing previously unknown material in both book and online formats.

Workshops and an international symposium are planned to help establish research networks and publicize the findings of this research projects. We are planning an international conference in September 2006, to be held at Ritsumeikan, which will bring together prominent specialists from Japan and abroad to discuss issues related to the history of Japanese calligraphy. Various publications are also planned, including the publication of a single-author monograph on Heian court calligraphy by John Carpenter in 2006, and a conference proceedings volume in Japanese in early 2007. We are also planning to create a small specialist bilingual catalogue of the *shinkan* (imperial calligraphy) in the Fujii Eikan Bunko collection, which has recently been entrusted to Ritsumeikan University.

### Research Visits to Calligraphy Collections

A crucial first stage of the project is to make research visits to study and photograph works of Japanese calligraphy in public and private collections in Japan, Europe and the USA. Needless to say, Kyoto, as the center of Japanese court culture for over a millennium, has the largest concentration of materials related to calligraphy in both public and private collections. The Kyoto National Museum is also the repository for many rare materials owned by area temples. Research visits will also be made to view other important collections in Tokyo and other areas of Japan. Though the number and size of collections of premodern calligraphy in the Europe and the USA is comparatively limited, still there are several important works outside Japan that should be brought to the attention of specialists.



Calligraphy by Emperor Fushimi, *Hirosawa-gire*.  
Fujii Eikan Bunko Collection, Ritsumeikan.

### Digital Archive

As part of this project, we shall create a bilingual digital archive of selected works of calligraphy for teaching and research purposes. This will be created with the technical support of ARC in connection with government sponsored projects. An immediate goal of the project will be to acquire a good selection of high-resolution images usable for digital projection. This JLAC project is envisioned as a long-term, ongoing project, with images being added to the site when feasible and permission can be granted. In many cases, museums and institutions already have their own websites or online digital archives, and in such cases this project will create an effective links. The public interface for the digital archive will be the Sainsbury Institute website at [www.sainsbury-institute.org](http://www.sainsbury-institute.org). Part of the project will involve creating a digital collection of the excellent collection of *shinkan* (imperial calligraphy) in the Fujii Eikan Bunko collection and other collections in Kyoto.

## Postgraduate Course at SOAS on Japanese Calligraphy

Beginning in January 2005, a new course 'Japanese Calligraphy: History and Reading Practice' will be offered by the Department of Art and Archaeology, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. Dr Carpenter will be the primary tutor, with visiting scholars occasionally conducting seminar sessions. The seminar aims at introducing students to the role of brush writing in the history of Japanese culture with focus on the crucial role calligraphy played in the artistic tradition even into modern times. Lectures and discussions will focus on the aesthetic dimensions of calligraphy, and text-image interaction in paintings and prints of premodern Japan.

The course will also have a practical skills dimension in that every week will include reading practice and guided readings in deciphering of premodern scripts, with the aid of specialist dictionaries and cursive-characters and *kana* (phonetic syllabary). Students will learn the basic techniques of deciphering premodern texts.

Topics will include:

1. Written Word as Talisman: Scriptoria of the Ancient Capitals
2. The Wang-Style in Heian Court Circles
3. The Emergence of Kana and *Wayô* Calligraphy
4. 'Scattered writing' and Decorated Papers
5. *Bokuseki*: Calligraphy by Zen Priests
6. Calligraphy and Portraiture in Medieval Times
7. Kyoto Renaissance: Tea Circles, Koetsu and the Rinpa School
8. Late Edo Literati Calligraphy and Painting
9. Image-Text Interaction in Ukiyo-e
10. Calligraphy in the Modern Era
11. Viewing sessions at British Museum, British Library and other UK Collections