

"Could Be Either" pile. So we knew that we had to stack the deck because the notion of cross-culture borrowing was not in the mental vocabularies of young Americans. It did not mean that they could not understand this concept, but it just meant we had to make it very clear when we designed the exhibition. Everything was tested. If we saw that people did not get it, we would try another way.

Vukov

Teen Tokyo may be available to travel to other cities. Will it turn into a blockbuster traveling exhibition?

Bedford

Shows about mummies and dinosaurs will always have wider general appeal. Japanese teenage life is something else. But the Asianist in me hopes Americans want to learn about how other cultures go about the business of living.

Additional information about *Teen Tokyo*

Teenage Tokyo, written by Jo Duffy and illustrated by Takashi Oguro, is a fifty-six page story of four students attending the fictitious Tokyo Toyo Municipal Junior High School. The main characters struggle with keeping up rigorous academic schedules, being involved in sports competitions, as well as having fun and meeting the challenges of being a teenager in contemporary Tokyo. Written in the highly popular format of authentic Japanese *manga* (comics), the book is an appealing way for American teens to learn about modern Japan and is accompanied by a teacher's guide.

The exhibition may travel to other cities. For further information, please contact Ms. Lisa Sankowski at the Children's Museum (617) 426-6500 x 277. ■

Suggested Readings

- Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum*. London: Routledge, 1995.
- Duffy, Jo. *Teenage Tokyo*. Boston: The Children's Museum and the Japan Forum, 1992.
- Hooper-Greenhill, Eileen. *The Educational Role of the Museum*. London: Routledge, 1994.
- Karp, Ivan, and Steven D. Lavine, eds. *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1991.

In a Teacher's Cyber-Lounge: The Emergence of H-ASIA

By Steven A. Leibo & Frank F. Conlon

Introduction

Imagine yourself sitting at your research desk or in front of a class of students confronted with an issue with which you are unfamiliar—one that local library resources simply do not allow you to explore. Recognizing the dilemma, you walk toward your "cyberspace" Asian Studies teacher's lounge knowing that at any hour of the day or night you will be able to submit a question or concern to professional colleagues all over the world. People ranging from graduate students to the leading scholars in your field will see your question and comment, sometimes within minutes of the query. Well, that is precisely what has been going on for the last twenty months within H-ASIA, an electronic international Asian Studies forum.

Background on the H-ASIA Listserve

H-ASIA, the H-NET list for Asian History (in fact, operating in a broader context of Asian Studies) was launched at the end of March, 1994 by two volunteer co-editors, Frank F. Conlon, of the University of Washington, and Steven A. Leibo of the Sage Colleges and the State University of New York at Albany. Since its inception, the H-ASIA listserv has been open exclusively to professionals and graduate students working in the field of Asian studies at the college or university level. H-ASIA itself is a subunit of H-NET based at Michigan State University and is partially funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. H-NET also runs some 60 other lists, all pertaining to aspects of the Humanities.

H-ASIA today has twelve hundred subscribers in 33 countries around the world. Reflecting the patterns of growth in personal computer use and Internet access, the majority of these subscribers are located in North America. Nevertheless, the participation from around the world is truly impressive. At this writing, we include members from Japan to South Africa, Indonesia to Finland, Taiwan to

Spain, India to Argentina, and we particularly look forward to the time when Internet access will enable much wider distribution of H-ASIA in all Asian countries.

The goals of H-ASIA are quite ambitious. We see the list as a means to helping establish the profession of Asian Studies as a truly international scholarly community. State, national, and chronological era specific lists exist now, and we anticipate the creation of more lists in the future. H-ASIA, however, will continue to serve as the principal clearing house of ideas, Asian Studies jobs, conference announcements, and issues of interest to the entire Asian Studies Community. Moreover, recognizing the fact that a very high percentage of our members are responsible for teaching about all of Asia, H-ASIA provides an ideal venue for discussions of both broad, comparative issues and more specialized questions which have comparative implications.

List Activities

On any given day the list of H-ASIA subjects can be quite eclectic. Recent "threads" (on-going conversations) have included discussion of the recent Enola Gay controversy, which led to conversations on the decision to use the A-Bomb in 1945 and India's attitudes toward nuclear weapons, while another clarified the terms Varna and Jati within the Hindu caste system. The discussion of these topics and others such as urban images in Asian films, China's relations with Tibet, women warriors in early China, Hong Kong during World War II—all have been made possible by scholars from around the world taking time to share insights and ideas. What many people find most valuable is that the volunteer editors seek to link together posts covering the same subject. Thus, a thread on classroom films might include comments by professors from North America, Europe, Japan, Taiwan, and Australia. They would as well usually include comments from newly

involved graduate students and long established scholars including Nathan Sivin, Marilyn Young, Barbara Metcalf, Fred Wakeman, John Richards, and Carol Gluck. Both editors work very hard to insure that each subject line is as clear as possible and thus easily deletable by those not interested in the subject.

H-ASIA Member Comments

Associated with an evaluation of the impact of N.E.H. funding in support of more technical aspects of H-ASIA, the membership was queried about their impressions of the list and its importance to their work. Although the editors did not see the original signed comments, we were given anonymous versions of them. The responses were gratifying. Members seemed very enthusiastic, and the actual list of comments ran some thirty pages with scores of comments—a very few quotes from which are reproduced below. . .

As a professor at a small state university working in the Asian field (India), without other Indologists on campus, I could easily become isolated. H-ASIA supplies a connectedness which allows me to stay aware of latest announcements (conferences, grants, etc.) and issues.

I encourage all of our graduate students in East Asian studies at XXXXX University (where I teach modern Japanese history) to sign up on the list, and many have given favorable responses. The job listings have been particularly useful for those coming onto the job market. There are also good materials for teaching: I am saving the currently ongoing thread on the Enola Gay exhibit for possible future use in a course I teach on the historiography of East Asia. [senior professor at ivy league university]

... it has been of tremendous help to me in my research, and its role in maintaining academic contacts with scholars in my area is invaluable to one so far off the beaten (academic) track. I have posted to the list (for help in locating a Sanskrit/Bengali book) and received two extremely valuable replies within hours!

[senior lecturer in religious studies in a small New Zealand university]

The spontaneity of the list helps me get a gauge of shifting interests in the field. The ability to communicate with scholars outside the U.S. is especially impressive. [professor at midwestern state university]

I have been a member of H-ASIA for close to a year now. I am also logged on as a member on other listserves, but none have been so useful nor so intelligent as this one. The moderators have been wonderful, and the participants have been first rate. I am amazed to find the many heavy hitters in my specific field. It is a joy to look in my mailbox to find the consistently insightful e-mails I read from H-ASIA. [graduate student in a New York state university]

I find it rewarding, stimulating, diverse and intense. I use it to broaden my own knowledge regarding the cultures of Asia . . . , but more to help me understand the diverse student body we have on campus. This listserv actually is instrumental in providing me with some background and insights into topics of conversation—so it helps me to meet our students. [administrator at Japanese university with many foreign students]

H-ASIA Homepage

H-ASIA been operating for almost two years, and we are now developing the H-ASIA homepage, a more permanent archive/resource designed to complement the ongoing professional discussions sponsored by the H-ASIA listserv. Although the H-ASIA listserv has done a remarkable job keeping an open dialogue on a host of pedagogical and research subjects associated with Asian studies, it has long been felt that an archive needed to be created for the preservation and easy retrieval of materials of more permanent interest. With that in mind, the home page is being developed. Chief among the wide variety of materials of more permanent interest will be book and product reviews, conference announcements and reports, sample syllabi, job listings, table of contents listings, significant historiographical threads, and "hot links" to other important sites. The H-ASIA homepage is already available on-line. While it is still in a construction state, some important sections are complete and available, including a very important discussion of the career of John King Fairbank.

The H-ASIA homepage is available at:

<http://h-net.msu.edu/~asia/>

It is our hope that the new homepage will serve many purposes. Obviously, as with the H-ASIA listserv, it will not be successful without the full cooperation of

H-ASIA members. Happily, just as our growing membership's enthusiastic support of the H-ASIA listserv has made it particularly successful, we expect a similar effort in keeping this new gopher useful.

Subscribing Procedures

To subscribe to the H-ASIA listserv, simply send an e-mail message to:

listserv@msu.edu

Ignore the subject line, and then on the message line type:

**sub h-asia Your First Name,
Your Surname, Your institution**

[Note the comma appears ONLY between your surname and your institution.]

For example,

**sub h-asia Jill Smith,
Hancock College**

When the message has been received by the H-ASIA subscription manager, the potential member is sent a questionnaire concerning address, research, and teaching interests. A subscription may be opened only after that questionnaire is returned completed. Upon addition to the list, subscribers receive a "welcome to H-ASIA" letter which includes valuable information regarding mail options, posting of items, etc.

H-ASIA is not a substitute for a reference librarian, an on-line catalogue, or an educational mentor. Still, during our short history, we have been able to encourage an exchange of queries, ideas, and information which has been of value to our members. By virtue of the list being edited and moderated, we have also endeavored to sustain and encourage creative and constructive conversations among professionals around the world. ■

[H-ASIA is limited to individuals associated with colleges and universities. Ed.]

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