



Exploring the history of genetics in Japan from multiple perspectives

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Q: What is the one thing you want to know the most right now?

In the field of history of science, we can explore any activities related to science that have occurred virtually anywhere in the world. My interest lies in the history of biology, and more specifically, in the history of genetics. Over the years, I've worked on topics like breeding and genetics, eugenics, and the genetic effects of radiation, along with related themes. I am particularly interested in uncovering how and why those topics have been studied and addressed in Japan, in relation to other countries and their social contexts. And by other countries, I don't mean just "western" nations. Likewise, when I talk about social contexts, I'm not only focusing on large-scale political dynamics, like international affairs. History of science is a deeply layered, global topic—so vast and complex that even a lifetime wouldn't be enough to fully explore it!

Q: What do you consider to be a challenge at the moment?

This isn't a particularly new challenge, but how we portray the history of science away from the "west"-centric perspective has been a significant issue for many years. Both the discipline of history itself and the concept of science have been shaped largely within that old framework. Historically, the field of history began as an elite, male-dominated academic pursuit—back in the days when

women were scarcely present in universities. Over time, however, women, minorities, and individuals from outside Euro-American regions began participating in academic research, bringing greater diversity to the field. This diversification naturally influenced the content and direction of research as well. Whether in business or research, the diversity of a team fosters creativity, and the same holds true for the history of science. Thanks to this increased diversity, the ways we approach and depict the history of science have undergone significant changes. That said, there's still much work to be done when it comes to developing historical research that doesn't rely on Euro-American reference points.

Q: Could you share your thoughts on the future prospects of this field?

I believe discussions on how to portray transnational, transregional, and global histories of science will continue for quite some time. With advancements in digital archives and related technologies, the linguistic barriers have significantly decreased, and the pace of research is expected to accelerate. By using new technologies and building wider networks with collaborators from other countries, researchers will be better positioned to pursue innovative research that transcends traditional frameworks. The demand for creative and original approaches in this field is likely to grow even further.



Q: What was the most enjoyable moment and the most challenging moment during your research?

Research can be tough at times, but it offers a kind of joy that's hard to find elsewhere. Whether it's a series of papers written by a researcher over a century ago, internal industrial documents, or government committee reports—things that might seem utterly uninteresting to others—I often find myself completely absorbed, losing track of time as I read. And then there's the thrill of discovering old, yellowed documents tucked away in some forgotten warehouse. That said, synthesizing all the bits and pieces I've gathered into a coherent paper is always a challenge. The final stages of writing are particularly grueling. But I've come to realize that this struggle is what it takes to bring everything together.

Q: What are your interests outside of research?

My hobby is playing the piano and keyboard. I'm open to any genre, and I especially enjoy performing with others—whether it's in a band or accompanying classical music.