



# THE CENTER OF JAPANESE STUDIES

Department of Historical Sciences,  
Faculty of Arts  
UNIVERSITY OF WEST BOHEMIA

2022 Newsletter

Experience Japan

# Introduction

The Center of Japanese Studies entered a new era in 2022. We experienced many changes and further promoted our studies and activities. After the difficult years of the COVID pandemic, we were able to renew our mission and work. The return of students to regular tuition, the possibility to personally discuss cooperation with our partners, and to organize public events was an important step towards extending the activities of our center. Due to our colleague's and students' dedication, we realized many new activities and promoted our work to the public. We want to thank all of our partners from all over the world and are looking forward to future fruitful cooperation.

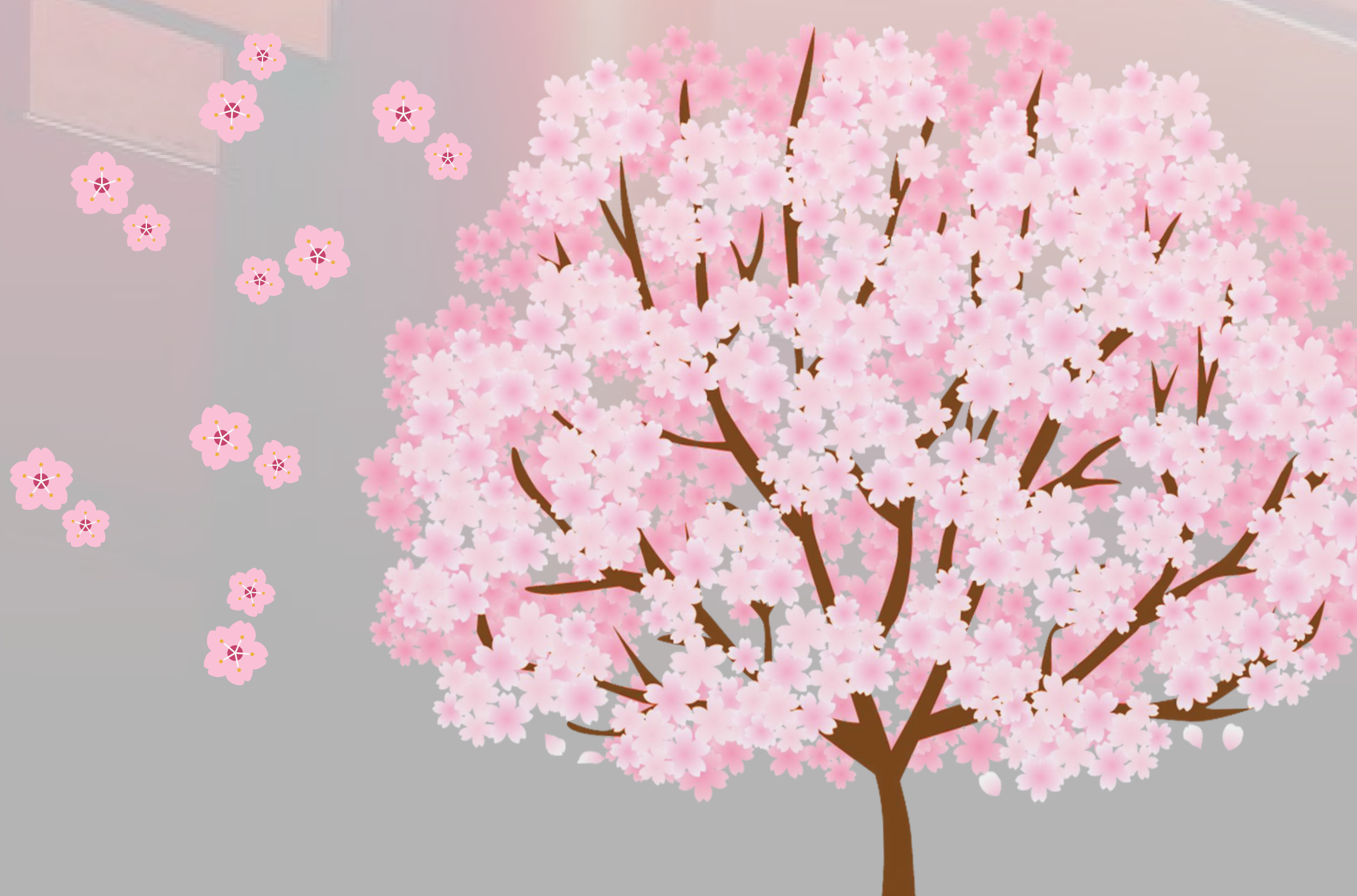




# News

In 2022 the Center of Japanese studies experienced many changes and improvements in our activities. In the first half of the year, dr. Kodet spent almost eight weeks in Japan on his research trip funded by the Fellowship of Japan Foundation. He dedicated his study to the relations of Japan with Western countries in the 19th century and plans to publish the results of his research in the near future. The second half of 2022 was dedicated to several public and educational activities. We were twice honored by the visit of His Excellency Japanese Ambassador to the Czech Republic. We also organized several lectures for the students of the Faculty of Arts, the University of West Bohemia, and the general public.

One of the significant improvements in the activities of our center was the creation of a whole new web page, on which we promote our work and inform about our future and past events and success. An essential step in the communication with our partners was the creation of the International Advisory Board, whose mission is to provide a platform to discuss possible cooperation in science and education. A significant success was the awarding of the Read Japan Project sponsored by The Tokyo Foundation for Policy Research, which will enable us to establish a library of books for our students and colleagues.





# Science



Last year the Center of Japanese Studies continued intensively in its scientific activities. The main topics of our research remained stable during the last few years, and we are trying to intensify our activities in this area through projects and grants. We focused on the Japanese premodern and modern history and Japanese security policy.

The major success in the scientific area was the Fellowship of Japan Foundation of dr. Roman Kodet, with his topic „Western Perception of Japan in the Bakumatsu Period.“ Dr. Kodet plans to publish his research in international scientific journals in 2023. His research trip in Japan, during which he visited numerous archives and other institutions (Yokohama Archives of History, Kobe City Archives or The University of Tokyo) brought already results in his new monograph „Twilight of the Samurai. War, Great Powers, Revolution, and the Birth of Modern Japan, 1850–1880“, which will be published in the Czech language in 2023.



We also frequently participated in international conferences. For example, Dr. Hosoda Takashi participated in Session 5, the 14th South China Sea International Conference organized by East Sea Institute, Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam (16–17/11/2022, Da Nang, Vietnam), and two other international colloquia where he presented his papers on the security policy of Japan and challenges to the geopolitical situation in the Indo-Pacific area.

Our doctoral student Aleš Kotva prepared a scientific article on the conclusion of the Anglo-Japanese alliance and continued his studies of the French policy towards Japan in the Bakumatsu Period.



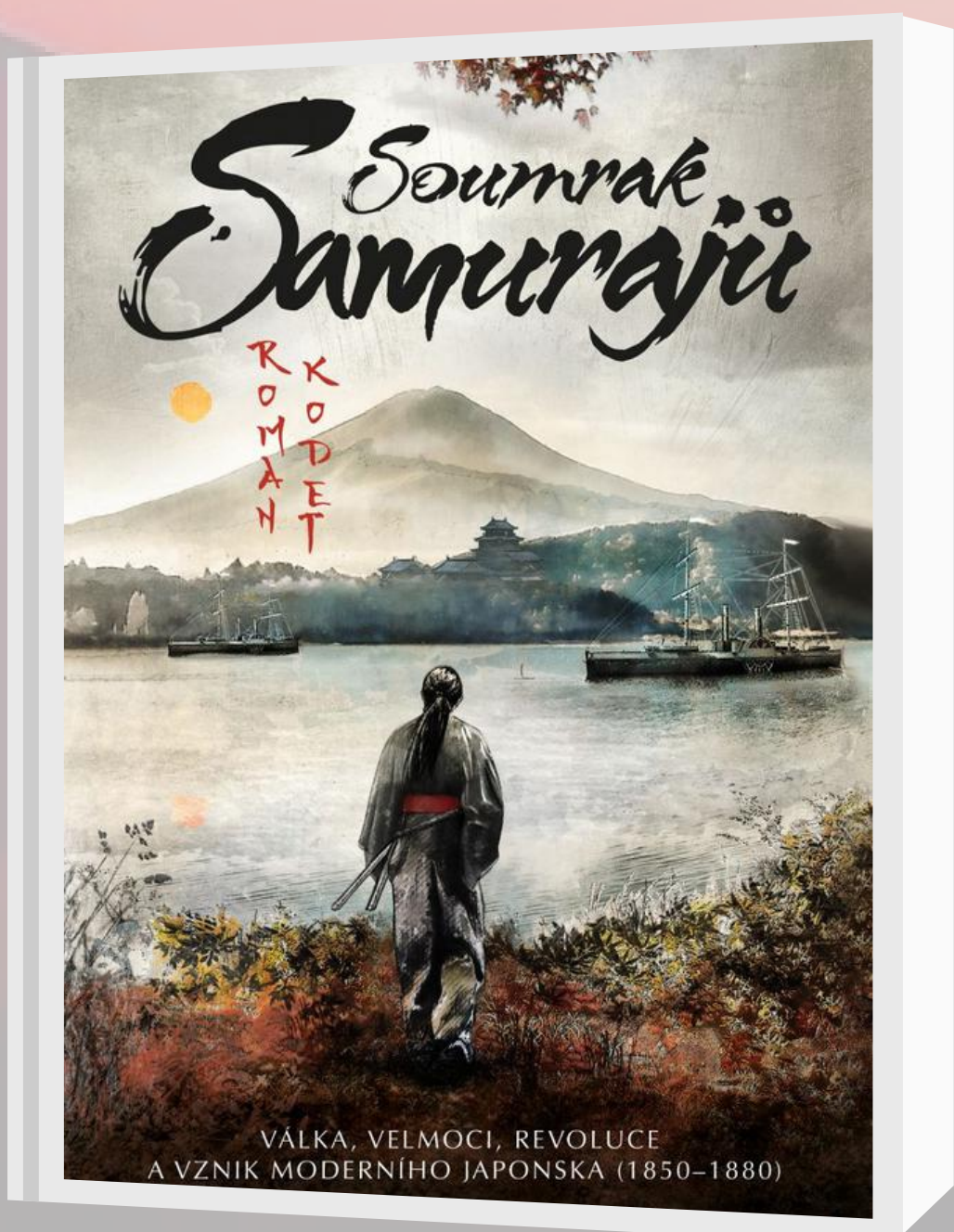


# Publications

In 2022 the Center of Japanese Studies produced several scientific articles published in the Czech Republic and abroad. Dr. Takashi Hosoda published a chapter (Challenge of Euro-Atlantic Alliances in an Era of "Savagery" and Its Implications for Asia) in a scientific monograph "2023, the Era of Savagery" published by Soseisha publishing house in Tokyo. He also promoted his studies in several articles online.

Dr. Roman Kodet published three scientific articles on the Japanese policy in the Bakumatsu Period and finished his book "The Twilight of the Samurai. War, Great Powers, Revolution, and the Birth of Modern Japan, 1850–1880", which is a significant achievement in the field of study of the international context of the Meiji Restoration.

Our doctoral student Aleš Kotva prepared a scientific article on the conclusion of the Anglo-Japanese alliance. Thanks to the support of the Department of Historical Sciences, we are planning to publish a special issue of the journal West Bohemian Historical Review.



TWILIGHT OF THE SAMURAI.  
WAR, GREAT POWERS,  
REVOLUTION, AND THE BIRTH  
OF MODERN JAPAN, 1850–1880

Roman KODET

The Meiji Restoration is arguably the most critical event in Japanese history. It is considered as the moment which marked the birth of modern Japan and the end of the feudal era. In his new book, dr. Kodet is presenting this event in its broader international context.

Planned publishing date: April 2023

Pages: 1100 (manuscript)



# Education

Last year we continued with our educational activities in the framework of the Department of Historical Sciences study programs. Our courses include „The Far East in the 19–20th Century“, „Social and Cultural History of Modern Japan, “ „Clash of Civilizations and Cultures, “ and „Selected Chapters of the History of the Far East. “ Dr. Hosoda is also lecturing the ERASMUS+ students at the Department of Political Sciences.

The interest of the students of the Faculty of Arts, University of West Bohemia, in Japanese history and culture can also be illustrated by their selection of bachelor and diploma theses topics. In 2022 their scope included the life of Saigo Takamori, the decline of the samurai class in the Bakumatsu period, and the Pacific War.





# Events

Thanks to the end of the COVID pandemic restrictions, we were able to renew our public activities. In May, dr. Kodet held a lecture in Study and Research Library of the Pilsen Region on the topic of the samurai culture in contemporary Japan, which was well received by the general public. He also participated in several podcasts, „Plzeňský historik“ in which he spoke about Japanese premodern history. Dr. Kodet lectured at the Japanese Embassy in Prague on November 22. His lecture, "The Meiji Restoration and the Birth of Modern Japan," introduced the Meiji Restoration from a broader global historical perspective and challenged the traditional narrative of the struggle of the reforming domains against the archaic Tokugawa regime. Before the lecture, dr. Kodet discussed future cooperation with the staff of the Japanese Embassy and was greeted by His Excellency Japanese ambassador himself.





## Visit of Japanese Ambassador

Following his visit to Pilsen in June, the Japanese Ambassador Suzuki Hideo visited the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of West Bohemia on 15 November. He was welcomed by the Head of the Centre for Japanese Studies, Roman Kodet, and Vice-Dean Tereza Šlehoferová, and discussed future cooperation. The meeting was followed by a joint lunch, where The Rector of the University of West Bohemia Miroslav Holeček accompanied his Excellency. Then the guest gave a lecture on Security Challenges in Indo-Pacific Region.

The lecture was attended by many students from all faculties of the University of West Bohemia. It was concluded by a long discussion. The Japanese Ambassador answered many questions on Japanese and global security policy. His lecture was another milestone in building good relations between the University of West Bohemia and the Japanese Embassy in the Czech Republic.





# Workshop of Japanese Sword

Our students had an excellent opportunity to experience the art of the Japanese sword. Our center hosted famous Czech swordsman Jakub Zeman who is often called a "Czech Samurai" (one of the creators of the YouTube channel Lord of the Blades). Jakub demonstrated his skill in tameshigiri and taught our students the basic techniques of the Japanese sword.





# Cooperation

## International Advisory Board



Luka Culiberg

University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana  
(Slovenia)



Thomas Lockley

Nihon University, Tokyo (Japan)



Natsuda Kaoru

Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University,  
Beppu (Japan)



Otaka Toshio

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Aneta Pawłowska

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Zuzana Stuchlíková

Prague University of Economics and  
Business (Czech Republic)





**WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD  
TO SEE YOU AGAIN IN 2023**

**Experience Japan**