

**The Society and the Man*****(1) Asiatic Society of Japan***

“The Society was established in Yokohama in 1872, just five years after the Meiji Restoration. In the spirit of the times, as the Japanese were looking intensely at the world outside their borders, a group of largely British and American diplomats, businessmen, and missionaries living in Japan decided to meet regularly to learn more about the country where they resided. At that time very little scholarly information about Japan in English was available, so at almost every meeting what members heard was fresh and groundbreaking to them. Though they didn't realize it at the time, they were participating in the birth of a new field of scholarly inquiry, Japan Studies. Society members carried out two basic activities: monthly meetings consisting of a lecture, and production of an annual publication called *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*.

“From the very beginning, The Society has conducted its activities, both lectures and publications, in English. Japanese members were welcomed from the very earliest meetings and continue to be active in The Society today, both as officers and members. Historically, the best-known Japanese member of The Society was probably Mori Arinori, who became Minister of Education in the Meiji Government. He first joined the Society in 1876 and was a member still in 1889 at the time of his assassination. ... Among the Western names affiliated with The Society either as officers or as guest lecturers, one will find a virtual Who's Who of Japan Studies from its earliest days to the present: Basil Hall Chamberlain and Ernest M. Satow, two pioneering Western scholars of Japanese history; J.C. Hepburn, creator of the romanization system for Japanese still used today; and G.B. Sansom and Lafcadio Hearn, both acute observers of Meiji Japan. ...”

(<http://www.asjapan.org/About/history.htm>)

The Asiatic Society of Calcutta (est. 1783)  
<http://www.indev.nic.in/asiatic/>

The Asiatic Society of Bombay (est. 1804)  
<http://education.vsnl.com/asbl/>

Royal Asiatic Society (est. 1823, London)  
<http://www.royalasiaticsociety.org/>

Royal Asiatic Society, Hong Kong Branch (est. 1847)  
<http://www.royalasiaticsociety.org.hk/>

Royal Asiatic Society, Ceylon Branch (est. 1847, Colombo)

**The Asiatic Society of Japan (est. 1872, Yokohama)**  
**<http://www.asjapan.org>**

Royal Asiatic Society, Malaysia Branch (est. 1877, Kuala Lumpur)  
<http://mbras.org.my/>

Royal Asiatic Society, Korea Branch (est. 1900, Seoul)  
<http://www.raskb.com/>

Note: School of Oriental Studies (SOAS from 1938), University of London, founded only in 1916  
Cf. École Spéciale des Langues Orientales, Paris, 1795

## (2) Basil Hall Chamberlain

a. Some key *o-yatoi gaikokujin* (お雇い外国人) in the field of culture and society

W.E. Griffis (1843-1928), Educationalist, Fukui, Tokyo, in Japan 1870-74

**Basil Hall Chamberlain (1850-1935), Japanese Literature and Philology, Tokyo University, in Japan 1873-1911**

Gustave Emile Boissonade (1825-1910), Constitutional Law, Hosei University, in Japan 1873-95

Ernest Fenollosa (1853-1908), Japanese Art and Aesthetics, Tokyo University, in Japan 1878-1890, 1897-99

Lafcadio Hearn (1850-1904), English Literature, Tokyo University, in Japan 1890-1904

b. Chamberlain's Major Works in the field of Japanese Studies

\* *The Classical Poetry of the Japanese*. 1880.

\* *A Translation of the "Ko-Ji-Ki"*. 1883.

\* *The Language, Mythology, and Geographical Nomenclature of Japan Viewed in the Light of Aino Studies*. 1887.

\* *Aino Folk-Tales*. 1888.

\* *A Handbook of Colloquial Japanese*. 1887.

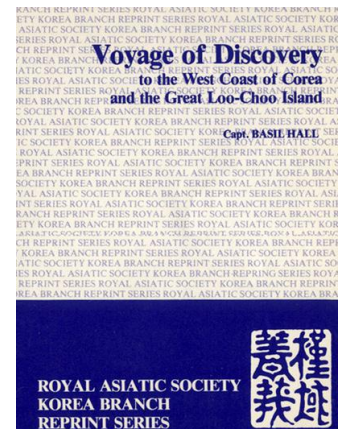
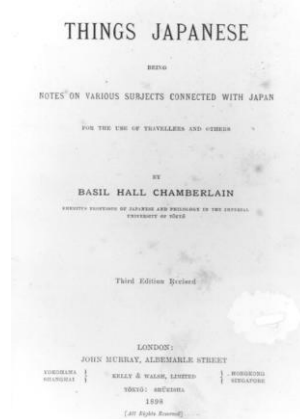
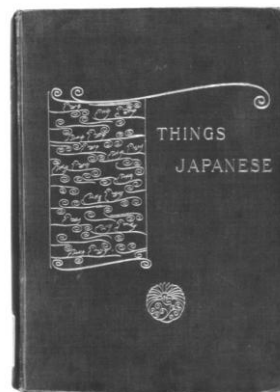
\* *Things Japanese*. 1890.

\* *A Handbook for Travellers in Japan*. 3rd ed., with W. B. Mason. 1891.

\* *Essay in aid of a grammar and dictionary of the Luchuan language*. 1895.

\* *Japanese Poetry*. 1910.

\* *The Invention of a New Religion*. 1912.



c. A sample of Chamberlain's periodical contributions in the field of Japanese Studies

"The Death-Stone: A Lyric Drama from the Japanese", *Cornhill Magazine* v34 (October 1876), pp. 479-488

"Japanese Miniature Odes", *Cornhill Magazine* v 36 (July 1877), pp. 72-79

"An Aino Bear Hunt", *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan* v15 (1887) pp. 126-296

"Reply to Mr. Batchelor on the Words 'Kamui' and 'Aino'", *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan* v16 (1889) pp. 33-8.

"On the Manners and Customs of the Loochooans", *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan* v21 (1893) pp. 271-89.

"Basho and the Japanese Poetical Epigram," *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, v30 (1902).

d. Further Reading

Ota Yuzo, *Basil Hall Chamberlain: Portrait of a Japanologist* (1998)

*Early Japanology: Aston, Satow, Chamberlain* (Reprinted from *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, 1874-1913). Ed. George A. Sioris. 4 vols. Tokyo: Yushodo Press, 1997.