



A HISTORY OF SOPHIA UNIVERSITY 2024

Person in charge: **Sven Saaler** (Sophia University, FLA/ICC)
saaler@sophia.ac.jp, tel. 03-3238-4046

Members:

Sven Saaler (Sophia University, FLA/GPGS/ICC)
Bettina Gramlich-Oka (Sophia University, FLA/GPGS/ICC)
Christian Hess (Sophia University, FLA/GPGS/ICC)

Affiliated Sophia members (non-ICC or formerly ICC)

Kate Wildman Nakai (Professor Emerita, Sophia University)
David Wessels SJ (Professor Emeritus, Sophia University, Faculty of Global Studies)
Linda Grove (Professor Emerita, Sophia University)
Yajima Motomi (Professor, Sophia University, Faculty of Law)
Sakano Masanori (Associate Professor, Sophia University/History Department)
Ozaki Shuji (part-time lecturer at Sophia University / Department of German Studies)
Ôtsuka Sachie (Sophia University Archive)

Affiliated non-Sophia members

Nagai Nobuhito (Associate Professor, The University of Tokyo;
formerly Sophia University, History Department)
Katada Satoko (postdoctoral fellow, Sophia University /History Department)
Klaus Schatz SJ (Philosophisch-Theologische Hochschule Sankt Georgen, Frankfurt)
Shimada Masayuki (Gakushūin Kōtō Gakkō)

Background of the Project

This project aims at strengthening a community of scholars studying the history of Sophia University and, in the long term, the completion of a *History of Sophia University* from its foundation until the twenty-first century. Beginning with a symposium organized on the occasion of the university's 100th anniversary, we have been building up a group of Sophia scholars, former Sophia faculty as well as external researchers interested in the history of our university.

The focus of the project is on the contexts and connections that have shaped Sophia's history and on developments that have given the university its character and direction. In doing so, we aim at underlining the dynamics of the university's history. Due to the limitations in terms of sources, authors, and finances, the coverage will be topical and selective. The project involves multiple authors, but aims for a greater integration than would be possible with a collection of individually authored essays.

The research project has to be positioned in the wider context of research on Japan's modern education system and on the development of Japanese universities and their international connections in particular. Compared to the situation of other universities with roots going back to the prewar period, Sophia's history has received little academic attention. Of the four Christian-affiliated institutions recognized as full-fledged universities under the University Ordinance of 1918 (Dōshisha, Rikkyō, Sophia, and Kwansei Gakuin), Dōshisha and Rikkyō have published multiple works of research (in both book and specialized periodical form) on their histories. Kwansei Gakuin has put out a multivolume university history combining analytical narrative with primary sources. Some Protestant schools that did not become recognized as universities until after the war, such as Meiji Gakuin, have done the same. Sophia has so far published a six-volume collection of documents related to the history of the university (上智大学史資料集), which will be an essential resource for this project. However, apart from a valuable but brief account published privately in 1993 by Theodor Geppert (and not widely available) and recent studies in German by Klaus Schatz based on materials in European Jesuit archives, there is no reliable, document-based, analytical narrative of Sophia University's history. This project seeks to fill this gap by exploring in depth the issues and events that have shaped Sophia's history.

The volume will be published in English and Japanese. Sven Saaler, Kate Nakai and Nagai Nobuhito will be the editors of both volumes and have begun to coordinate the authoring of the chapters written by the collaborators and contributors.



Activities during FY 2024

The members and affiliate members individually have conducted research on the history of Sophia University.

The editors of the proposed book, Sven Saaler, Kate Nakai and Nagai Nobuhito held editorial meetings online and in person to discuss the progress that has been made and to identify immediate concerns, in particular the need to establish a section on the new website of Sophia University, on which the history section is currently difficult to find and not very detailed. Consultations were held with the Archive about how to address this issue.

In addition, we continued with the digitalization of a variety of primary sources, making them easier accessible to the project participants. We also continued indexing and digitalizing the *Katorikku Shinbun* (Catholic Newspaper), which carries articles about Sophia's development from the 1930s into the postwar era, and continued digitalization and indexing of the *Deutsche Japan-Post*, a weekly German newspaper published in Japan between 1901 and 1914. Eventually, the digitalized files will be made accessible on the repository of Sophia University Library as a remaining achievement of this research project.

Budget

We used the allocated budget for student support, for the digitalizing of primary sources, and for the copyediting of forthcoming publications.

Image on page 1: Main Gate of Sophia University, ca. 1923.
Image on page 3: Aerial view of Sophia University Campus, 1932.

