

*** * Sino-Japanese News * ***

At long last, thanks to the work of Daniel Baird (see his piece below), we now have a website for *Sino-Japanese Studies*. Much of it is still under construction, but it is taking shape slowly. Pass along the information to anyone interested. Any suggestions or queries can be put directly to webmaster Daniel; his e-mail address is give in his note to follow. Similarly, all suggestions of how to improve or add to this website are welcome. Because we used existing space on my university account, the website has the following address:

<http://www.lweb.sscf.ucsb.edu/depts/hist/faculty/fogel/sjs/>

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A Note on East Asian Languages and the Internet

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Recently there have been some improvements in the way one can input, display, and print Chinese (simplified and traditional) and Japanese in a single document. (For you Korean speakers, all these programs will do Korean as well.) I have evaluated three different IME programs (input method editor, which inputs text into a target program such as MS Word; I did not look at any Asian word processors): Microsoft's new Global IME, NJStar's Communicator 2.1, and Unionway's AsianSuite 97. All of these programs are for Windows 98.

First a quick announcement: MS Word 2000 is based on Unicode which enables the viewing and printing of Chinese, Japanese, and about 30 other languages simultaneously without any third party program (such as TwinBridge, Unionway, etc.).

The great news about the MS Global IME is that it is a free download at <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/ie/features/ime.asp>. You must download simplified, traditional, and Japanese IME separately; if you don't already have the support packages for Asian languages, you can download those as well. Unlike the other two IME programs, the MS Global allows for phrase/sentence input. With Unionway and NJStar one must enter one word at a time. The downside to MS Global is that there is only one input method—pinyin for simplified characters, *zhuyin* for traditional, and *romaji* for Japanese, although you can get the *changjie* input method for Chinese traditional characters as well. Unlike the other two programs, one cannot work with other codes

besides Unicode. Also, this IME does not have any of the extras that come with the two other programs.

NJStar's Communicator had several nice features that the other two did not. This program by far has the most different ways to input characters. My favorite is the radical lookup dictionary allowing you to look up characters/*kanji* by their radical. The Japanese IME also includes input by the number in Nelson's Dictionary. Cantonese speakers will enjoy either of the two Cantonese romanization options. Surprisingly, there is not a *kana/kanji* input method for Japanese—one must use the ever popular *romaji*. A nice feature is that one can use *pinyin* to input Japanese *kana* and *kanji*, or use *romaji* to input Chinese characters. It comes with *zhuyin*, standard and double pinyin, internal code, *cangjie*, Wade-Giles, four-corners, and several other input methods. There is also a dictionary feature, a recent words button, and a code converter. This IME also supports the new GBK code. For some reason there is also a basic e-mail program included; it can send but not receive email. You can download a free 60-day trial version at <http://www.njstar.com>. Purchase cost is \$99.

Although slightly cheaper than NJStar, I found Unionway's AsianSuite to be clunkier. Although it does have a *kana/kanji* input in addition to *romaji* for the Japanese users, Chinese users will be disappointed to find that one cannot use the tones to narrow down the selection with either pinyin or *zhuyin* (both MS Global and NJStar have this feature). One nice feature is that one can choose whether the spacebar inputs the first selection or simply gives more selections. The worst feature is that unlike NJStar, the IME interface for Chinese and Japanese appear different, causing one to learn, not just two, but three different menu systems and sets of icons. Finally, Unionway's program is the only one that crashed while I was evaluating it. You can download a free 60-day trial version from <http://www.unionway.com> (although you have to register). Purchase cost for the most basic version is \$89.