

Origins of the School Name; the School Emblem and School Flag; the School Colors and School Song

No. 41

1. Origins of the school name “Jōchi” and “Sophia”

According to letters by James Rockliff, SJ, one of the founders of what would become Sophia University, and Hermann Hoffmann, SJ, the first president, the name Jōchi was chosen as the equivalent of the

Latin word *sapientia* (“wisdom”), or the wisdom coming from God. In the Catholic church, the term *sapientia* figures in images of the Virgin Mary and litanies that invoke her as the “Seat of Wisdom” (*Sedes Sapientiae*). This term can be seen today in the university seal that appears on the main gate: *Universitas Sedis Sapientiae* (see photograph 1). “Sophia” is the Greek equivalent of the Latin *sapientia*.

Jōchi was thus chosen to express the concept *sapientia*. In the university’s first years, however, there were complaints that “jōchi” might be confused with “joshi” (women) and Jōchi Daigaku misunderstood as “Women’s University.” Some said, too, that it sounded overly Buddhistic, and suggestions that the name be changed were made more than once.

When in April 1924 Joseph Eylenbosch, SJ, began teaching Greek to some students, he told them that in Greek “jōchi” would be “sophia.” Thereupon the students proposed that the school should be known as Sophia University. President Hoffmann initially opposed this idea, but he soon came around. In 1925 he wrote to Rome that the university had decided to add the *katakana* reading “Sophia” to the Chinese characters “Jōchi” when referring to the school name. When the newly established student-faculty association began to put out a magazine in 1926, they gave it the title *Sophia*, written in Chinese characters used phonetically; the second issue, published in 1927, carried the same name written in Roman letters (see photograph 2). Building No. 1, completed in 1932, carried the name “Sophia University” in large bronze letters over the entrance (see photograph 3).

From 1935 university brochures used simultaneously the name “Jōchi Daigaku,” written in Chinese characters, and “Sophia University,” written in Roman letters (see photograph 4). The Western-language academic journal of Japanese studies *Monumenta Nipponica*, inaugurated in 1938, identified itself as published by Sophia University, and thus the name Sophia became firmly established, both within Japan and overseas.



1. The university seal on the present main gate. *Universitas Sedis Sapientiae* means “University of the Seat of Wisdom.” (*Sedis* is the genitive form of *sedes*; *sapientiae* is the genitive form of *sapientia*).



3. The entrance to Building No. 1, showing the school name in bronze letters (this feature no longer exists).



2. The first issue of the student-faculty association magazine, published in 1926 (left); the second issue, published the following year (right).



4. The 1935 university brochure.

2. The school emblem

Sophia University's emblem is an eagle with its wings spread. On its breast are the initials LV, representing the university's motto, Lux Veritatis (Latin for the "light of truth"). The eagle is a bold, fearless bird said to fly directly towards the sun, and its use for the emblem expresses the ideal of an unswerving quest for the light of truth.



Evolution in the school emblem from around 1914 to the present.

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The term *lux veritatis* does not appear as such in the Bible, and no records remain as to why the school founders chose this motto. But the emblem was created in the autumn of 1913; students of the Preparatory Division wore it as a badge on round caps, while students of the Main Division used the same badge on square caps.

3. The school flag

The first school flag had gold lettering on a field of blue (school flag 1). It was designed in 1931 and first displayed in 1932 at the ceremony celebrating the completion of Building No. 1.

This flag is no longer extant. The image to the right showing various details and specifications evidently was made in response to a survey of school flags conducted by the Ministry of Education in 1939.

The next version of the flag had gold lettering on a maroon field (school flag 2); it was designed around 1955 by Peter Herzog, SJ. Opposition to this design resulted in the creation of a third version in 1957 by Klaus Luhmer, SJ (school flag 3). This again had gold lettering on a blue field. It was used for the first time at the Founders' Ceremony that year. Photographs preserved in the University Archives show that it was still in use at the Sophia-Nanzan Sports Festival held in June 1986. Deterioration owing to age led to the creation the same year of a fourth version of the flag, with gold lettering on a maroon field (school flag 4). This flag was displayed at the Founders' Ceremony held in October 1986 and is still used at present.

School flags 2 and 3 are preserved in the University Archives.



Model of the first school flag.



【School flag 1】
1931-1955



【School flag 2】
1955-1957



【School flag 3】
1957-1986



【School flag 4】
1986-present

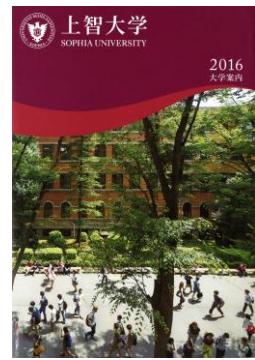
4. School color

In 2013, in connection with the centenary of the university's founding, Sophia University codified its "visual identity" as expressed in the school colors and school emblem.

The initial school colors are said to have been blue and white, the colors of the Virgin Mary. Although the choice of these colors has been attributed to President Hoffmann, no written records attesting to this remain. The first formal description of the school colors is found in the student bulletin for 1955, which states "the school colors are gold on maroon." This formulation was probably linked to the new design of the school flag made that same year by Fr. Herzog. But while the school flag and its colors soon changed, the definition of the official school colors as "gold on maroon" remained in subsequent student bulletins until 1969. At that time, following the student protests of the previous year, the format of the bulletin was revised, and reference to the school colors dropped from it.

The official school colors as set out in the Visual Identity Guidelines codified in 2013 continue the tradition of maroon. The guidelines define the main color as claret and the secondary color as crimson. Since its founding, Sophia has sought to educate young people imbued with the ideals of wisdom and a

global perspective rooted in the principles of Christian humanism. Claret symbolizes this ongoing tradition, while crimson symbolizes the commitment to carry it into the next century. Their combination in the logo termed “wave of the future” represents the university’s slogan of “Sophia (wisdom)—bringing the world together.” The logo appears in publicity brochures and posters and on university name cards.



The cover of the university brochure for 2016 uses the “wave of the future” logo.

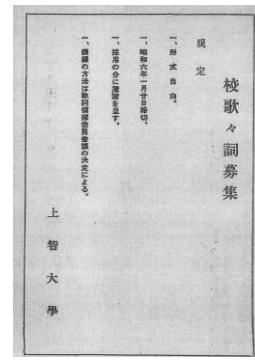
5. School song

The school song was composed in 1932. In 1928 Sophia had secured elevation to full university status under the provisions of the University Ordinance (1918). A movement arose at this time to foster school loyalty through a school song.

It was decided to hold an open competition among the students for the words to the song, and issue 5 (1930) of the student-faculty association magazine *Sophia* carried a notice announcing the competition. The verses chosen were written by Henmi Sadao, a student in the Philosophy Department. Professor Uda Gorō, who taught German, contributed the refrain “This solemn center of learning,” and Tsuchihashi Yachita, SJ, added a final polish. The composer and conductor Yamamoto Tadanao, who had recently returned from studying in Germany, was asked to compose the music. No records remain concerning the background to this request.

The song includes references to the eagle and *lux veritatis* of the school emblem, expressing the hope for students to persevere in the quest for the light of truth. The phrase “This solemn center of learning” bespeaks the seriousness of the school atmosphere of the time. The school song was officially unveiled together with the school flag at the ceremony in 1932 celebrating the completion of Building No. 1.

At present the school song is sung at occasions such as the entrance and graduation ceremonies and at All Sophians alumni events. Some departments sing it at the Orientation Camp for newly entering students. To encourage better understanding of the song among students, since 2012 the cheerleading squad has led practice singing sessions at performances it puts on of its cheerleading style.



Announcement of the competition for the words to the school song; *Sophia*, issue 5 (left). Music and words to the school song, carried in issue 6 (1932) of *Sophia* (right).

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