

About me

I am currently working for the [Modern Japanese Studies Program](#) at [Hokkaido University](#); that is on Japan's beautiful northernmost island, indeed. Until September 2018, I had a hybrid position as director of Digital Humanities and lecturer in history at the [Graduate Institute](#), Geneva. There, my position entailed more than research and teaching. For better or for worse, I happened to be the digital preservationist and curator for a [unique collection of historical stock exchange quotes hosted there](#). It used to be different. From 2011 to 2016, I was an associate professor of financial history at the [Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia](#), of the [University of Tokyo](#).

I have published stuff. In 2012, Harvard University Press published [The Money Doctors From Japan: Finance, Imperialism, and the Building of the Yen Bloc, 1895-1937](#). Not so long ago (in October 2020), Oxford University press released my second monograph titled [Accounting for the Fall of Silver](#). This book concentrates on the history of exchange banking practice in Asia after the turbulent 1870s, when the 'fall of silver' became a worldwide systemic event. It was inspired by the massive archives of the [Yokohama Specie Bank](#), which I was happy to find at the [Rare Materials Reading Room](#) of the Economics Faculty Library at UTokyo. An extensive repository related to this book project is hosted on [FigShare](#). I also refer to the [research logbooks on GitHub](#), where I document both the obvious and less obvious choices with regard to data selection, calculations, and interpretations.

Still, **research has been so much more.** Apart from being a financial historian, I have been quite vocal in advocating [OpenAccess](#), [OpenSource](#) (or, probably more accurately (?), [free software](#)), and a whole lot of other things with 'open' as a prefix. Nowadays, my interests include encryption and privacy, alternative methods for scientific publishing, strategies for enhancing the transparency and reproducibility of scientific results, and so forth... The mainstay of my practical interests is [digital preservation](#), a topic that captured my imagination long ago, during research time at the [Library of Congress](#) in Washington DC. I did advisory work for international organizations, the arts, and small to medium size memory institutions with regard to the sustainable preservation of their collections.

Although my (little?) son attempts to make my hobbies impossible, I remain: [free jazz](#) aficionado, record collector, admirer of contemporary art, and proudly persisting amateur cook. Other interests are: hardware hacking (this includes a passion for knife forging and sharpening!), the '[maker culture](#)', the [Right-to-Repair](#)-movement (and, relatedly, the '[right to destroy](#)'!).

New Projects

- Inspired by earlier research by, among others, [William Goetzmann](#) and [Geoffrey Poitras](#), I got interested in the way vernacular mathematical education relates to the development of finance (e.g. in actuarial science) and financial products. I therefore started studying the *Jinkoki* 塵劫記, the Japanese equivalent of the *Liber Abaci* of [Leonardo di Pisa](#) (Fibonacci). Realizing that there does not exist an authoritative translation into English, I may try my hand at this.
- And, of course, the exchange banks project isn't finished yet. I recently received a large stack of archives, comprising the balance sheets of both the [Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China](#) and the [Mercantile Bank of India, London, and China](#). These should throw further light on the way the international banks chose to cope with the fall of silver in the late nineteenth century.

My CV

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- Twitter: [@michaelschiltz](#)
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- [Instagram](#) (unrelated to research)
- ... or contact me @ michael.schiltz@gmail.com



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