

SHIMADA KENJI (1917–2000)

At 7:34 on the morning of March 21, 2000, the world lost one of its greatest scholars of Chinese history and culture. Professor Shimada Kenji died in his 83rd year, of pneumonia after a protracted illness. Although he passed away in a hospital in Fushimi, in southern Kyoto, he was living in Uji where he had resided for many years.

Trained at Kyoto University in the 1940s, Shimada published his first and most influential book, *Chūgoku ni okeru kindai shii no zasetsu* (The Frustration of Modern Thought in China; Tokyo: Chikuma shobō), in 1949 at the startlingly young age of 32. It was based on his college graduation thesis and played a fundamental role in opening up serious scholarship to the intellectual history of the Ming era. As he reasoned in his introduction, we know all about the revival of Neo-Confucianism in the Song dynasty and the textual critical movement of the Qing, but what about the intervening centuries of the Ming? Many scholars in Japan, China, and the West have since joined Shimada in examining the myriad individual figures that populate Ming-era schools of thought. Despite the half century that has passed since its initial appearance, its publication in an English translation today would still be a welcome addition to our libraries.

Years later, Shimada published a smaller, more popular treatise entitled *Shushigaku to Yōmeigaku* (The Zhu Xi School and the Wang Yangming School; Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1967). It was subsequently translated into German by Monika Übelhor and published as *Die Neo-konfuzianische Philosophie: die Schulrichtungen Chu Hsi und Wang Yang-Mings* (Hamburg: Gesellschaft für Natur- und Volkerkunde Ostasiens e.V., 1979; Berlin rpt.: Verlag von Dietrich Reimer, 1987); and into Chinese by Jiang Guobao as *Zhuzi xue yu Yangming xue* (Xi'an: Shanxi shifan daxue chubanshe, 1986). The special introduction Shimada wrote for the Chinese edition was published in English translation in *Sino-Japanese Studies* V.1 (October 1992), pp. 41–47.

More recently, he published a monograph on the Chinese philosopher Xiong Shili: *Shin Juka tetsugaku ni tsuite: Yū Jūriki no tetsugaku* (On the Philosophy of a New Confucian: The Philosophy of Xiong Shili; Kyoto: Dōhōsha, 1987). It was translated into Chinese by Xu Shuisheng and published in 1992 as *Xiong Shili yu xin Rujia zhexue* (Xiong Shili and the New Confucian Philosophy; Taipei: Mingwen shuju, 1992).

In addition, he published several volumes over the years which brought together his more influential essays. These include: *Chūgoku kakumei no senkushatachi* (Pioneers of the Chinese Revolution; Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1965) in which his justly famous essay on Zhang Binglin—translated in *Pioneer of the Chinese Revolution: Zhang Binglin and Confucianism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990)—can be found; and most recently *Inja no sonchō: Chōgoku no rekishi tetsugaku* (Esteem for Recluses: Chinese Philosophy of History; Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1997).

Beyond his own extraordinary original work, Shimada devoted enormous energies to preparing translations into modern Japanese of seminal works in Chinese philosophy and politics—ancient, middle period, and modern—as well as a number of significant Kanbun texts from Edo-period Japan. For example, his annotated editions of the Great Learning and the Doctrine of the Mean—*Daigaku Chūyō* (Tokyo: Asahi shinbunsha, 1967, 1978)—is still probably the most often used reference work

in Japan for these ancient Chinese texts. He was also editor of *Ō Yōmei shū* (Collection of Writings by Wang Yangming; Tokyo: Asahi shinbunsha, 1975). Together with his longtime friend and neighbor, Ono Shinji, he edited *Shingai kakumei no shisō* (Thought of the 1911 Revolution; Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1968), a collection of seminal essays from the early twentieth century, translated and annotated. He was also senior editor of and contributor to the five-volume *Ajia rekishi kenkyū nyūmon* (Introduction to Studies in Asian History; Kyoto: Dōhōsha, 1983–87).

In the area of Sino-Japanese relations, he published a number of extremely important modern Japanese texts in annotated editions, among them: Nakae Chōmin's classic *Sansuijin keirin mondō* (Three Drunkards Discuss Governance; Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1965); and Miyazaki Tōten's *Sanjūsan nen no yume* (My Thirty-three Years' Dream; Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1993).

At the time of his death he was in the seventh or eighth year of a longterm project that he had organized with a group of scholars ranging in age from their 30s to their 60s to translate into Japanese the mammoth *Liang Qichao nianpu changbian* (The Chronological Biography of Liang Qichao, Full Edition). Work will continue on this project.

Although born in Hiroshima, Shimada moved with his family to Qingdao in the early 1930s where he attended middle school for two years. After graduating from the Number Three High School in 1938, he entered Kyoto Imperial University. There he studied with Miyazaki Ichisada and Yoshikawa Kōjirō. After the war, he returned to Kyoto University where he took up a position in 1949 as assistant professor at the Research Institute in the Humanities. In 1975 he moved over to the Faculty of Letters from which he retired in 1981.

One little known facet of Shimada's life was his lifelong commitment to the Esperanto movement. From his middle school days, for over 60 years he and his wife of 54 years, participated in Esperanto activities. Indeed, it was through the Chinese Esperanto journal, *La Mondo*, that he renewed a friendship from the mid-1930s with Lü Yinsheng, the Chinese Esperantist, after nearly a 60-year hiatus.

The last length conversation I had with Professor Shimada took place at the reception after the annual meeting of the Tōyōshi kenkyūkai in November 1996. I introduced him to a visiting Chinese scholar from the Institute of Modern History at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. He proceeded to deliver in fluent Chinese a discussion of how the Japanese academy had long been split between the Marxists and the Weberians and how, as a representative of the latter, he had long been criticized by the former. This was, of course, a great simplification, but his finest qualities emerged as the conversation progressed, especially his unparalleled openness to scholars of Chinese studies from outside Japan. He was long a believer in the great value of study abroad.

He will be sorely missed and not soon replaced.

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