

Japan and Liang Qichao's Research in the Field of National Learning

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From the beginning of the twentieth century, studies in the field of national learning (*guoxue* 國學) in China had close relations with the Japanese scholarly world. As an important pioneer in national learning, Liang Qichao's 梁啟超 (1873-1929) career overlapped with the first half of the development of national learning. Indeed, Liang's studies in the field of national learning cannot be disconnected from this Japanese influence. However, if looked at closely, Liang Qichao's interaction with the world of Sinology in Japan was much less intense than was the academic exchange between China and Japan in general. Furthermore, Liang's relations with Japanese Sinology gradually grew apart as time passed. This increasing distance between Liang and Japanese Sinology resulted in effective Japanese indifference when Liang died. Studying the role of Japan in Liang's research in national learning not only enables us to identify the foreign origins of his thinking, but also to assess the advantages and disadvantages of such foreign elements. There has been a controversy concerning Liang's academic achievements and limitations ever since his own time. The controversy became even more nebulous after his death. It is significant, though, to try to discern Liang's academic ties to Japan, for this task will be beneficial to us and future scholars as well.

1. Founder and Pioneer

Strictly speaking, Liang's academic research began in the field of national learning following his exile in Japan. His life itself can be divided into four stages: the 1898 Reform Movement, the 1911 revolution, the early Republican era, and his last years; and all four periods hovered between scholarship and politics. When he moved away from politics, Liang came closer to scholarship. His political activities can be further divided into political criticism and direct involvement in political affairs. The more involved in political affairs he became, the less involved he was in academic research, and vice versa. The reason was simple. Although Liang criticized the traditional Chinese habit of "relying on authority," it was nevertheless how most scholars continued to construct their writings. When Liang studied at the Wanmucaotang 萬木草堂, he listened to the lectures of such men as Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858-1927) and Chen Qianqiu 陳千秋 (1869-95), but could not engage in dialogue. As he later recalled, "I could only listen to them but could

not ask them any questions.”¹ When he was in charge of the Shiwu xuetang 時務學堂, Liang focused more on ideological exhortation than on academic discussion. “When he did discuss scholarly matters, [though, Liang] attacked every single scholar from Xunzi 荀子 down through the Han, Tang, Song, Ming, and Qing dynasties with a vengeance.”² This sentence sounds like mimicry of Kang Youwei’s words from the Wanmucaotang (and hence political propaganda). Liang’s students were mostly known for their political activities. The only exceptional case who would achieve an academic reputation was Yang Shuda 楊樹達 (1885-1956). Although Yang studied with his teacher carefully, his scholarship turned out to be more like Liang’s enemy, Ye Dehui 葉德輝 (1864-1927).³ After the failure of the 1898 Reform Movement, Liang was forced from the center of power and escaped to Japan. From this point in time, in addition to his political criticism, Liang had more time to devote to research.

In the summer and autumn of 1902, Liang wrote a letter to Huang Zunxian 黃遵憲 (1848-1905), suggesting the launching of a newspaper to be called *Guoxuebao* 國學報 (National learning). Liang, Huang, and Ma Ming 馬鳴 elaborated upon this task. Their purpose was to “nurture national citizens (*guomin* 國民). We should preserve the national essence (*guocui* 國粹) and polish up the old scholarship in order to expand and bring honor to it.” Huang approved of such an idea, saying “How great are such words! We can stabilize our nation on the basis of such words.” However, he also had two objections. First, “the general contours of *Guoxuebao* implied grand and refined thought. This project cannot be done in a hectic, haphazard manner.” As a result, Huang suggested that they first compose a history of Chinese national learning. Second, Huang thought that “China’s old ways suffered from arrogance and insularity rather than the incapability of preserving her learning.” He thus suggested that they “open the door wide and invite in new knowledge” and wait for a few years until this new knowledge flourished before advocating national learning in China. This proposal did not succeed, but it did pioneer the modern notion of national learning.⁴

The motivation behind Liang’s wish to create *Guoxuebao* was opposition to Kang Youwei’s proposal to uphold Confucianism and increase China’s respect for Confucius. After the 1898 Reform Movement, Liang and Kang differed politically on one occasion. At the beginning of 1902, Liang published “*Bao jiao fei suoyi zun Kong lun*” 保教非所以尊孔論 (Preserving Confucianism and raising China’s respect for Confucius), an essay directly in conflict with his teacher Kang. Liang attempted to refine traditional Chinese learning by looking into the Classics and histories, and find evidence to make respect for

¹ Liang Qichao, “*Sanshi zishu*” 三十自述 (Autobiography at thirty), in *Yinbingshi wenji* 飲冰室文集 (Literary Works from an Ice-Drinker’s Studio) (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1916), *juan* 44, p. 26.

² Liang, *Qingdai xueshu gailun*, in *Yinbingshi zhuanji* 飲冰室專集 (Specialized Works from an Ice-Drinker’s Studio) (Taipei: Zhonghua shuju, 1927), *ce* 6, p. 62.

³ See Yang Shuda, *Zhiwei weng huiyilu* 積微翁回憶錄 (Shanghai: Guji chubanshe, 1986); “*Xiyuan xuexing ji*” 郇園學行記 (Account of studies in Xiyuan), *Siwen* 斯文 9.9-10 (September-October 1927), pp. 1-35.

⁴ See Sang Bing 桑兵, “*Wan-Qing Minguo shiqi de guoxue yanjiu yu xixue*” 晚清民国时期的国学研究与西学 (Western learning and national learning studies in the late Qing and early Republic), *Lishi yanjiu* 历史研究 5 (1996), pp. 30-40.

Confucius unnecessary. According to Liang, there was no more glorious time in Chinese history than the Warring States period. That this period achieved such a proliferation of ideas can be attributed first and foremost to freedom of thought. Liang argued that “the reason that Confucius was Confucius is precisely that he believed in the freedom of thought.”⁵ The idea of preserving Confucianism and enhancing respect for Confucius was exactly the opposite to this. When Liang replied to Kang’s critique, for a time he accepted Huang’s proposal by not advocating traditional Chinese learning and starting to focus on the promotion of new knowledge by reforming China’s national mentality as the most urgent task to save the nation. However, Liang still insisted on criticizing Confucius, a point with which even Huang disagreed.

Liang’s second motive—namely, to protect the national essence in order to form a national citizenry—was an idea primarily deriving from Japan’s own experience with national essence (*kokusuishugi* 國粹主義). In March of the same year, Liang published his “Lun Zhongguo xueshu sixiang bianqian zhi dashi” 論中國學術思想變遷之大勢 (Outlines of changes on Chinese scholarly thought) in *Xinmin congbao* 新民叢報 (no. 3), and early in the essay he argued that intellectual ideas and scholarship are the essence of the national spirit. Liang purposely proclaimed with a young audience in mind that “in the forthcoming two decades, I am not worried that new learning will not be introduced; rather, I do worry that our own scholarly ideas will not be enhanced.... Failing to do so will mean that we simply will have gotten out of a slavery that worships the ancients and into another slavery that worships the foreign, and therefore has contempt our own race (*zu* 族). I worry that the advantage is not worth the gain.” Huang then gently argued in return:

In comparing China and Japan, the scale differs slightly. Japan did not have Japanese learning (*Ribenxue* 日本學). Medieval Japan looked up to the Sui and Tang dynasties, and the whole nation turned to the East. When modern Japan revered Europe and America, the whole nation turned to the West. After the nation [Japan] chased after both the East and West, the soul and shadows of the nation also galloped and wandered, as if the nation was inebriated or lost in dream. When the nation calmed down and stabilized, it then became aware of its existence, and thereupon the idea of a national essence emerged.

Later Liang sent a letter to Kang which rehearsed Huang’s argument by saying that early Meiji Japan also focused on the destruction of tradition. However, “the proposal to preserve the national essence has arisen in recent years. The idea of a national essence is perfectly fine today, but if it had been promoted two decades ago, the national mentality would not have been sufficiently open to receive it.”⁶ In addition, Liang also favored Buddhism and had discussions with several Japanese monks about how to save the nation with Buddhism. This reversal foreshadows Liang’s Orientalism after he returned from

⁵ In *Xinmin congbao* 2 (February 1902), pp. 59-72.

⁶ Ding Wenjiang 丁文江 and Zhao Fengtian 趙丰田, eds., *Liang Qichao nianpu changbian* 梁啟超年譜長編 (Chronological Biography of Liang Qichao, Full Edition) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1983), pp. 275-93.

post-World War I Europe. It also illustrates that, although Liang was good at refashioning himself as the situation demanded, we can still trace the origins of his thought.

The turn of the century was a time in which *guocui zhuyi* 國粹主義 (the principle of the national essence) greatly flourished in Japan. This linguistic term (*guocui zhuyi*) and the circumstances surrounding it no doubt triggered Liang's desire to preserve the national essence of China. Nevertheless, how one used the concept of a national learning creatively depended on each person's specific context. There were two important factors, and the first was friendship. After Liang arrived in Japan, he "made friends with many Japanese. There were several with whom Liang was extremely close, almost as if they shared the same flesh and bones; and there were more than a dozen friends whom Liang treated as if they were brothers."⁷ Among them were two Japanese scholars who directly influenced Liang's conception of a national learning: Kuga Katsunan 陸羯男 (1857-1907) and Kojô Teikichi 古城貞吉 (1866-1949). Kuga was known for his opposition to Westernization, his advocacy of the national essence, and his strong support for Japanism. He used the journal *Nihon* 日本 to bring together many Sinologists and Japanese literary scholars.⁸ Kuga once told Liang that the Japanese government only emulated the German model of education, and that while this approach may have appeared civilized, in fact it was completely rotten to its core. The Japanese government "was actually following [Qin Shihuang's] techniques of burning the books and burying the scholars alive, all disguised in the name of civilization. Japan's malicious mischief was indeed ten times worse than the policy of the Qin."⁹ Despite the fact that Kuga's idea of independence and self-respect was based on the Japanese national essence, what Liang learned from him was how to use liberty to argue against obedience. Kojô's relationship with Liang began early on. When Liang was in charge of *Shiwubao* 時務報, Kojô served as a translator from Japanese and hence was a colleague of Liang's at that time. Kojô was a graduate of the Saisaikô 濟濟齋 which had close ties to the world of Japanese Sinology. In 1897 he published *Shina bungaku shi* 支那文學史 (A History of Chinese Literature), the earliest work on this subject in the world. His experience working for *Shiwubao* certainly influenced this translation. In April 1897, Kojô translated an essay entitled "Hanxue zaixing lun" 漢學再興論 (The rebirth of Kangaku [Chinese learning]) which had appeared in *Donghua zazhi* 東華雜誌 and published it in issue 22 of *Shiwubao*. This article described the rise and fall of Chinese learning in Japan before and after the Meiji Reformation, and its relations with Western learning as well as Japanese national learning. The article argued:

Before the Meiji period, Chinese learning prospered immensely [in Japan]. What scholars called learning was nothing other than Chinese learning. Aside from Chinese learning, there was no true learning at all. After the polity changed, we acquired wisdom from the West, and our scholarship altered accordingly.

⁷ "Hanman lu" (Record of travel toward the unknown) 汗漫錄, *Qingyi bao* 35 (February 1900), p. 2; this describes circumstances pertaining up through late 1899.

⁸ Tô-A dôbun kai 東亜同文会, ed., *Tai-Shi kaikoroku* 対支回顧録 (Memoirs Concerning China) (Tokyo: Hara shobô, 1968), vol. 2, p. 918; Goi Naohiro, *Kindai Nihon Tôyô shigaku* (East Asian Studies in Modern Japan) (Tokyo: Aoki shoten, 1976), pp. 23-37.

⁹ "Jingshen jiaoyu zhe ziyou jiaoyu ye" 精神教育者自由教育也 (Spiritual education is liberal education), *Qingyi bao* 33 (December 1899), p. 3.

Chinese learning was condemned as old and useless, and books from Mencius and other ancient philosophers were treated as garbage. Nobody would even take a look at them. However, after having sunk to the bottom, Chinese learning is about to be resurrected. Recently national learning has gained considerable momentum and is about to overtake Western learning. Hence the rebirth of Chinese learning will eventually come to pass.

Kojô had gone to study in China and worked for a number of years as a newspaper correspondent, and after returning to Japan he became an instructor at Tôyô kyôkai shokumin senmon gakkô 東洋協會殖民專門學校 (Colonial Specialist School of the East Asian Association, later Takushoku University).¹⁰ In 1902, when Wu Rulun 吳汝綸 (1840-1903) went to Japan to study the Japanese educational system, Kojô attempted to persuade Wu that “you should not abolish the learning of the Chinese Classics, histories, and ancient Chinese philosophers. The educational systems of European countries also made use of their own national learnings as backbones.”¹¹ From this quotation, we can see that the term “national learning” (*kokugaku* 國學) originated in Japan. The initial purpose was to distinguish Japanese studies as national learning from Chinese learning. When Japanese advocated the preservation of their culture, they could not call it Chinese learning and thus used “national learning” instead. The Chinese hence borrowed the term and used it to mean the Chinese national learning. Hence, the three main countries in East Asia (China, Japan, and Korea) each had their own national learning.

Furthermore, mainstream Sinologists in Japan also had contact with Liang. In May 1899, Liang was invited by Anesaki Masaharu 姉崎正治 (1873-1949) to attend the spring meeting of the Philosophical Society of Japan, and he presented an essay entitled “Lun Zhina zongjiao gaige” 論支那宗教改革 (On religious reform in China). Liang met Katô Hiroyuki 加藤弘之 (1836-1916), chairman of the Society, Sinologist Shigeno Yasutsugu 重野安繹 (1827-1910), Buddhist scholar Inoue Enryô 井上圓了 (1858-1919), and Japanese historian Miyake Yonekichi 三宅米吉 (1860-1929). Soon after the meeting, Liang’s *Qingyi bao* 清議報 published two of Inoue Tetsujirô’s 井上哲次郎 (1855-1944) articles. Naitô Konan 内藤湖南 (1866-1934), later to become the foremost scholar of Chinese history at Kyoto University, met Liang after the 1898 Reform Movement, and wrote a review of Liang’s article “Lun Zhongguo zhengbian” 論中國政變 (On Chinese Reform) which appeared in the journal *Nihonjin* 日本人. When Naitô traveled to Shanghai, he spoke about Liang with Zhang Yuanji 張元濟 (1866-1959).¹²

¹⁰ “Sengaku o kataru: Kojô Teikichi sensei” 先学を語る：古城貞吉先生 (Discussion of a former scholar: Kojô Teikichi), *Tôhōgaku* 東方学 71 (January 1986), pp. 191-211. Kojô began his translation work for *Shiwubao* in 1896 while he was still in Japan; late that year he moved to China.

¹¹ Wu Rulun, “Dongyou riji” 東游日記 (Diary of a Trip to Japan) (*renyin* 6/30 [August 3, 1902]), reprinted in Shen Yunlong 沈云龍, ed., *Jindai Zhongguo shiliao congkan* 近代中國史料叢刊 (Collections of Historical Materials on Modern China) (Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, n.d.), 37.367, p. 796.

¹² Joshua A. Fogel, *Politics and Sinology: The Case of Naitô Konan (1866-1934)* (Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1984), pp. 90-100; Hazama Naoki 狭間直樹, “Chûgoku kindai ni okeru Nihon o baikai to suru Seiyô kindai bunmei no juyô ni kansuru

Naitô had high expectations of Liang at first, but he later changed his mind as he came to detest the close interaction between “China hands” in Japan and Kang Youwei as well as Liang Qichao. Naitô thus closed the door on them and studied on his own.¹³ During this period, Naitô became friendly with Wen Tingshi 文廷式 (1856-1904) and avoided Kang and Liang. This would be the political explanation for Naitô’s action. The scholarly explanation, on the other hand, derives from Wen’s background in the Xuehaitang 學海堂 (Academy of the Sea of Scholarship), far different from those of Kang and Liang, and the similarity of his scholarly interests with those of Zhang Zhidong 張之洞 (1837-1909).

The second important factor was reading. After Liang was exiled to Japan and had only studied Japanese for a short while, he began to “widely collect Japanese books to read, as if he was walking on a hiking trail and could not cope with all of the beautiful scenery before him.” He felt that “all the books I had never seen before all came before my eyes, and all the theories I had never thought of before all oscillated in my brain; it was as if I were seeing sunshine in the dark, or drinking wine on an empty stomach.” Liang claimed that “the quality of my brain then changed. My ideas and words became completely different from the earlier Liang Qichao, as if I were a different person. I read Japanese newspapers every day and immersed myself in political and scholarly affairs just as if I was in my own country.”¹⁴ What Liang absorbed was not only Western books on politics, economics, philosophy, and sociology translated into Japanese, but also new Japanese scholars’ interpretations of Chinese history and literature inspired by Western theories. In part two entitled “Dongyang shi” (Japanese history) of chapter two entitled “Lishi” (History) of his book *Dongji yuedan* 東籍月旦 (Monthly Notes on Japanese Books), published in 1902, Liang listed and assessed many works on Chinese and Japanese history by Japanese scholars, such as Kuwabara Jitsuzô 桑原鷺藏 (1870-1931), Kojima Kenkichirô 児島獻吉郎 (1866-1931), Ichimura Sanjirô 市村瓚次郎 (1864-1947), Fujita Toyohashi 藤田豊八 (1869-1929), Naka Michiyo 那珂通世 (1851-1908), Tanaka Suichirô 田中萃一郎 (1873-1923), Koderu Ryûjirô 木寺柳次郎, Takigawa Kametarô 瀧川龜太郎 (1865-1946), Taguchi Ukichi 田口卯吉 (1855-1905), Shirakawa Jirô 白河次郎 (1875-1919), and Nakanishi Ushio 中西牛一郎 (1859-1930). This list nearly exhausted the most important East Asian historians in Japan at the time. The influential Kyoto school, which deeply and profoundly shaped Chinese studies in modern Japan, and the Tokyo school were both in their formative stages at that time.¹⁵

kiso kenkyû” 中国近代における日本を媒介とする西洋近代文明の受容に関する基礎研究 (Foundation study on the reception of modern Western civilization in modern China through the intermediacy of Japan), *Heisei 6-7 nendo kagaku kenkyû hiho jokin ippan kenkyû kenkyû seika hôkokusho* 平成 6-7 年度科学研究費補助金一般研究研究成果報告書 (Report on the Research Results on the General Research Funded for Scientific Work in Heisei 6-7), pp. 8, 15.

¹³ Tô-A dôbun kai 東亜同文会, ed., *Zoku tai-Shi kaikoroku* 続対支回顧録 (Memoirs Concerning China, Continued) (Tokyo: Hara shobô, 1973), vol. 2, p. 759.

¹⁴ “Hanman lu,” *Qingyibao* 35; “Lun xue Ribenwen zhi yi” 論學日本文之益 (On the benefits of studying Japanese), *Qingyibao* 10 (April 1899), p. 3.

¹⁵ Miyake Yonekichi, “Bungaku hakase Naka Michiyo kun den” 文學博士那珂通世君傳 (Biography of Professor of Literature, Naka Michiyo), in *Naka Michiyo isho* 那珂通世遺書

Liang keenly identified these scholars with stunning sensitivity, and his comments in most cases hit the nail right on the head. Liang knew that their research on East Asia was innovative. “Hence, all the books that these men have written are the best among current East Asian histories.” Liang also pointed out that Kuwabara’s *Chûtô Tôyô shi* 中等東洋史 (East Asian History, Middle-Level) “encompasses the strengths of different historians.... It is neat in arranging materials, properly concise and detailed in its narrative, and insightful in judgment.” According to Liang, Kojima was a novice, but Ichimura was a famous historian at the Imperial University in Tokyo. His *Tôyô shiyô* 東洋史要 (Concise History of East Asia) only described China and ignored the rest of East Asia, and hence it was incomplete. Tanaka’s *Tôhō kinsei shi* 東邦近世史 (Modern History of East Asia) was the best.

While Liang’s assessment of the Chinese history done by Japanese scholars may have, on the other hand, been lower, he indicated that Japanese scholars paid special attention to commoners in local society and did not avoid taboos. However, in general, Liang thought that their historical writings about China were either too old-fashioned or too concise. He emphasized the comparative history of East and West, and felt much inspired by it. In other words, Liang was indeed familiar with the editions and bibliography of Japanese Sinology at that point (including the assessment of the Chinese translations of them), but his perspective focused on the intellectual dimension. Liang’s fundamental view was: “Chinese history written by Chinese is usually too narrow and not comprehensive, but Chinese history written by foreigners is too concise and incomplete on historical details. In a nutshell, this task cannot be done by outsiders.”¹⁶ To understand the intellectual background of Japanese Sinology later became a prerequisite to his works, such as *Zhongguo shi xulun* 中國史敘論 (Discourse on Chinese History), *Xin shixue* 新史學 (New Historiography), and even his plan to write a *Zhongguo tongshi* 中國通史 (Comprehensive History of China).

Dongji yuedan was a significant work in the histories of both modern Japanese and Chinese studies. Modern scholarly interaction between China and Japan was initiated by such famous old-fashioned Sinologists as Takezoe Shinichirō 竹添進一郎 (1841-1917), Oka Senjin 岡千仞 (1833-1914), and Shimada Kan 島田翰 (1879-1915). These contacts slowly changed to the more fashionable and Westernized scholars in both Japan and China. However, at this time, it was rare for a Chinese scholar to be capable of evaluating the evolution of Japanese scholarship. Famous late-Qing literati who became friends of Japanese scholars—such as Yu Yue 俞樾 (1821-1906), Wang Kaiyun 王闓運 (1833-1916), Zhang Lianqing 張廉卿, and Ye Dehui—were incapable of evaluating the history of Japanese scholarship. By the same token, neither were those scholars who had been to Japan and had connections with both old and new scholars, such as Yang Shoujing 楊守敬 (1839-1915), Wen Tingshi, Chen Yi 陳毅 (b. 1905), and Wu Rulun, able to do so. Yang Shoujing, who had written about Japanese scholarship, could only point out some obvious shortcomings, such as the fact that Japanese scholarship followed Ming learning too closely. Zhang Binglin 章炳麟 (1868-1936) looked down his nose at Japanese

(The Surviving Works of Naka Michiyo) (Tokyo: Dai Nihon tosho kabushiki gaisha, 1915), pp. 25-33.

¹⁶ He Qingyi 何擎一, ed., *Yinbingshi wenji* (Shanghai: Guanzhi shuju, 1908), “jiaoyu” 教育 (education), pp. 79-82.

Sinology; Luo Zhenyu 羅振玉 (1866-1940) was not yet devoting his attention to scholarship; and Wang Guowei 王國維 (1877-1927) was still a student. With no precedents to assist him, Liang Qichao demarcated old and new schools of thought in Japanese scholarship based upon his poor reading skills in Japanese. This demonstrates, in my view, how hard Liang had worked on such issues, and how smart he could be. Unfortunately, no one in Liang's time was working on such topics; otherwise they would have found Liang a extremely good guide.

Although Liang did avidly study the Japanese language, he claimed that his manner of reading Japanese in Chinese enabled him to "move forward a little bit every day and leap a bit further forward every month."¹⁷ Liang actually only touched the surface of Japanese scholarship and culture. His political reviews, for example, were notorious. After Liang understood the outline of a Japanese article, he would simply extend and reconstruct the arguments to fit his purposes. Many of his political essays in the press actually came from Tokutomi Sohō 德富蘇峰 (1863-1957), among others, but Liang never acknowledged the debt. Hence, many Chinese students in Japan accused Liang of being a plagiarizer. Liang's scholarship was no exception to this. Such works of his as *Xin shixue* and "Lun Zhongguo xueshu sixiang bianqian zhi dashi," it is said, were all based upon Japanese scholarship.¹⁸ In terms of his conceptual frame, the Japanese influence was obvious. However, the scholarly circumstances surrounding this were somewhat more complicated, because the writings of Japanese scholars of concern to him frequently derived from Chinese sources. Liang, of course, also had access to these sources. Hence, it is difficult to determine who got what from whom. For example, in 1921 when Takeuchi Yoshio described the differences between the northern and southern scholarship in ancient China, he cited Yu Yue's *Jiujiu xiaoxialu* 九九銷夏錄 and Huang Yizhou's 黃以周 *Ziyou Zixia wenxue shuo* 子游子夏文學說 (Ziyou's and Zixia's Ideas on Literature) as important evidence to account for the origins—whether they began in the Northern and Southern Dynasties or at the end of Zhou dynasty—of the differentiation between northern and southern scholarship. This use of evidence was similar to several points in Liang's "Lun Zhongguo xueshu sixiang bianqian zhi dashi," written some twenty years earlier.¹⁹ If Liang's work was based upon Japanese writings, then Takeuchi either failed to point it out or did not notice it. If they both based themselves on Yu's and Huang's works, then Liang's piece appeared far earlier than Takeuchi's. Although Japanese scholars rarely cited Liang's work, they actually paid considerable attention to it (see below). Japanese scholars found it difficult to cite Liang because Liang's work carried no footnotes and Liang as a rule depended on his impressions from reading.

¹⁷ "Lun xue Ribenwen zhi yi," *Qingyibao* 10 (April 1899), p. 4.

¹⁸ Bin Bin 彬彬 (Xu Bin 徐彬), "Liang Qichao" 梁啟超, in Xia Xiaohong 夏曉虹, ed., *Zhuiyi Liang Qichao* 追忆梁啟超 (Remembering Liang Qichao) (Beijing: Zhongguo guangbo dianshi chubanshe, 1997), p. 18.

¹⁹ Takeuchi Yoshio 武内義雄, "Nanboku gakujutsu no idô ni tsukite" 南北學術の異同に就きて (On the differences and similarities between the northern and southern styles of scholarship), *Shinagaku* 支那學 1.10 (June 1921); Liang's essay was serialized in *Xinmin congbao* from issue number 3 (March 1902) forward.

2. Nagging Criticism from Japan

Liang's extraordinary performance in the area of Japanese scholarship on China was ultimately ephemeral, for his attention was quickly drawn back to politics again. During the Republican period, Liang worked for the Republican government for a long period of time. In 1917, Liang retired from the political realm and announced his intention to focus on scholarship and culture, but from time to time he was distracted by corruption in politics. However, Liang took advantage of his fame and published a large quantity of scholarship. He assumed the position of director of the Institute of National Learning at Qinghua University, and acquired fame as a "great teacher," but this time in scholarship, not in politics.

During these years, the Sinological factions in both Kyoto and Tokyo had taken shape and continued to produce new scholars and scholarship without end. The Kyoto school was especially active—in the eyes of such Chinese scholars as Wang Guowei, Chen Yuan 陳垣 (b. 1897), Hu Shi 胡適 (1891-1962), and Chen Yinke 陳寅恪 (1890-1969), Kyoto was *the* international center for Chinese studies aside from Paris. Naitô Konan and Kano Naoki 狩野直喜 (1868-1947) advocated studying China by following the methodology of their contemporary Chinese scholars. In so doing, the Kyoto school had extensive interactions with both old and new scholars in China, especially with Wang Guowei whom they believed to have possessed a solid foundation in traditional learning but also having mastered the new methodologies from the West. By contrast, Liang, who had previously paid attention to Japanese Sinology, gradually became alienated from that scholarly world, probably because Liang shared too much with them in scholarship.

After Liang's death, Hu Shi in an entry in his diary offered the following assessment of Liang's overall achievement: "[Liang] Rengong 梁任公 had great talent but did not receive systematic training; he loved learning but did not interact with good teachers or valuable friends. He entered the political world too early, became famous too rapidly, and assumed too much responsibility. Therefore, Liang was highly influential upon others but achieved very little by himself."²⁰ Throughout his entire life, Liang never did produce an outstanding and immortal work for posterity. If one were to count *Xinmin shuo* 新民說 (Discourse on the new people) as such an extraordinary work, it should be noted that it actually was not an academic work. If we only evaluate Liang's academic work, then Hu's assessment was not too far off. Hu himself, though, would not avoid repeating the same mistake.

Chinese studies in the early Republican period (both overseas and in China) were influenced by European positivism and the Parisian school of Sinology. Hence, such research focused on extremely detailed and refined evidential analysis; at least this method would become the foundation for further analysis. This method avoided a broad synthesis that seemed to be empty and too general, but it was this method that was precisely Liang's weakness. Be it scholarly research or political criticism, Liang usually demonstrated his acumen and cleverness, rather than his academic training and solid research techniques. His scholarly genealogy, from the Chinese orthodox standpoint, may be said to be biased

²⁰ *Hu Shi de riji* 胡適的日記 (Diary of Hu Shi) (Taipei: Yuanliu chuban shiye gufen youxian gongsi, 1989-1990), entry for February 2, 1929. Others of the time expressed different points of view, but none were as persuasive as Hu.

and out of the ordinary. Liang learned evidential methods and the writing of prose essays at the Xuehaitang in his youth. Although the Xuehaitang was an offspring of orthodox academic learning in the lower Yangzi delta, in the late Qing it had also been influenced by South China and Beijing. By the time Liang entered it, however, scholarship associated with the Xuehaitang had shown signs of decline. Liang commented that “the students of [Chen] Dongshu 陳東塾 were all over central Guangdong, but no one was outstanding.”²¹ Liang left the Xuehaitang after two years and became a follower of Kang Youwei’s extremist New Text Confucianism. In my view, it was frequently the case that whoever was influenced by New Text Confucianism gained a literary reputation rather than becoming a competent scholar, and this would include the eccentric historical geography done by Wei Yuan 魏源 (1794-1856) and others. Exiled in Japan, Liang gradually came to suspect Kang’s doctrines of false editions of the *Classics* and institutional change, and he stopped discussing them.

Furthermore, propaganda and political criticism provided Liang with a place to manifest his special talents for literature and thought over a long period of time rather than solid and rigorous scholarship. When he temporarily retreated from politics, he usually conducted academic research. Liang gained a reputation for being broad and concise, but in fact he was vague and unrefined. He would often write dozens of pages based on what he remembered at a given moment. Although his writing was not completely concocted from whole cloth, Liang’s work was filled with many gaps and holes. “When Liang was teaching in his last years, he especially liked to observe and study the latest fashions. His views lingered between Confucianism and Moism, Han and Song Learning, Buddhism and Daoism, as well as even Science and Metaphysics. While Liang had been one who previously set the trends, now he had become someone who only followed the fashions.” Therefore, people “lamented that Liang did not establish a fundamental philosophy of his own different from others.”²² Liang did not produce research in depth but only wanted to write works for mass production, and he continually confused the results of his predecessors with his own research. Liang did plagiarize in the name of research. This could not but provoke discontent and criticism from the Japanese scholars who cared about refined research as well as giving credit where credit was due.²³

Early Japanese translations of Liang’s work include *Qingdai xueshu gailun* 清代學術概論 (Intellectual Trends in the Qing Period) and *Zhongguo lishi yanjiu fa* 中國歷史研究法 (A Method for Studying Chinese History). The former was published during Liang’s time, and the second appeared posthumously. Beside these two, Liang’s writings received virtually no positive attention from his Japanese colleagues. Occasional reviews of Liang’s work were usually harsh. *Qingdai xueshu gailun* was published in 1921, and it was translated into Japanese in 1922 by Watanabe Hidekata 渡邊秀方 and Hashikawa

²¹ Liang Qichao, “Jindai xuefeng zhi dili de fenbu” 近代學風之地理的分布 (The geographical spread of modern scholarly styles), in *Yinbing shi zhuanji* 9:33.

²² Miu Fenglin 繆鳳林, “Zhuo Liang Zhuoru xiansheng” 悼梁卓如先生 (Eulogizing Mr. Liang Zhuoru), *Xueheng* 學衡 67 (January 1929), p. 4.

²³ Japanese scholars did not have a high opinion on the renowned French sinologist, Paul Pelliot. They thought that Pelliot cited the work of Japanese scholars without acknowledging their contributions. This may be a misunderstanding. Later on, Haneda Tôru 羽田亨 and Paul Demiéville would come to Pelliot’s defense.

Tokio 橋川時雄 (1894-1982). Although Watanabe and Hashikawa acclaimed Liang's work, the response of the Japanese scholarly world was quite unexceptional. Even the Kyoto school members who focused on Qing scholarship rarely mentioned Liang's work in their publications. Yoshikawa Kôjirô 吉川幸次郎 (1904-80) recalls in his memoirs that, when he was a student in Kyoto, he seldom heard Liang's name mentioned in the classroom.²⁴ This ignorance among Japanese scholars might be attributable to the differing assessments coming from their Chinese counterparts. Hu Shi had a high opinion on Liang's *Qingdai xueshu gailun* and had provided suggestions for Liang to revise this book. Hu noted that only Liang could produce such an "intelligent work."²⁵ Fu Siling 傅斯稜, on the other hand, thought the work was "awful. Liang has no solid foundation for scholarship at all, but only relied on his sneaky manipulation to compose the work. Liang should have known that there would always be some experts who know better and could not be fooled by him."²⁶ In summarizing Liang's *Minguo shiernian guoxue zhi qushi* 民國十二年國學之趨勢 (The General Orientation of the National Learning in 1923), Hu Puan 胡朴安 (1878-1947) "first decried the fact that Liang occupied an esteemed academic position at that time," and he addressed Liang's book as only "a broad theorization without substance.... He uses all kinds of theories to construct an empty story, in an effort to seek fame and favors."²⁷

In 1922, Liang's *Zhongguo lishi yanjiu fa* was published and received some significant response from Japanese. Tanaka Suijirô published a short review in the April issue that year of *Shigaku* (vol. 1, no. 3). Tanaka claimed that the publication of this book was a welcome event in the scholarly world, and regarded chapters 2, 4, and 5 as essential reading for scholars of Chinese history, but he criticized Liang's idea that historical scholarship should focus on the general pattern of things and causal relations between historical events rather than on individual facts. Tanaka was especially critical of the chapter on historical sources, and he singled out Liang's mistaken identification of the calligraphic styles of the stone inscription of Buddhist texts in Juyongguan 居庸關 and Mogaoku 莫高窟. Later Okazaki Fumio 岡崎文夫 (1888-1950) invited Kuwabara Jitsuzô to publish a long review of the work, entitled "Ryô Keichô shi no *Chûgoku rekishi kenkyû hô o yomu*" 梁啓超氏の《中國歷史研究法》を読む (Reading Liang Qichao's *Zhongguo lishi yanjiu fa*) in the journal *Shinagaku* 支那學 (vol. 2, no. 12) in

²⁴ Yoshikawa Kôjirô 吉川幸次郎, "Ryûgaku made" 留学まで (Through overseas study), in *Yoshikawa Kôjirô zenshû* 吉川幸次郎全集 (Collected Works of Yoshikawa Kôjirô) (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 1975), 22:361. Kano Naoki taught a course on "The History of Qing Scholarship," and Naitô Konan taught a course on "The History of Chinese Historiography." The Qing era was greatly emphasized.

²⁵ *Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan jindai shi yanjiusuo Minguo shi yanjiushi* 中國社會科學院近代史研究所 (Republican History Section, Modern History Institute, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences), ed., *Hu Shi de riji* 胡適的日記 (Diary of Hu Shi) (Hong Kong: Zhonghua shuju, 1985), p. 36.

²⁶ *Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan jindai shi yanjiusuo Minguo shi yanjiushi* 中國社會科學院近代史研究所 (Republican History Section, Modern History Institute, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences), ed., *Hu Shi lai wang shuxin ji* 胡適來往書信集 (Collection of Letters from and to Hu Shi) (Hong Kong: Zhonghua shuju, 1983), vol. 1, p. 178.

²⁷ *Minguo ribao*, *Guoxue zhoukan* 民國日報・國風周刊 (October 10, 1923), p. 1.

the same year. Kuwabara embraced a standard European positivist approach. Although he was a professor at Kyoto University, his style was closer to the Tokyo school.²⁸ Kuwabara praised Liang's claim to "use the historiographical methods of the West and to see the renovation of Chinese historiography as an urgent task." Kuwabara argued that, as a scholar, Liang "erected his own unique style in modern China." Kuwabara not only appreciated Liang's criticism that traditional Chinese historical studies were largely unscientific, but also admired how Liang scientifically evaluated historical sources. Kuwabara liked Liang's syntheses on the solid basis of analysis, and he suggested that Liang's book appropriately summarized many key issues, and occasionally demonstrated "outstanding vision."²⁹ However, Kuwabara also had eight points of criticism of Liang's book, the last four of which were factual mistakes concerning interactions between East and West. Kuwabara argued that Liang cited Western scholarship but did not read the original sources, and hence Liang made "mistakes on a number of different pages." Kuwabara also claimed that Liang relied too heavily upon "scholarly" opinion as well as old-fashioned epigraphy, which were irrelevant to the world of international scholarship. This kind of sharp and uncensored criticism would, as Kuwabara hinted, become "nagging" to Liang.

In November of the same year (1922), Ishihama Juntarô 石濱純太郎 (b. 1888) published an essay, "Seikagaku shôki zoku" 西夏學小記續 (Short note on Xixia studies, continued), in *Shinagaku* (vol. 3, no. 2). Ishihama once again dragged out Liang's mistaken identification of Buddhist texts in Juyongguan and Mogaoku, and cited Tanaka's and Kuwabara's criticism as support. For a time, Ishihama's article set off a small tremor in both Chinese and Japanese scholarly circles. Zhang Shizhao 章士釗 (1880-1973) summarized Kuwabara's criticism of Liang's work in the journal *Jiayan* 甲寅 (vol. 1, no. 34), and then Wei Jiangong 魏建功 (pen-name Tianxing 天行) translated the complete criticism in *Xiandai pinglun* 現代評論 (vol. 2, nos. 49-50). A few years later, when Wang Senran 王森然 (b. 1895) was writing a biography of Liang, he still credited Kuwabara Jitsuzô's critical essay on *Zhongguo lishi yanjiu fa* for correcting many mistakes in dates, translation, and names of places. In fact, although Kuwabara did not actually say so in his review, his essay carried the strong hint that Liang's *Zhongguo lishi yanjiu fa* had nothing new in it. Kuwabara also suggested in his review that the examples raised concerning Liang's book should be carefully studied, and Liang's mistakes meticulously identified.

Kuwabara had a relatively weaker China complex than other members of the Kyoto school. Among his Chinese contemporaries, Kuwabara found he had most in common with Chen Yuan, but felt a great gulf separated him from Liang.³⁰ Kuwabara was

²⁸ "Sengaku o kataru: Kuwabara Jitsuzô hakase" 先学を語る：桑原鷺藏博士 (Discussion of a former scholar, Professor Kuwabara Jitsuzô), *Tôhōgaku* 東方学 49 (January 1975), pp. 109-28.

²⁹ Kuwabara Jitsuzô 桑原鷺藏, "Zhongguoxue yanjiuzhe zhi renwu" 中國學研究者之任務 (The duties of those who study China), transl. J.H.C., *Xin qingnian* 新青年 3.3 (May 1917), pp. 1-12; the original appeared in *Taiyō* 太陽 (March 1917).

³⁰ Someone once called Chen Yuan "the Kuwabara of China." See Chen Zhichao 陳智超, ed., *Chen Yuan lai wang shuxin ji* 陳垣來往書信集 (Collection of letters from and to Chen Yuan) (Shanghai: Guji chubanshe, 1990), p. 169. While he had great respect for Naitô, Kuwabara often

also contentious by nature.³¹ It was said that Kuwabara would gently criticize those who were sincere and purely academic, but that he was malicious with those who rushed into print recklessly.³² Kuwabara used his own strengths to attack Liang's weakness. However, Kuwabara's attack on Liang had another dimension: Liang's book was exceedingly rude to Japanese scholars. Kuwabara's revenge began by attacking Zhang Binglin, who dismissed both the old and the new generations of Japanese Sinologists altogether. Kuwabara described Zhang as "showing off his new knowledge which is merely half raw and half cooked. This should only invite mockery from scholars." Liang believed that in studying Chinese history one should examine foreign records, but Liang only focused on Islamic and European documents, while ignoring their Japanese counterparts. Liang claimed: "If we look at the cultural system of Japan, then we will discover that Japan was peripheral to our [the Chinese] culture fifty years ago. It would be rare to find Japanese scholarship that could correct and help refine our own thinking today." Kuwabara argued that this position is laughable because research on Chinese history after the Tang dynasty should consult both Korean and Japanese records as well. What especially bothered Kuwabara was Liang's disrespect for Japan: "Those popular history books--such as *Tôyô shi* 東洋史 and *Shina shi* 支那史--published in Japan were rushed into the bookstores en masse. The quality of them is too low to be assessed. Chinese publishers translated these popular history books into the textbooks used in our schools without serious consideration and reevaluation. This is indeed tremendously shameful for our national citizens." At that time, Japanese scholarship actually enjoyed a very high international reputation, and Liang's blunt dismissal of Japanese scholarship stood in stark contrast to this. Kuwabara used Liang's praise of Japanese scholarship in *Dongji yuedan* some twenty years earlier to contrast it with Liang's current view. He showed that the dramatic change in Liang's scholarly attitude might be attributed to his anti-Japanese politics. He also indicated that Liang did not understand what was actually going on in the world of Japanese Sinology. Kuwabara used the results of Japanese research on trade relations between China and the outside world in the Tang and Song eras to demonstrate that Liang's misled judgment could in fact be derived from his ignorance. As a result, Kuwabara suggested Liang pay more attention to the development of Japanese scholarship.

By about 1922, Liang's political attitude toward Japan had shifted 180 degrees. Whether or not this shift affected his attitude toward Japanese scholarship needs further research. However, Kuwabara's critique clearly exerted an impact on Liang. The second edition of *Zhongguo lishi yanjiu fa* deleted the anti-Japanese materials. In September of that year, Liang wrote a long essay entitled "Dacheng qixinlun kaozheng" 大乘起信論考證 (Evidential studies on the awakening of faith in Mahayana Buddhism). In this piece, he systematically read Buddhist studies by Japanese scholars, such as Matsumoto Bunzaburô 松本文三郎 (1869-1944), Mochizuki Shinkô 望月信亨 (1879-1948),

had arguments with Kano Naoki. He frequently ridiculed the abusive practices in Chinese history and had serious reservations about Kano who professed a love for China.

³¹ Yoshikawa Kôjirô *zenshû*, 17:292.

³² Miyazaki Ichisada 宮崎市定, "Kaisetsu" 解説 (Explanatory note), in *Kuwabara Jitsuzô zenshû* 桑原鷺藏全集 (Collected Works of Kuwabara Jitsuzô) (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1968), 2:655.

Murakami Senjō 村上專精 (1851-1929), Tokiwa Daijō 常盤大定 (1870-1945), and Hatani Ryōtai 羽溪了諦, published in such journals as *Shūsui* 宗粹, *Bussho kenkyū* 佛書研究, *Shūkyōkai* 宗教界, *Bukkyōgaku* 佛教學, and *Tetsugaku kenkyū* 哲學研究. Liang wanted to use his unprecedented revival of the study of Buddhism to “let Japanese scholars understand that research cannot do without method, for otherwise it is just like reading but not seeing the texts.” From this exercise, Liang also expressed his surprise that “Japanese scholars worked hard and had always been so diligent. If we could use this method to study the entire set of Buddhist texts known in our time, then the number of undiscovered colonies would truly surprise us.”³³ Liang’s study of Buddhism was mostly based upon Japanese scholarship, such as the *Hassō kōyō* 八宗綱要 (Outlines of the Eight Sects) or the *Butsuzō kōryō* 佛宗綱領 (Outlines of Buddhism), but he rarely gave them credit. Some argue that the reason Liang did not cite Japanese works “can be attributed to his dismissal of Japanese scholarship, but, more importantly, to his inability to understand Japanese scholarship.”³⁴

Although Liang began this essay with the intention of editing and translating the established theses in Japanese scholarship and introducing them to the Chinese scholarly world, in the end Liang synthesized new ideas from his reading in Japanese scholarship and organized the material in his own manner. However, at least this time Liang detailed in his introduction what his sources were, something that was quite exceptional for him. In his personal library, Liang had more than 300 Japanese books, among which one-third concerned Buddhism.³⁵ In April of the next year (1923), *Qinghua zhouban* 清華周刊 invited Liang to compile a *Guoxue rumenshu yaomu* 國學入門書要目 (Annotated Bibliography of Introductory Works on National Learning). Liang put Inaba Iwakichi’s 稻葉岩吉 (1876-1940) *Shinchō zenshi* 清朝全史 (Complete History of the Qing Dynasty) under the category: “Political history and other documentary works.” Liang may have been attempting to respond to Kuwabara’s criticism indirectly, while revising and simultaneously defending his own position. Nevertheless, in comparison with Liang’s work of twenty years earlier, his understanding of Japanese scholarship had significantly regressed, especially in contrast with the exponential progress in Japanese understanding of Chinese scholarship. Inaba’s work was first published in 1914, and over the following decade there were numerous innovative works produced in Japan. Indeed, ten years later, Inaba’s work was thoroughly outdated and could scarcely represent the scholarly achievement of Japanese Sinology at the time.

Tanaka’s and Kuwabara’s criticism apparently set the tone for the assessment of Liang in Japanese scholarly circles. Kuraishi Takeshirō 倉石武四郎 (1897-1975) reviewed the publication *Guoxue luncong* 國學論叢 (edited by Qinghua guoxue yanjiuyuan 清華國學研究院 [Qinghua Institute of National Learning] in 1927) in *Shinagaku* (vol. 4, no. 3, October 1927). From the standpoint of Japanese scholarship, there were three major centers of national learning in Beijing: Beijing University, Beijing

³³ “Dacheng qixinlun kaozheng” 大乘起信論考證 (Evidential studies on the awakening of faith in Mahayana Buddhism), in *Yinbingshi zhuanji*, 7:35-38.

³⁴ Liang Rongruo 梁容若, “Liang Rengong xiansheng yinxiang ji” 梁任公先生印象記 (Impressions of Mr. Liang Rengong), in *Zhuiyi Liang Qichao*, p. 345.

³⁵ Su Jing 蘇精, *Jindai zangshu sanshi jia* 近代藏書三十家 (Thirty Modern Book Collectors) (Taipei: Chuanji wenxue chubanshe, 1983), p. 102.

Normal University, and Qinghua University. *Qinghua xuebao*, initiated in 1924, published many important research articles. The opening of Qinghua Institute of National Learning in 1925 attracted considerable scholarly attention from within China and abroad. *Guoxue luncong* was their formal publication, and it was edited by Liang. Naturally, this combination caught the attention of scholars. The first issue included many essays by Qinghua graduates (mostly Liang's students) and from Liang and Wang Guowei themselves. Kuraishi praised those papers by Lu Kanru 陸侃如 (b. 1903), Wu Qichang 吳其昌 (1904-44), Wei Juxian 衛聚賢 (b. 1898), Chen Shoushi 陳守實 (1893-1974), and Xie Guozhen 謝國楨 (b. 1901). Kuraishi appreciated their meticulous and refined research in primary sources, as well as the Western-style of Chinese learning that they brought to their analyses and conclusions. The only exception was Liang's opening essay "Wang Yangming zhixing heyi zhi jiao" 王陽明知行合一之教 (On Wang Yangming's doctrine of the unity of knowledge and action). Kuraishi suggested that Liang simply used his popular lecture materials to write the piece, and he added this should not have been the case for a journal of such high quality. In 1938 Konagaya Tatsukichi 小長谷達吉 translated Liang's *Zhongguo lishi yanjiu fa*. Although he praised Liang as a first-rate scholar and political figure in modern China, he also pointed out that Liang's book was biased and outdated when Liang commented on China studies in Japan and the West, especially his ignoring the contributions of Japanese scholars to Sinology.³⁶

3. Competing to Take the Lead in Oriental Cultural Enterprises

After returning to China in the first year of Republican period, Liang seldom discussed Japanese writings, nor did he have many interactions with Japanese scholars. His attitude seemed odd in the increasingly active scholarly exchanges between China and Japan. However, as a celebrity in the cultural and academic world, Liang could not completely elude this trend. He frequently attended social events, sometimes at which Japanese scholars were present. He also received visitors from Japan. He met with Tanaka Suichirô during the latter's sojourn to China, and made contact with Imazeki Toshimaro 今関壽磨 (Tenpô 天彭, 1884-1970) and Hashikawa Tokio who had long taken part in cultural activities in China. Imazeki arrived in Beijing in 1918 to chair a research institute of the Mitsui 三井 Corporation, which was responsible for investigating national conditions in China. Each year he traveled around China and socialized with well known figures in many circles, especially those in the cultural and scholarly fields. Introduced by Kashiwara Buntarô 柏原文太郎, Imazeki made Liang's acquaintance.³⁷ In a small pamphlet analyzing the scholarly world of China written by Imazeki in 1922, Liang's research was listed as a new school of thought in the north. In a later book by Imazeki, *Kindai Shina no gakugei* 近代支那の學藝 (Scholarship in Modern China), he also offered a positive evaluation of Liang's work.³⁸

³⁶ Konagaya Tatsukichi, in *Shina rekishi kenkyû hô* (A Method for Studying Chinese History) (Tokyo: Kaizôsha, 1938), pp. 1-11.

³⁷ "Gakumon no omoide, Imazeki Tenpô sensei o kakonde" 學問の思い出、今関天彭先生を囲んで (Memoirs of scholarship, surrounding Imazeki Tenpô), *Tôhōgaku* 東方学 33 (January 1967).

³⁸ Imazeki, *Kindai Shina no gakugei* 近代支那の學藝 (Scholarship in Modern China) (Tokyo:

Hashikawa Tokio lived in China for more than twenty years. He first worked for the newspaper *Shuntian shibao* 順天時報 and later for the General Committee for Oriental Cultural Enterprises. He was regarded as “the man with the most extensive contacts among modern Chinese scholars.”³⁹ “Whether they were venerated old scholars of Beijing or youngsters of the new learning, all politely bowed to welcome Hashikawa, and they treated him like an old friend.” In the *Zhongguo wenhuajie renwu zongjian* 中國文化界人物總鑒 (Compilation of Figures in the Chinese Cultural World) compiled by Hashikawa, it was said that he “selected modern scholars who became famous in the domains of scholarship, literature, arts, and technical skills. It includes some 4,600 biographies.”⁴⁰ Many of those included in this work were his personal acquaintances. Hashikawa was also known as a fine scholar of the works of Tao Yuanming 陶淵明 (365?-427), and in this regard he shared certain academic interests with Liang. Hashikawa also wrote *Manzhou wenxue zhushu kao* 滿洲文學著述考 (Research on Manchu Literary Works), and he translated Liang’s *Qingdai xueshu gailun*.⁴¹ This evidence would seem to suggest that they liked each other, but in fact they did not. At the end of February 1924, after Hashikawa had met with Liang at the home of Lin Changmin 林長民 (1876-1926), Hashikawa told Wu Yu 吳虞 that “Liang Rengong’s personality is indeed opportunistic. He pretends to be impartial but in fact always pursues his own interests. His scholarship is trivial and unsystematic.”⁴² Nonetheless, Hashikawa himself continued “cultural activities” during the Japanese occupation of Beijing, and this has also been criticized as immoral.⁴³

After World War I, Japan decided to return the Boxer Indemnity funds to China in order to launch various cultural projects; Japan was under international pressure to do this, and it fit Japanese interests as well. From northern to southern China, people in educational, scholarly, and cultural circles were highly enthusiastic about these projects. As representative of his research group, Liang also sought to participate. In 1923, Irizawa Tatsukichi 入澤達吉 (1865-1938), the president of Tokyo Medical School, and Okabe Nagakage 岡部長景 (1884-1970), the head of China Cultural Affairs Bureau, were both commissioned to visit China and exchange views with Chinese intellectuals. After traveling throughout the south, they returned to Beijing in early August. The Japanese

Min’yûsha, 1931), pp. 25, 120-24.

³⁹ Nagase Makoto 長瀬誠, “Ribei zhi xiandai Zhongguo xuejie zhanwang (xia)” 日本之現代中國學界展望，下 (Trends in contemporary Japanese scholarship on China), Chinese edition of *Ôsaka mainichi shinbun* 大阪毎日新聞 2.8 (1939).

⁴⁰ Fu Zengxiang 傅增湘, “Xu” 序 (Introduction), in *Zhongguo wenhuajie renwu zongjian* 中國文化界人物總鑒 (Comprehensive Mirror of Personages in the Chinese Cultural Arena) (Beijing: Zhonghua faling bianyiguan, 1940).

⁴¹ “Gakumon no omoide, Hashikawa Tokio sensei o kakonde” 学問の思い出：橋川時雄先生を囲んで (Memories of scholarship, surrounding Hashikawa Tokio), *Tôhôgaku* 東方学 35 (January 1968).

⁴² *Wu Yu riji* 吳虞日記 (Diary of Wu Yu) (Changsha: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, 1986), vol. 2, p. 165.

⁴³ Norimoto Toshihiro 法本義弘, “Haruka ni Pekin mura o omou” 遙かに北京村を想ふ (Distant memories of Beijing), in *Shina oboegaki* 支那覚え書 (Notes on China) (Tokyo: Keisetsu shoin, 1943), pp. 70-71.

minister in Beijing hosted a banquet for them and invited many Chinese and Japanese officials. Representing some thirty Chinese officials at these meeting, Liang gave a speech in which he claimed: "Out Eastern culture is indeed one of the finest cultures in the world. It is, at least, part of the finest culture in the world. Therefore, to expand and make its greatness known is not only the duty of all nations in the East, but also a true contribution to the world. The responsibility for such a glorious task falls to us and no one else." His point was that culture did not belong to any individual nation, nor did it have any boundaries. It called for cooperation. In ancient times Japan had benefited tremendously from China, but at present China had much to learn from Japan. Liang argued that China should proceed to learn from Japan in the following domains: thought, historical documents, and natural sciences. Due to the chaotic situation of the Chinese polity, however, China was unable to concentrate on such issues. The good intentions of Japanese government would contribute to China, the East, and even the world in an extremely significant way. There were at that time numerous private researchers in China, and it seemed as if a Chinese renaissance was about to emerge. And, Japanese financial aid would help to bring this to fruition.⁴⁴

After Liang's visit to Europe in 1918, he was influenced by the decline of Eurocentrism and the rise of East Asian culture, and he began to shift toward the promotion of the East Asian culture. Liang's turn became compatible in a fundamental way with the proclivity of Japanese scholars to preserve the East Asian cultural legacy. Liang had suggested on several occasions the building of an institute of Chinese culture and an institute of national learning. One of his plans was to compile a collection of writings about Chinese culture from abroad, and "to translate the research on [Chinese] national learning by Europeans, Americans, and Japanese."⁴⁵ Although this plan was never realized, Liang did create a climate of options for further involvement with Japanese cultural enterprise in China.

In 1925, with the establishment of the Sino-Japanese General Committee for Cultural Affairs (later renamed as the General Committee for Oriental Cultural Enterprises), in accordance with Japan's agreement on cultural enterprises in China, organization of the Humanities Institute and its library in Beijing were placed on the agenda.⁴⁶ This event attracted many contending groups in China. Among them, Beijing University had the most resources to take advantage of this opportunity. As early as in 1922, Hu Shi, Jiang Menglin 蔣夢麟 (1886-1964), and others had planned to take over the whole project in the name of the national university.⁴⁷ The university board saw to it that some professors trained in Japan, working with Japanese officials, would organize a Sino-Japanese academic association which became extremely active.⁴⁸ The most powerful

⁴⁴ "Liang Rengong zai-Ri shiguan zhi yanshuo" 梁任公在日使館之演說 (Speech of Liang Rengong at the Japanese Embassy), *Chenbao* 晨報 (August 8, 1923).

⁴⁵ Wang Senran 王森然, *Jindai ershijia pingzhuan* 近代二十家評傳 (Twenty Modern Critical Biographies) (Beiping: Xingyan shuwu, 1934), p. 204.

⁴⁶ For details, see Huang Fuqing 黃福慶, *Jindai Riben zai-Hua wenhua ji shehui shiye zhi yanjiu* 近代日本在華文化及社會事業之研究 (Studies of Modern Japanese Cultural and Social Enterprises in China) (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1982), pp. 113-26.

⁴⁷ *Hu Shi de riji*, p. 395.

⁴⁸ See *Zhou Zuoren riji* 周作人日記 (Diary of Zhou Zuoren) (Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe,

competitor with the Beijing University was Liang's research group. In April 1924, Wang Guowei wrote to Jiang Ruzao 蔣汝藻:

The Japanese have expressed their intention to recruit me to help prepare the cultural enterprises project. The university people here are also willing to recommend me to be in charge (the Japanese told me about this). However, I, as someone who has no association with any party now, do not intend to get involved in this business. So I did not say a word about it. When the university asked me about it, I did not reply either. It seems to me that both Beijing University and Liang's research group want to take up this project, and hence a sharp competition will ensue. I do not want to be affiliated with either side. Recently the Japanese realized that such a contracting method is inappropriate. Hopefully they will figure out a compromise solution in the near future. What you said is quite right. We should let it develop spontaneously.⁴⁹

The reason that Beijing University recommended Wang was to use his fame to compete with Liang. Later the rumor circulated that Wang suggested "putting the library and humanities research institute under the administrative authority of the president of Beijing University." This in general caused discontent from scholars outside Beijing University. Zhang Xinglang 張星烺 (b. 1887) wrote to Chen Yuan:

The factional conflicts at Beijing University are indeed exceedingly deep. Those who are in charge have small minds and narrow visions. If the Beijing University took charge, disagreements within the humanities institute would not be allowed. The "New Culture Movement" they advocated was nothing but vernacular literature and the co-education of men and women. When they first launched the New Culture Movement, historians such as Tu Jingshan 屠敬山 were all excluded from the university because they did not agree with the use of the vernacular. Many of us disapprove of that decision. Beijing University now has become the center of a political movement and no longer functions as a research institution. Therefore, I think the heads of library and the humanities research institute should stand above politics and factions, and they should be open-minded and have a truly broad vision. I have heard that the Japanese intended to assign these positions to Ke Shaomin 柯劭忞 (1850-1933) and Liang. I think they are appropriate candidates. Ke is a surviving adherent of the former dynasty, and Liang is not associated with any party. Neither of them has political bones to pick. They are also open-minded and tolerate disagreement.

Zhang Xinglang hoped that Chen Yuan could pass his opinions along to the Japanese. If this decision were made public, Zhang indicated that he was willing to endorse it.⁵⁰

1996), held in the collection of the Lu Xun Museum; and *Kucha, Zhou Zuoren huixianglu* 苦茶，周作人回想录 (Bitter Tea: Memories of Zhou Zuoren) (Lanzhou: Dunhuang wenyi chubanshe, 1995).

⁴⁹ Wu Ze 吴泽, main ed., Liu Yinsheng 刘寅生 and Yuan Guangying 袁光英, eds., *Wang Guowei quanji, shuxin* 王国维全集·书信 (Collected Works of Wang Guowei, Letters) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984), p. 394.

⁵⁰ Chen Zhichao, *Chen Yuan lai wang shuxin ji*, p. 377.

Ke Shaomin actually was appointed to a concurrent post of the chair of the institute and the committee chairman of the General Committee for Oriental Cultural Enterprises. In this instance, Wang Guowei's words seem to have been more reliable than Liang's. Beginning in 1923, Kano Naoki had discussions with the high-level politician Yamamoto Teiji 山本鶴次. Kano later recalled: "I mentioned the Oriental Cultural Enterprises to the authorities on several occasions. Except for several old gentlemen, most of them hoped that Wang would participate. They also told the Chinese committee that if the Oriental Cultural Enterprises wanted to begin doing research, then Wang should most certainly take part. Most of the people agreed."⁵¹ Kano did not indicate publicly who those old gentlemen were, but on January 18, 1927, when Kano received a visit from Dong Kang 董康 (b. 1867), he mentioned several names, including Li Shengduo 李盛鐸 (1859-1934), Zhang Binglin, Zhang Jin 章瑾, and Fu Zengxiang 傅增湘 (1872-1950), but not Liang Qichao. Unfortunately, Ke Shaomin was unable to be impartial, he used only personal favorites, and he never listened to others' opinions. "None of the scholars" that Kano had in mind "was included in the project." Kano was extremely disappointed and noted that "if this is the way things are to be arranged, then we should just impartially observe."⁵² Kano also expressed his discontent in public several times, and he suggested that such an arrangement was not fair to Wang Guowei.

In 1929, Liang died from an illness. The social response provoked by Liang's death had far less of an impact than Wang Guowei's suicide in Kunming Lake two years earlier. Japanese scholars were virtually indifferent to Liang's death. In both the Tokyo and Kyoto newspapers, there was scarcely a report of Liang's passing whatsoever. This sharply contrasts with the response to Wang's death. The repercussions following Liang's death were even less than those following the deaths of Ye Dehui or Ke Shaomin shortly before. This disjunction between Liang's political fame and reputation and the increasingly interactive relations between Japan and China by and large illustrates the attitude of Japanese scholars toward Liang, and it also indicates Liang's continued alienation from the Japanese scholarly world. In fact, the main cause of Wang's suicide was that the Guomindang's Revolutionary Army ordered the arrest of "reactionary scholars" as the Northern Expedition was about to approach Beijing and Tianjin. These events also caused Liang to consider escaping to Japan once again.⁵³ Although Liang had been frightened by how the Japanese government disguised itself as the protector of the Chinese people but slowly was encroaching on Chinese sovereignty ever since the anti-Yuan Shikai 袁世凱 movement (around 1922),⁵⁴ Liang still had no choice but to seek

⁵¹ Kano Naoki 狩野直喜, "Ô Seian kun o omou" 王靜安君を憶ふ (Remembering Wang Jing'an), reprinted in *Shinagaku bunsô* 支那學文叢 (Essays in Sinology) (Tokyo: Misuzu shobô, 1973), p. 372. This piece was originally published in *Geibun* 藝文 18.8 (August 1927). There is a Chinese translation of this essay in Chen Pingyuan 陳平原 and Wang Feng 王楓, eds., *Zhuyi Wang Guowei* 追忆王国维 (Remembrances of Wang Guowei) (Beijing: Zhongguo guangbo dianshi chubanshe, 1997), but the meaning does not always come through as it should.

⁵² Dong Kang 董康, *Shubo yongtan* 書舶庸談 (Shallow Discussions of Book Ships) (Taipei: Guangwen shuju, 1967), p. 55.

⁵³ Zhang Xuguang 張旭光, "Huiyi Wang Guantang xiansheng de zichen" 回憶王觀堂先生的自沈 (Remembering the suicide by drowning of Wang Guantang) in *Zhuyi Wang Guowei*, p. 277.

⁵⁴ Wu Qichang 吳其昌, "Liang Rengong xiansheng bielu shouyi" 梁任公先生別錄拾遺

exile in Japan. In scholarship, Liang's relations with Japanese scholars continued to remain confused. The reason that the Qinghua research institute hired Liang was, in addition to his "broad learning and fine reputation," principally his knowledge of Japanese scholarship. One of the three requirements to be a professor at Qinghua was "familiarity with Western or Japanese research accomplishments in Oriental languages and Chinese culture."⁵⁵ Inasmuch as Liang's knowledge of European languages were close to non-existent, he had to use his imperfect Japanese to fulfill this requirement. At the Qinghua research institute, Wang Guowei would give the Japanese language tests for incoming students. After Wang died, Liang took over the job. The problem, however, remained. Most of Liang's Japanese friends were not academics, and in the eyes of scholars Liang's reputation was continually deteriorating. Among Japanese scholars Liang was viewed primarily as a politician. Moreover, many Japanese Sinologists admired Qing culture, and they were unhappy with Liang's hope that "when the moment our words become effective, then will the revolutionary tide rise over all the world."

The ensuing entwined relationship between ideology and politics remains a serious issue for Chinese scholars today.⁵⁶ Scholarship driven by political criticism in the style of Liang Qichao can only generate more negative than positive consequences. Before the 1911 Revolution, Wang Guowei had already criticized those who published in *Xinmin congbao* as primarily "trouble-making students" and "exiled ex-ministers." "These people do not know what scholarship is, but only possess some sort of political motivation. Although they do have certain academic ideas, these ideas are at most no more than plagiarism or perversions." Wang then argued that "only when we have scholarship for its own sake, not for any political purpose, will our scholarship flourish and expand."⁵⁷ In retrospect, this wise predecessor hit the mark nearly a century ago. If we really examine this point—even though Xiao Yishan 蕭一山 (1902-78) and others have argued against those who "looked down on Liang"⁵⁸—the Japanese scholars were actually even more farsighted when they deployed a rigid academic standard to measure Liang's work.

(Gleanings, separately catalogued of Liang Rengong) in *Si qiao ji* 思橋集 (Collection of a Bridge of Thoughts), *juan* 3 of *Zixiang wenzai* 子馨文在 (Zixiang's Literary Collection), in Shen Yunlong, ed., *Zhongguo jindai shiliao congkan* 81:808, pp. 456-57.

⁵⁵ Wu Mi 吳宓, "Qinghua kaiban yanjiuyuan zhi zhiqu ji jingguo" 清華開辦研究院之旨趣及經過 (The principles and history of the opening of the Research Institute at Qinghua University), *Qinghua zhouban* 清華周刊 351 (1925).

⁵⁶ On this issue a debate has taken place in recent years. Some argue that there is a distinction between ideogical scholarship and scholarly ideology. Indeed, scholarship itself does include ideology, especially when one exceeds the boundaries of the scholarly arena. However, this sort of ideology is still scholarly and not social or political.

⁵⁷ Wang Guowei, "Lun jinnian zhi xueshujie" 論近年之學術界 (On the scholarly world in recent years), in *Wang Guowei wenxue meixue lunzhuji* 王國維文學美學論著集 (Collection of Writings by Wang Guowei on Literature and Art), ed. Zhou Xishan 周錫山 (Taiyuan: Beiyue wenyi chubanshe, 1987), pp. 106-10.

⁵⁸ Xiao Yishan 蕭一山, "Wei Qingdai tongshi piping shi zai zhi Wu Mi jun shu, bing da Chen Gonglu jun" 爲清代通史批評事再致吳宓君書, 并答陳恭祿君 (Another letter to Wu Mi concerning criticism of [my book] *Qingdai tongshi*, and a reply to Chen Gonglu), *Guofeng* 國風 4.11 (June 1934).