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Chinese Language Education, the Contemporary Japanese University, and Modern Japan

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree Master of Arts
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Abstract

This thesis investigates undergraduate Chinese language education in the modern
Japanese university. It attempts to account for the recent upsurge in interest in Chinese
language learning but also deals with broader questions about the nature of Chinese education
in Japanese universities. The study attempts to situate the modern system in its historical
context, giving a general overview of the historical Sino-Japanese language contact through the
Tokugawa period and moving on to discuss Chinese language education in the context of the
upheaval of the Meiji period. Finally it describes the modern Chinese language curriculum in
the Japanese university, showing a system that only now is treating Chinese as a real foreign
language. This thesis also explores how the current Chinese language education system
reflects complex Japanese attitudes toward China and Asia and argues the current system
shows a changing Japanese identity in Asia.
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CHAPTER 1: AN INTRODUCTION

American commander Perry's gunboat appeared in Japan in 1853 demanding trade relations with Japan, an event that would change Japan forever. Even though the Japanese had been learning about the West for centuries from the Dutch, this 1853 event really forced Japan to open to the West; Japan suddenly realized that it was going to have to modernize its military and adopt Western technology wholesale. Naturally, foreign languages were to be crucial to this push and from their inception, universities emphasized foreign languages. But "foreign languages" has often referred to Western languages, and English in particular. From the establishment of the linguistics department at the Tokyo Imperial University in 1883, English study has always been the mainstay of language education in higher education institutions. Other "less important" languages, in contrast, have tended to be shunted to the periphery. One immediately thinks of Russian and the Asian languages from Japan's neighboring countries, languages that have proved useful for commerce and in time of war, but which have never shared the prestige that the European languages enjoyed.

Recently, however, all of this seems to be changing. Japan is now apparently returning to what has been the Japanese people's second language for over a millennium: Chinese1. This thesis will focus on education in Japanese universities, where the changes are dramatic. Since the late 1980s, the demand for Chinese language classes has far outstripped the number of qualified teachers. First, there has been an upsurge in the number of people who major in Chinese. For example, in 1997, Aichi University opened up an impressive new campus for the study of China and the Chinese language, the only one of its kind in Japan. For its opening class of April 1997, 1800 applied for 150 places ("Nikawa bunu," 1997, 1

1 In this study, the term "Chinese language" will refer to modern Mandarin Chinese unless otherwise stated.
March 17). Even more dramatic has been the number of people who study Chinese as their second foreign language. One Waseda University professor laments that it is impossible for him to hire teachers until he knows how many more people will be interested in Chinese (ibid.). While ten years ago Waseda had Chinese classes of A, B, and C, now Waseda is up to M, which doesn’t even take into account the increase in class sizes.

This thesis has taken this startling upsurge in interest in Chinese language studies as a starting point for research. The reasons for recent Japanese interest in the Chinese language were the first focus of attention, but before long, profound questions arose about the very nature of Chinese language study in Japan itself. The writer therefore decided to use the history of language contact between Japan and China as a backdrop to examine modern undergraduate Chinese language education in Japan. The central research question that emerged was what kind of investment in China and the Chinese language the Chinese language education system in Japan reflected. Moreover, what kind of view of China and Chinese did this system perpetuate?

First, the underlying forces that shape modern Chinese language education involve an exceedingly complicated historical relationship between China and Japan, that is usually dated back to the end of the seventh century when Japan first adopted Buddhist and Confucian texts, but actually began several centuries before (Loveday, 1996, 30). To attempt to understand Chinese language education in Japan is a daunting task precisely because of the complexity of this Sino-Japanese relationship. By the way of introduction, it will be shown how economic, political, and cultural considerations all have a bearing on our study of Chinese language education in Japan. These categories naturally overlap each other, and to some extent, encompass each other.

The most basic dimension of the Sino-Japanese relationship is economics; obviously,
the economic relationship between China and Japan has influenced the recent Chinese language boom. At the beginning of the eighties, when China had just opened its markets, Japan had about four billion U.S. dollars trade volume with China. This quadrupled to 16.6 billion dollars by 1990 and by 1995 had reached 54.47 billion U.S. dollars (Yong, 1997, 380). Economic imperatives clearly have a great deal to do with our discussion. Increased trade with China has meant a high demand for Chinese speakers to represent Japanese business interests in China. China was Japan’s fifth largest trading partner in 1992, but by 1993, it had become Japan’s second largest trading partner, surpassing Taiwan, South Korea, and Germany (Yong, 1997, 389). Indeed, one can see the fortune of German language studies decreasing precisely as Germany’s economic importance for Japan dwindled. Likewise, it was in this period that Chinese surpassed German as being the most popular second language after English.

Even though economic imperatives are a strong motivation for Japanese to learn Chinese, there are also overlapping political, and cultural considerations. After all, Japan has been widely viewed as a country that uses international trade and investment as a tool to expand internationally and further its own political interests (Arnold, 1990, 124). Even more problematic is the nebulous boundary between culture and economics. As one professor of Chinese professor observes, without economic relations, there are no cultural relations. For example, one can see a pan-Asian pop-culture emerging in Asia where Japanese film and music is increasingly intersecting with other Asian forms of entertainment, particularly from Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the mainland. A 1996 film entitled "Swallowtail" envisions a futuristic Tokyo where Chinese and Japanese culture have blended. Two young Japanese actors in the film not only speak Chinese in the film, but also play Chinese characters. And increasingly Asians, the Japanese not the least, are watching each others’ movies and listening
to each others' music. Star TV, an increasingly important organ of cultural transmission in Asia, would not exist if it were not for a market ("Asia kizu," 1997, January, 20).

The influence of the political relations between China and Japan on Chinese language education must also be teased out; one must gauge the fine line between genuine good will and cynical self-interest. On the one hand, politically, Japan seems willing to keep its traditional isolationist stance, and it would seem that the Sino-Japanese relationship will never advance beyond mutual distrust. Japan has been accused of having a "collective amnesia about Asia" since the Second World War (Yong, 1997, 374). Not only did they place most of their economic interests in the West, they also ignored their presence in Asia before the Second World War. China has been outraged by a series of largely symbolic issues that reminded them of Japan's past militarism, nationalist aggression and brutality in Asia. In 1982, and again in 1986, Japanese textbooks diluted references to Japan's invasion and occupation of China in the 30s. In 1985, Prime Minister Nakasone visited the infamous Yakusuni shrine where some of Japan's war criminals are buried, which touched off further protests (Arnold, 1990, 133). And in 1989, Japan signed a G-7 document in Paris condemning the Tiananmen crackdown (Yong, 1997, 384).

However, political relations between the two countries are by no means transparent. Despite countless sources of outrage, Japan also shares an odd understanding with China. For example, even after going along with the West, Japan carefully distanced itself from Washington's response to the Tiananmen incident. Prime Minister Kaifu was the first G-7 leader to visit China after this event, and even showed sympathy with China on human rights. Clothing and food are the starting point of human rights, he observed. He went on to comment that every country has its own cultural background, and no country was in the position to judge other countries by its own standards (Yong, 1997, 381).
Deng Xiao Ping’s comments aptly capture the odd relationship that Japan has with China. In May 1989, Deng said “the harm that the Japanese did to China is beyond calculation. In terms of death toll alone, tens of millions of Chinese people alone were killed by the Japanese. If we want to settle the historical account [of the humiliation and aggression suffered by the Chinese], Japan owes China the largest debt” (Yong, 1997, 377). But after the Tiananmen tragedy that would occur one month later, Japan worked laboriously so that the West would not isolate China and then quickly resumed its non-governmental relations with China. Only seven months after his first comment Deng would say to delegates of a Japanese international trade association: “This move [the resumption of informal relations] is reflective of genuine friendship. As an ancient Chinese saying goes, true friendship is tested in adversity. Although we are not exactly in trouble, your visit to our country at this time really shows precious friendship....” (Yong, 1997, 380).

Another interesting example of the odd Sino-Japanese political relationship is Emperor Akihito’s trip to China in 1992. As Yong Deng (1997) remarks, this was the first time that an emperor had visited China in the two thousand year history of the monarchy (382). Outsiders and the Japanese and Chinese alike must decide whether this is a sign of unprecedented friendship or an attempt by Japan to shore up its relationship with China to offset U.S. pressure on Japan, an interpretation many Chinese took (ibid.).

Japan also has a complex cultural relationship with China. Though a fair treatment of this topic is beyond the scope of this thesis, unique aspects of this relationship directly bear on our topic, Chinese language education in Japan. David Pollack (1986) argues that Japan’s unique geographic relationship with China has greatly influenced Japan’s cultural development. Japan was an island that was close enough to the continent that the benefits of Chinese civilization were available, but that it was isolated enough to prevent physical
invasion. Unlike China’s more immediate neighbors, Japan was able to keep its cultural identity which Pollack argues gave Japan the breathing space to establish a dialectic between the “native” and the “alien” (21).

But even though Japan had the leeway to maintain its own distinctive culture, Japan and China always shared profound similarities between their cultures. In a sense, the Confucian Analects and the Thousand Character Classic, the first two Chinese texts on record to be introduced to Japan, are as important to the Japanese as they are to the Chinese. Indeed, in a sense, the Japanese have adopted the Chinese classics for themselves. Buddhism and Confucianism, too, were first adopted and then molded into a Japanese tradition. However, even though Japanese tended to add their “Japanese-ness” to what they borrowed, Japan has maintained a deep fascination with China as the birthplace of Japanese culture. Though part of this fascination turned to contempt for modern China at the end of the nineteenth century when feudalism was crumbling on the continent and when the Japanese were able to defeat the Chinese at war in 1895, classical China has never lost its intrigue.

However, the most fascinating and important aspect of the Sino-Japanese cultural relationship is language. The Chinese word for “civilization” is “wenming” (文明) (bunmei in Japanese). D. R. Howland (1996) argues that this is really derived from the concepts “clarifying” or “enlightening-through-patterning” which can be extended to “enlightening through writing.” According to him, the notion of writing has been integral to the concept of civilization; it was the classics that legitimized and provided a virtuous example of the reign of an emperor (14). Moreover, it was the ability to read and write classical Chinese that qualified one to be an administrator in the Chinese feudal system, through the civil service examinations. Consequently, when outsiders did participate in Chinese civilization, occasionally sending tribute missions to China as the Japanese did, they
wrote in classical Chinese. Moreover, even at home, the Japanese equated classical Chinese writing with the notion of “civilization,” even long after they had adapted the Chinese script such that they could write Japanese sounds. This knowledge of Chinese allowed the Japanese an unusual membership in the Chinese cultural order (Jansen, 1985, 244). As we shall see, even at the end of the nineteenth century, intellectuals were still skilled at writing classical Chinese.

From this preoccupation with writing comes the notion of *tong wen* 同文 (*dobun* in Japanese), a notion fundamental to understanding the cultural relationship between China and Japan. Given the scope of meaning of the character *wen* (文), the meaning of this phrase could range from “same civilization” to “same culture” to “same script.” So profound was this shared culture that the Japanese could communicate by “brush chatting,” writing in classical Chinese without ever knowing each other’s spoken language. We will further delve into this topic later.

Having the same religion, philosophy, and written characters as the foundation of both of their civilizations has profoundly affected the Sino-Japanese relationship. On the one hand, this shared culture has given Japan and China a closer understanding of each other than that between Japan and, say, the West. Even in 1972, Prime Minister Tanaka presented Mao Zedong with a poem, written in the classical style and allegedly his own. Mao reciprocated with a gift volume of the poems of Ju Yuan (Jansen, 1985, 244). Perhaps the *tong wen* idea is also at the root of recent interest in East Asia in an Asian *ethos*, a view that argues that Asians have a unique way of viewing the world which is fundamentally different from that of the West.

At the same time, this commonality in the written language has caused great unease in Japan towards China. Japan has always had to distinguish itself from the mainland. If the
roots of Japanese civilization were Chinese, then what really was Japanese? Tokugawa nativism, a school of thought prevalent in the Tokugawa period (1603-1868) attempted to get relief from the impossible burden of China's contribution to Japanese culture and the reality that the Japanese written language had been basically derived from Chinese even though the Japanese and Chinese oral languages were completely different. The nativists argued that Japanese reality could never be represented by Chinese characters. One of the interesting characteristics of this movement was the celebration of “wonder” (something that required no words) and silence, both things that the Chinese apparently could not appreciate, that were thought to be inherent in the Japanese “Way” (Harootunian, 1980, 18). In more modern times, the Japanese have also been careful to demarcate classical Chinese as a completely different language from modern Chinese. In this way, they could see modern Chinese as a kind of bastard version of the original language to which they were also heir.

In this section, I have tried to show how we must filter developments in modern Chinese language education through a kind of three-pronged economic, political, and cultural relationship that has developed between Japan and China. Rather than simplifying Japanese motivations in their interaction with China, these three dimensions have shown there are a multitude of factors that must be brought into account if we are to understand the current Chinese “boom.”

This study was done in and around Nagoya in the 1997/1998 academic year, using Nagoya University as a base. There are six undergraduate universities with Chinese language specializations in the Nagoya area and I obtained program literature, interviews with professors, and in many cases, policy documents from each university. In addition, I interviewed 14 full-time professors in the Chinese language programs. Of the 14 full-time professors, one was Taiwanese and one mainland Chinese (See Table 1, p. 68).
Psuedonymns will be used when referring to these professors unless their names appear in published material.

Along with the universities with Chinese language majors, I visited four universities offering Chinese as a second foreign language and did classroom observation. In addition, I interviewed five part-time teachers of Chinese language teaching at various universities around the Nagoya area, three of whom were Chinese nationals (See Table 2, p. 69).

Student views of China, Chinese language, and Chinese studies were crucial to this paper. I solicited about 200 responses to a questionnaire that asked students about their views of Chinese language study. About one third of these students were taking Chinese as their first foreign language, which meant that they were majoring in Chinese language, history, philosophy, or literature; the rest were studying Chinese after English. I also used extensively the results of a report done by Benesse Corporation in September, 1996, called “The Chinese Language Student Report,” a report that surveyed 3029 university students of Chinese language, and solicited their views on language study along with their goals and motivations for studying.

This thesis tended to rely more on the Benesse results for analysis because of its broad sample. My collected surveys had a preponderance of lower year students and my survey was not large or representative enough to override variables such as the vastly differing levels of the surveyed universities (and the resulting effect on student abilities and motivations), the differences between first foreign language and second foreign language classes, and so on. However, my results were useful for general interpretive purposes.

Aichi Prefecture, where Nagoya is located, was a particularly appropriate area to investigate because three fledgling Chinese programs have been set up there since 1997, more rapid growth than other areas of Japan have seen. Moreover, Nagoya University is a
A prestigious national university and its Chinese language education system is typical of other traditional academic universities which are also teaching Chinese as electives. Visits to these universities along with my experiences at Nagoya University provided the most valuable information for this study as I was able to compare written literature provided by the university with professors' insights and with what was enacted in the classroom. All of the information collected at these universities was used interpretively to give an overall picture of modern Chinese language education.

There were a number of limitations to this study. It focused on undergraduate Chinese language study on the grounds that it was intended to account for the non-academic, cultural, and political pressures at work on popularized Chinese language education. But by doing so, it excluded some excellent graduate level research going on in Chinese studies. For example, Nagoya University set up a new graduate program called the Center for Research on International Linguistics and Culture in April 1997, and one can expect important research about the Chinese language from this department in the future. Even though the universities I investigated were representative of recent trends in Chinese language education, my sample was limited on account of my research budget and my imperfect knowledge of the Japanese language. Finally, this study was essentially exploratory and used written material, observation, and interviews in an impressionistic way to paint a particular picture of Chinese language teaching and learning in Japan.

Taking a broad approach, this thesis is an attempt to situate the Chinese language fever (netsu) in its historical context. Chapter Two describes early contact with the Chinese, and shows how that even early on, Chinese language had a dual function of being a means to communicate and a symbol of high culture. The third chapter will examine in some detail the circumstances surrounding Chinese language education in the Meiji era, and show the rift
between modern Chinese for communication purposes and classical Chinese for cultural purposes. The fourth chapter traces the history of two modern universities and shows what came of the split between the modern and the classical camps in the modern era. The fifth and sixth chapters provide an overview of the modern Chinese language education system and interpret modern developments in light of historical trends.
CHAPTER 2: THE HISTORY OF SINO-JAPANESE LANGUAGE CONTACT

2.1 The Heian Period (794-1192)

To Japanese scholars, the history of language education in Japan generally begins in the Tokugawa period (1603-1868) when the Japanese started to learn European languages. Of course, scholarship has delved into the Japanese adoption of the Chinese script that goes back to the seventh century, but this is never really seen as language learning. In a typically Japanese approach to the topic, Toshio Doi (1988) devotes about half of his book entitled *The Study of Language in Japan* to the study of Western languages, a good-sized chapter to the study of Sanskrit-related languages, and he puts a small section on Chinese studies in a chapter called “Linguistic Science.” Indeed, the scant reference actually made to Chinese language study in contemporary Japanese scholarship places it with the study of European languages, merely a late-Tokugawa (1603-1868), early-Meiji (1868-1912) development.

This section of my thesis will describe the early language contact with the Chinese, showing that the image of Japanese monks poring over Buddhist and Confucian manuscripts, painstakingly making the Chinese characters usable for the highly inflected Japanese language, is one-sided. The adoption of Chinese characters was a process involving a high level of cooperation and communication between the Chinese and Japanese. I will show that the Chinese language had a dual function for the Japanese, as it does today. On the one hand, it was a tool for communicating with the Chinese; for the Japanese to actually engage with the Chinese classics and to adopt the Chinese script meant face-to-face communication in Chinese. On the other hand, the Chinese language was the symbol of China’s glorious culture at the same time.

Chinese was not only a revered language that the Japanese were learning to write, but
it was a vehicle with which it was possible to engage with the Chinese and their culture. As Leo Loveday (1996) points out, the initial employment of characters necessarily meant bilingualism. The language that the Japanese were acquiring came not from merchant's records, but from the fundamental texts of Chinese culture, which required orthodox and legitimate interpretation; this implied native Chinese teachers and bilingual students (Loveday, 1996, 31). If one examines the Heian literature (794-1192), it is possible to see Chinese loan words becoming integrated into the Japanese language in a way that would not have been possible if it were not for significant oral communication. For example, an inscription dated 607 AD on an aureole of a statue in Yakushi temple in Nara suggests that the scribe was not native Chinese, having both the object-verb (Japanese) and verb-object (Chinese) word order (Pollack, 1986, 25). Other seventh century inscriptions were written in Chinese rhyme, which implied that the Japanese scribe had a sophisticated knowledge of spoken Chinese (Habein, 1984, 9).

The Japanese obsession with pronunciation, a concern that will recur when we examine modern Chinese education, also demonstrates how the Japanese were adopting a spoken language of communication along with written classical Chinese. The Japanese were highly sensitive to changes in Chinese pronunciation that were happening on the continent. When the Japanese first had contact with the Chinese characters, it was the pronunciation of the “Six Dynasties” (approximately corresponding to the beginning of the fourth century until the middle of the sixth) that they adopted. Toward the end of the sixth century, the centers of culture became the Tang metropolitan cities of Chang An and Luo Yang. As Japanese students, officials, and clergy went to China, they became increasingly aware of the difference in pronunciation, and this resulted in a shift to the Tang pronunciation. In 793, there was a decree that prevented clergy from entering the priesthood if they could not recite
their texts with the new pronunciation (Miller, 1967, 104). This clash with Chinese pronunciation foreshadows a preoccupation that we will see later in modern Chinese language education in Japan, not only with the Beijing pronunciation, but with the concept of Chinese pronunciation itself.

Foreign students were to be exceedingly important to the Japanese adoption of the Chinese language. At one point in the Sui Dynasty (581-618), there was an entourage of 500 Japanese staying in China, and from 630 to 894, the Chinese and Japanese governments both sent fifteen missions to each other's countries (Ichiji, 1985, 120).

But communication with the Chinese was by no means uniform. Starting at the end of the ninth century and lasting for about five centuries, the Japanese contact with the Chinese was curtailed; China was experiencing the upheaval of civil war and there were power struggles in the Japanese court. But the pattern we have been describing held true; Chinese was never lost as a communication tool even after Chinese high culture had been completely adopted as a basis for Japanese culture. In the centuries after the Heian period, it was the Buddhist clergy who kept Chinese alive, occasionally going to China to study Zen and Confucianism, and upon returning, introducing new pronunciation and vocabulary. Court nobles also played a significant role in keeping Chinese alive as a means of communication with the continent (Loveday, 1996, 40).

2.2 The Chinese Language and the Tokugawa Era (1603-1868)

In terms of Chinese influence and the role of the Chinese language in Japan, the Tokugawa period is shrouded in contradictions. As is well known, the Tokugawa period was one of relative seclusion. The Iberian Catholics were thrown out in 1630, and only the
Chinese and Dutch were permitted to trade in Nagasaki. There was also some limited contact with the Koreans (Reynolds, 1992, 2). But at the same time, it is often said that Chinese culture reached the peak of its influence over Japanese culture in this period, a phenomenon resulting from the official endorsement of Confucianism. Chinese trading junks were admitted into Nagasaki, even though no Chinese officials were allowed on board. "Chinatowns" lined the Kyushu coast and cultural activities thrived. Master Chinese artisans were commissioned by warlords to work for them and temples sprang up for the use of Chinese residents and many of the Zen masters who came to teach in them were famous in China. There were many artists (Reynolds, 1992, 58).

In this section, I am going to show how Chinese played a dual role in Tokugawa Japan, similar to the situation when the Japanese were first reading Chinese texts and adopting the Chinese script. Chinese was high culture and represented Confucianism to the Japanese, yet it was also a language of communication.

As Harold Harootunian (1980) argues, the vision that the Japanese had of China was fixed by Confucianism. He comments how China functioned almost metaphorically, being associated with moral concepts such as tendo (heavenly way). China was also referred to as chuka, the central fluorescence, or chugoku, the central kingdom (Harootunian, 1980, 18). As a result, the Japanese had an enlarged notion of Chinese as a grand classical language. But Chinese language also had a more practical function. It was crucial for interaction with the many Chinese who flooded Nagasaki in the Tokugawa period to do commerce and for interaction with the artists, musicians, and clerics who were in Nagasaki on cultural missions.

This era produced some first-rate scholars whose interests show that in Tokugawa Japan, Chinese was esteemed as a language for communication and as a classical language. Ogyu Sorai (1666-1728) was an avid Sinologist who attracted Chinese monks to Japan, often
inviting them and other scholars of colloquial Chinese to his home. According to Ogyu, people always diverted from the original Chinese in the classics in order for them, as Japanese, to understand; it was a frustration for him that the pronunciation from the continent was so different from what he heard in Japan. As a result, Ogyu Sorai insisted on reading the classical texts in modern pronunciation (Ando, 1995, 63). Ogyu Sorai has some illuminating comments about one encounter that he had with a Chinese cleric. It was a question and answer period, with Japanese Zen priests interpreting. Ogyu says: “We had a marvelous conversation on various subjects. It was like the playing of bells; when they sounded high, inquiries were answered; when they sounded low, there were gasping sounds” (Lidin, 1973, 116). Obviously, Ogyu was enthused both by the particularities of modern Chinese and by his contact with teachers of the classics.

2.3 The Early Meiji Period: The Brush talks

Near the end of the nineteenth century, educated Japanese and Chinese both knew classical Chinese, and as such, were able to have a very meaningful communication simply through writing characters. The Chinese participants used a combination of modern and classical Chinese while the Japanese used kanbun, a style of writing that was both “Sinocized” Japanese and “Japanized” Chinese at the same time. The brush talks further illustrate the two powerful functions Chinese characters have for the Japanese, even today. One, kanji is an extraordinary tool for communication between two cultures that use the semantic base of characters as the basic building blocks for meaning. And two, the brush talks show that the Chinese characters also represent a classical culture common to both the Chinese and Japanese.
As previously mentioned, the concept of *tong wen* (同文) was first used by the Chinese in the nineteenth century to refer to a “shared language” which could also be extended to a “shared civilization,” given the breadth of meaning in the character 文 (wen in Chinese, *bun* in Japanese). As D. R. Howland points out, writing (文) was the “preferred mark of Civilization” because it not only distinguished men from animals, but also distinguished the civilized from uncivilized (Howland, 1996, 55). Though this concept was later used by the Japanese to more sinister ends during war-time when they were trying to disseminate the study of Japanese and found the East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere, the concept of *tong wen* was very important to the brush chats; *tong wen* was the very premise on which the communication was based.

Shanghai was a great shock to the Japanese on the first official mission to China after the seclusion of the Tokugawa period. There was nothing heroic about China: The feudal system was tottering and China was crippled economically and politically by the West (Fogel, 1995, 86). In this context, Takasugi, a young Japanese intellectual, engages in a particularly significant brush talk with a Chinese official.

The talk began with the current political situation but quickly moved to history and religion. Takasugi explained that in Japan, military prowess determined success in the civil service; he described the Japanese view of Confucius, and then told his new friend about the indigenous Japanese Sun Goddess (Fogel, 1995, 91). Even though this exchange might seem a little silly, or even pretentious, given the fact that China was in political and economic shambles and the conversants appeared to be having a scholarly exchange that might have been expected during the Heian period, this small exchange made a link between the two cultures that went very deep.

The classical Chinese of China and that of Japan were very different; after all, a
thousand years had past since Japan had “domesticated” classical Chinese for its own use. But at the same time, the participants were able to maintain a subtlety and sophistication in their communication because they used a system of shared cultural referents. This level of communication was never realized during Japan's modernization and commercial interaction with the West. For example, language problems seriously hampered a diplomatic mission to the United States in 1860 (Fogel, 1995, 94). One also thinks back to Prime Minister Tanaka’s poem offered to Mao during the Cultural Revolution. This gesture meant common ground between the two countries despite vastly different, political, economic, and ideological standpoints.

But more than that, the Chinese used in the brush chats had the same twin role mentioned before. On the one level, Chinese represented contemporary linguistic communication; on the other hand, it was an object of classical culture at the same time. Howland (1996) comments that “the brush talks bespeak multiple cultural and historical references--on the one hand, the past worlds of Japanese and Chinese history as they are constituted in and through specific linguistic formulations, and on the other hand, the present world of the 1870s and 1880s in which the participants are embedded and to which they repeatedly refer” (53).

2.4 The Early Contacts: A Conclusion

This section has shown that, even early on, the Chinese language was more significant to the Japanese than simply as the source of the Japanese written script or the source of a few sacred texts. Chinese was also the means through which the Japanese were actually able to communicate with the Chinese. I have shown how, during the early Sino-Japanese
contact, spoken Chinese for communication was as crucial as the prestige cultural language the Japanese were most interested in. And again in the Tokugawa period, at least some scholars esteemed the spoken Chinese language along with the Chinese Confucian classics. Even in the Meiji period, the “brush chats” remind us that the characters themselves were both powerful as a tool of communication and as a system of shared cultural referents.

Overall, until the onslaught of Western learning, this contemporary Chinese for communication was never seen as intrinsically separate from the Chinese of the classics. But the next chapters will show that, even though Chinese was always to have this dual quality in Japan as a communication tool and object of culture, from the Meiji period, they were to be neatly split. Classical Chinese was to be venerated, while Chinese for communication was to be employed for practical purposes only.
The modern2 history of contemporary Chinese language study in Japan marks a clean break from Tokugawa optimism about China and Chinese. Due to political factors, from the Meiji period, Japanese came to view China and its language in a fundamentally different way from what had been their practice for a thousand years. By the time the Japanese university was established in the Meiji period, Chinese language education had split into two opposing worlds of values. How these worlds are divided is not immediately obvious, but a few of the oppositions that immediately come to mind are the written and spoken, the cultural and economic, the literary and practical, and the ancient and modern. On a fundamental level, these two worlds were split over the two kinds of Chinese discussed in the previous chapter, modern Chinese for its communication value, and classical Chinese for its cultural value. This division has resulted in two camps with vastly differing ideology, methods and interests. This section of my study will focus on developments from the beginning of the Meiji period, showing how the existence of these two value systems affected every aspect of the modern history of Chinese language education in Japan.

First, a clear distinction between classical and modern Chinese needs to be made. Then the effects of the competing classical and modern ideologies on educational institutions, curriculum and pedagogy will be explored; we will see an odd mixture of contempt for modern Chinese and a veneration for the classics. This section will also show how a handful of educators attempted to bridge the practical and classical aspects of Chinese studies in their scholarship.

2 I am borrowing the Japanese convention of using the word "modern" (In Japanese, kindai) to refer to the period between the Meiji Restoration (1868) and the end of the Second World War (1945).
3.1 Classical and Modern Chinese: A Definition

In English, one naturally associates "modern" Chinese with "classical" Chinese; after all, as their names imply, they are both the Chinese language. However, in Japanese, the distinction is not quite so obvious. Traditionally, the classics have been called *kanbun* (漢文). *Kanbun* essentially has two meanings. It refers to works written in classical Chinese, a florid, difficult style that preceded the modern standardized language. *Kanbun* also refers to the Chinese classics imported from China that are treated as an integral part of Japanese culture. The *kanbun* texts were never really treated as Chinese. They were typically read using the Japanese pronunciation (the *kunyomi*) in the Japanese syntax which often required the reader to invert the word order, a reading method we will discuss later.

Modern Chinese, on the other hand, had a different Japanese designation in the modern period than today because modern China itself had a different name. Nowadays, Japanese uses the word *Chugoku* to refer to China, and *Chugokugo* to refer to Chinese. However, this is a recent development. Until the Second World War, the Japanese generally referred to China as *Shina* (支那), and hence, to modern Chinese as *shinago*. As we shall see, the designation of modern Chinese as *shinago* limited the value that it could have.

The word *shina* has a long history in Japan that goes back to the ninth century, which perhaps justified its use ("'Shina, '" November 26). But this designation got its real salience in the early part of the twentieth century. The term *shina* became a slightly pejorative term that had two functions. It avoided referring to China as *Chugoku*, which meant "middle kingdom" or "central kingdom," which essentially acknowledged China's cultural importance. But *Shina* was also a handy way of describing a weak and backward China that was much different from modern Japan (Tanaka, 1993, 4). In the thirties, the Chinese government first
asked Japan to not use this term, but it was not until 1946, after Japan had lost the war and the Chinese government had gone so far as to threaten to start using the term *riben guizi* (Japanese devils) to refer to the Japanese, that the Japanese finally abandoned *Shina* and started calling China *Chugoku* (‘Shina,’” November 26).

Modern Chinese, or *Shinago*, then, simply by its designation, was completely divorced from classical Chinese and the ancient culture with which the Japanese were fascinated. Rather, it was the language of a weak, modern country for which the Japanese did not have much respect.

### 3.2 The University

First of all, from the the inception of the imperial universities, the study of Chinese in the university was in the “classical” *kanbun* camp. Though the imperial university was established in 1877, it wasn't until 1885 that Tokyo Imperial University began offering modern Chinese for three hours a week in the linguistics department, and one hour per week in the classics department (Ichiji, 1985, 125). There are a number of reasons that *kanbun* was very important in the Japanese university while, on the other hand, modern Chinese counted for nothing.

The Chinese classics had always been an important part of Japanese scholarship, and as such, occupied an important place in the early university. The Chinese classics were traditionally treated as as if they were, if not “Japanese,” at least a part of Japan's civilization. Japan's first texts were essentially copied from the Chinese and, say, Tang Dynasty (618-907) poetry would never have been treated as foreign texts.

Moreover, *kanbun* occupied an important place in the Meiji university because it was
only through kanbun that the Japanese could assimilate the ideas that they were borrowing from the West. Prior to Japan’s modernization at the end of the nineteenth century, Japan did not have a language of ideas and concepts other than classical Chinese. For example, in the Meiji period, the new words “culture, refinement” (kyoyo), “national assembly” (kokkai), and “national language” (kokugo) all came from Chinese commentary on Buddhist sutras. And oddly enough, Chinese writing (kanbun) was also to be crucial to the adoption of Western technological concepts. “Arithmetic” (sugaku) and “electric” (denki), for example, came straight from a Chinese-English dictionary (Seeley, 1991, 137).

And apart from their importance to Japanese culture, the Chinese texts played a further important role in the Meiji Universities. The Meiji period marked a profoundly new and uncharted era. Japan had begun its rapid Westernization, but the Chinese classics were still vitally important. Placing importance on the Chinese classics and Neo-Confucianism helped to legitimize the restoration of the emperor: Just as universities were to be exceedingly important for Japan’s Westernization, they were also important in conserving what was Japanese. This movement was subsequently to peak in Tokyo Imperial University in the Chinese Classics Department, an important department that essentially continued the classical education received in high schools, and upheld the Confucian values of the state.

Why was modern Chinese not studied in university departments at the beginning of the Meiji period? In part the university’s “allergy” to modern Chinese resulted from what the Japanese thought a foreign language was. In the early Meiji period, Modern Chinese was never an academic subject, as a one-time president of the University of Tokyo notes. “I must remark that the Chinese we study is not a modern language any more than the Greek of English is a modern language; with us the Chinese is the old classical Chinese, different from the modern Chinese, but to be understood when written down, by an educated Chinese”
There are good reasons for Kikuchi's brand of snobbishness toward modern Chinese. English, German, and French were considered to be Japan's modern foreign languages, and as such, had a cultural component that Chinese never shared.

When one studied the European languages, it was possible to study economics, fine arts and law, aspects of Western learning that would become valuable to Japan, and as such these languages were very important components of the early university programs. Modern Chinese never had similar prospects; if one studied modern Chinese, one became a translator, and this was never an academic pursuit. And people in foreign affairs didn't study Chinese; they studied law, business, or the European languages. If one wanted to become a diplomat, it was not necessary to speak Chinese; at best, the diplomats knew enough Chinese to order tea or buy antiques (Ando, 1995, 5).

As a result, in universities, Chinese retained its importance as a classical language and as a language for digesting foreign concepts; European language study remained a symbol of the prestigious West, and modern Chinese was ignored.

3.3 The Senmon Gakko

The study of modern Chinese, on the other hand, was centered in the senmon gakko. The senmon gakko (専門学校) is essentially a for-profit school that teaches a specialized skill. These schools are for short-term study and are characterized by their non-academic bent; indeed, these schools are as practical as their university counterparts are theoretical. For example, one might find a senmon gakko that teaches flower-arranging, auto-mechanics, or language. In terms of our topic, the underlying demand for Chinese language education at the senmon gakko was similarly practical. Chinese was crucial for the Japanese push into
China, and it was up to the *senmon gakkos* to hastily train translators. As Ando (1995) points out, in Japan in the modern period, there were really only two kinds of modern Chinese, soldier Chinese (*heitai shinago*) and peddler Chinese (*gyosho shinago*) (14).

For the entire Meiji period, Chinese outside the university system, *senmon gakko* Chinese, served the political and commercial interests of the nation. A key reason for the importance of the *senmon gakko* in Chinese language education was the extraordinarily close ties between the Chinese language and the Japanese desire to expand into China. Illustrating this interdependency, one company/school trained Chinese speakers, spies, and medicine salespersons at the same time. The grandfather of Katherine Hepburn, James Hepburn, went to Shanghai in 1866 to get the printing type for the English-Japanese dictionary he was working on. In China, he and a Japanese former fellow student discovered a lot of the Chinese sick with eye disease and a company called the *rakuzendo* (楽善堂) was subsequently set up to export eye medicine to China. But the school associated with this company was not only training salesmen who could speak Chinese, they were training a lot of young Japanese to gather military information about China. Arao Sei, the founding father of the Toa Dobun Shoin, about whom we will say more later, was probably the most famous participant of this group.

The story of how the study of modern Chinese continually found itself in the dustbin after the beginning of the Meiji period shows to what an extent this split over the classical and contemporary shaped Chinese language education. Modern Chinese language education began with a headache for the foreign affairs office of the government. The 1871 Friendship Treaty had been signed with China and translators were direly lacking, as were people who had the skills to assist in Japan’s commercial and political activities in China. Subsequently, the Foreign Affairs Ministry set up the *Kango Gakujo*, a school for teaching Chinese. The
demand being great, Chinese gained some respectability when it was absorbed by the Tokyo Foreign Language School in 1873. But its fortune soon took a downward swing. Students of the Western languages were studying law, science and fine arts, while it soon became clear that studying Chinese (along with Russian, Korean, and the other peripheral languages) meant studying to become a translator. In 1874, the English department broke away and subsequently became the Tokyo University Preparatory School, which proved to be the beginning of the end. In 1885, the Tokyo Foreign Language School closed and students of French and German joined their counterparts studying English. Students of Chinese, Russian and Korean joined the Tokyo School of Commerce (Tokyo Shogyo Gakko) (Ichiji, 1985, 129), shunted off to the periphery, forming a precedent that one might argue has repercussions today.

3.4 The Curriculum

The great division between contemporary and classical Chinese not only affected schools that were established, but also profoundly affected the way that Chinese was taught. In this section, I will discuss trends in Chinese language methodology that essentially began in the Meiji period but are still present today. Traditionally, there have been two great divisions, the “Conversation School” and the “Silent Reading School” (kaiwa shugi and mokudoku shugi). Modern Chinese essentially belonged to the former school of thought (conversation has practical value), while the classics were read rather than pronounced, which put them in the “Silent Reading School.”

Several important features of the “Silent Reading Camp” bear mention. First of all, classical Chinese was not really completely “silent”; a pronunciation was associated with all
of the characters, as is the case in all developed writing systems. It was silent insofar as it was simply a way to decipher classical Chinese, and once one knew the method, there was no reason to pronounce the text. Part of the function of the *kundoku* was to avoid the Chinese pronunciation, the complexities of which were challenging for Japanese speakers.

The Japanese method of reading the Chinese language was exceedingly complex. Let us take as an example the old Chinese adage that approximately corresponds to the English “a picture is worth a thousand words.”

百聞不如一見

In Chinese this is read “bai wen buru yi jian.” However, in Japanese, the syntax does not match the Chinese grammar, so the characters must be read in a different order. Moreover, for the lay reader unfamiliar with classical Chinese, further markings are necessary to indicate both pronunciation and word order. The Japanese would appear as follows:

百聞不如一見

(Ema, T., Taniyama, S., + Iino, K., 1979)

The character reading order would become 1,2,5,6,4,3 and it would now be pronounced *haku bun* (1,2) *wa* (subject marker) *iken* (5,6) *ni* (object marker) *shikazu* (4,3).

In the pragmatism of wartime, this “knowledge” of having mastery over the Chinese text had some bizarre consequences. *Kanbun* had been religiously taught in institutes of
higher education, and was an important criterion for entering tertiary education, and was consequently pressed into service for the Japanese occupation of Manchuria when a reading knowledge of modern Chinese was in high demand, and teachers were scarce. While the kundoku method worked for classical Chinese, this method caused all kinds of problems for reading modern Chinese, for obvious reasons. Classical and modern Chinese were like two different languages but some people who had not even studied Chinese even published translated work (Ando, 1995, 107)! According to one author, this naive belief that kanbun study would stand the Japanese in good stead showed that the Monbusho (the Ministry of Culture and Education), Japan's powerful government body in control of education, thus far had never given a moment's thought to modern Chinese (Ichiji, 1985, 126). Even today, Chinese language classrooms in Japan still reflect the tendency to deal with Chinese by reading it.

Not only was it difficult to read modern Chinese with no training in modern grammar, speaking Chinese proved to be similarly problematic. The kaiwa shugi, spoken Chinese with no academic training about the structure of the language, was also bankrupt. Chinese never shared the grammar-school type approach that the European language education used, and standards among teachers were conspicuously absent; teachers' pronunciation and teaching methods were all different. Some teachers were from the sermon gakkos where they had only practical experience and no grammatical knowledge of Chinese. There was also the opposite case where the teachers had received only a classical training, and had little knowledge of modern Chinese. Some had studied by themselves, or had been to China.

Part of the problem was that these programs valued nothing that was not going to be

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3This modern written Chinese was referred to as jibun (時文) and consisted of government documents, newspaper articles, and the like, and was used for Japan's military and economic penetration of China.
useful. However, having removed any cultural dimension to Chinese study, the language the Japanese learned made no sense. For example, the government hastily produced a large number of textbooks to teach conversation before the occupation of Manchuria. But when thousands of Japanese went to China for the war effort, they spoke a Chinese that only they themselves understood; the soldiers’ Chinese was so bad that the Chinese thought that they were speaking Japanese (Ando, 1995, 112).

The trends that I have described need to be qualified; obviously, to say that Chinese language education in Japan always fit the Conversation stream or the Silent Reading Stream is a caricature. Developments in Chinese language education in Japan in some senses developed in tandem with what was happening on the continent. The May Fourth Movement (1919) in China really began a literary revolution that fundamentally changed the Chinese language in China. The separation of the written language and oral speech had lasted for centuries, which had traditionally meant that classical Chinese was not a general instrument, but a mark of the ruling class. Writers like Lu Xun and Li Dazhao wanted a “down-to-earth expression of their feelings and depiction of the world” (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, 1993, 1073). Indeed, Lu Xun’s novel, “Diary of a Madman” was the first novel in modern spoken Chinese language, a novel that was to become influential in Japan both for its ideas and as a symbol of modern China. In limited academic circles, the Japanese were challenged to see the Chinese language in a new way, insofar as they accepted the new Chinese literature as a valid form of expression. Some Japanese scholars began to realize that their study of China was going to have to start from zero.

I have tried to show that the Japanese distinction between classical and modern Chinese profoundly affected the study of Chinese in the modern university. The universities studied written Chinese while the senmon gakkos were preoccupied with oral skills. Chinese
study in the universities was primarily historical and cultural while in the *senmon gakkos*, the Chinese was basically for commercial purposes. Chinese in the universities was largely conservative, and scholars had a somewhat hard-headed, pedantic image. Chinese in the *senmon gakkos*, on the other hand, was essentially progressive and expansionist. While the study of Chinese in the universities was associated with respect, the unofficial education of the *senmon gakkos* was associated with contempt and exploitation.

3.5 The Educators

Because the status of Chinese language in Japan has always been associated with the status of China in Japan, the study of Chinese has always involved complicated political motivations. Nonetheless, I will show that in the modern era there were also figures fascinated by China whose interests in China were outside political interests and cultural prejudices. These individuals wanted to straddle both the classical and modern camps, persons who realized the folly of neatly splitting classic and modern, and written and spoken Chinese.

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4 In the early modern period, particularly from 1880 to 1895, Japan was in a transition period in which it feared and envied the military and economic power of the West while simultaneously scheming how it could empower itself. There were two philosophies at work. The *koa* was a philosophy that promoted making Asia powerful such that it could compete with the threat from the West. As a result, the *koa* camp was much more interested in Chinese than German, French, and English. The *datsua*, on the other hand, turned away from Asia and was hungry for whatever knowledge that it could get from the West, a movement in which Fukuzawa Yukichi was the most famous personality. It would be convenient to assume that the pro-Asian stance meant a positive feeling toward China. Unfortunately reality was not so simple. At the turn of the century, for Japan, turning toward Asia did not necessarily mean countries of common cultures banding together to resist the West. Rather, part of the meaning of *koa* was Japan's need to consolidate its power in Asia. As history was to show, this did not mean friendship at all (Rokkaku, 1988:290).
3.5.1 Miyajima Daihachi

Miyajima Daihachi (1866-1943) spent his whole career doing the unconventional. At 19 he quit the Chinese school that he was attending in Japan and went to China where he studied modern spoken Chinese and Confucianism. He formed a close, apprentice-type relationship with his teacher, a relationship that would profoundly affect his ideas about Chinese education. Seven years after leaving Japan, Miyajima returned to Japan and started the Eikisha ("Return home Singing" School) and subsequently the Zenrin Shoin, the "Good Neighbor Academy"; both schools were essentially senmon gakkos. He also published the famous Kyushuhen Chinese textbook, not the least of his accomplishments.

Miyajima’s vision of education had a number of interesting characteristics. First, he was fascinated by modern spoken Chinese. In 1904 he brought out his Kyushuhen a text that would go through 170 editions and last as the standard Chinese text in Japan right until the Second World War. The Kyushuhen was the first text to really popularize the mondotai, the question and answer format first used by the translators in Nagasaki, essentially a modern style that assumed that the language learned and knowledge gained was going to be used for communication.

Second, Miyajima insisted on teaching the classics. He offered a four year program at his "Good Neighbor Academy" (Zenrin Shoin); in the first two six-month periods of the Zenrin Shoin course, students would study the Kyushuhen and one other conversation text teaching modern Beijing speech. But they would graduate up to classics of the modern era in the upper years. At the highest level, students read the Four Books and Five Classics (Ando, 1995, 43).

Finally, Miyajima insisted on teaching Confucianism, the most radical aspect of his
vision of Chinese education. According to him, Confucianism was the basis of China, the popularity of which determined if China was flourishing or not. To him, if Confucianism did not exist in China, then it wouldn’t be China. Similarly, Japan had Confucian roots and a great deal in common with China (Rokkaku, 1985, 32). Oddly enough, Miyajima’s ideas have the same ring as those of modern day thinkers who believe a modern Asian ethos exists in character-based, Confucian societies in East Asia.

3.5.2 Ogairi Yoshio

Ogairi Yoshio was part of a boom in Chinese language education within academia in the 1930s that was reacting to the standardization and recognition of Modern Chinese on the continent. To Ogairi, the problem with Chinese language education stemmed from the callous attitude that Chinese was merely a war language and from a profound ignorance of linguistics. Ogairi’s big contribution to Chinese language education was his insistence on treating Chinese as an academic subject as were the European languages; he translated and published two books about Chinese linguistics in 1937 and 1938 that were published in the West, and he was interested in systematically analyzing pronunciation. Ogairi also connected this academic curiosity about modern Chinese linguistics to the traditional study of classical Chinese in universities. His introductory texts, expository essays, and academic articles discussed modern phonetics but classical language as well.

The most intriguing element in Ogairi’s scholarship, however, was his investment in China beyond the language he was investigating. A pen name he once used was pronounced “friend of China” even though the characters were different. Ogairi called himself 信濃義人 (shina no yujin) whose pronunciation is the same as 支那の友人 (shina no yujin) which means
Kuraishi Takeshiro was a contemporary of Ogairi and he, too, wanted to get modern Chinese out of the gutter; to him it was more than a war language. Kuraishi, too, was interested in modern Chinese and he also wanted to connect characters and pronunciation, to connect the spoken and written. As part of this effort, Kuraishi advocated the reform of the *kanbun* system of Chinese study. According to him, the *kyuseikoko* ⁵ (旧制学校) needed reform such that Chinese would be acknowledged in the same way that German, French, and English were.

But probably the most remarkable thing about Kuraishi was the textbook series that he created. He, too, wanted to blend the modern and classical in his curriculum. “The Chinese Reader” (*shinago tokuhon*), a reader with short, authentic Chinese readings, began with modern writers such as Lu Xun but worked its way back to a work from the Tang Dynasty by Tao Yan Ming. Kuraishi also based his texts on a cultural syllabus, something running counter to the war-time, instrumental view of Chinese of his era. For example, he designed a text called "The Little Beijinger" (小北京人 sho Pekinjin) that mimicked the texts of the Western languages such as “The Little Londoner” and the “Petit Parisien” readers that attempted to evoke life in what was certainly a foreign country and culture (Ando, 1995, 49).

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⁵ Literally, this means "high schools of the old system," schools that gave academic preparation for university. If one were to compare this school's level with modern schools, it would be found somewhere between secondary and tertiary education.
3.6 Conclusion

This section has not attempted to cover all of the history of Chinese language education from the Meiji period to the present, a history full of surges and set-backs. Rather it has shown how events early in the Meiji period created two tracks (or ruts), one where Chinese language (kanbun) was esteemed, and the other (shinago) where it was simply put it to use. Likewise, all of the important people from all of the modern eras of Chinese education have not been mentioned, or even represented. Rather, this section has attempted to show how that there were always those in Chinese education who, in their enthusiasm for China and Chinese, went against the grain of convention and attempted to integrate the classical and the modern, the written and spoken, and the cultural and economic.

On the whole, one could say that there was a strange and complicated balance between the classic and practical in Chinese language education in the Modern Era. The Japanese had a profound respect for the Chinese classics that one might argue went deeper than their fascination with Western languages and culture. Perhaps this respect arose out of the conviction that the Chinese classics were as Japanese as they were Chinese. On the other hand, modern Chinese had to deal with the contempt of familiarity, or at least a perceived familiarity. China lay close to Japan and the great power of the Chinese pictographs to convey meaning gave the Japanese a feeling that they could understand Chinese if they wanted. Moreover, it was tempting to see modern Chinese as a tool of enormous military and economic possibility which tended to eclipse any academic or cultural interest in the language, a mind set that had disastrous results, as we have shown.
CHAPTER 4: TWO MODERN UNIVERSITIES AND THE UNIVERSITY-SENMON GAKKO CONUNDRUM

The previous chapter has shown how Chinese language education has been split between classical Chinese for its cultural value and modern Chinese for its commercial value. The following discussion will show how this rift has continued into the present day. Two universities will be discussed, one as a senmon gakko that was established at the beginning of the twentieth century, and the other one as a Japanese imperial university. A discussion of these two universities and their systems also introduces the modern period, showing that the traditional split over the modern and classical still exists, but that a new view of Chinese language education is also emerging.

4.1 Aichi University and the Toa Dobun Shoin: The Story of a Senmon Gakko and Success

Any study of modern Chinese education in Japan has to take note of one school. In 1900, the East Asian Common Culture Academy (Toa Dobun Shoin), a school that did an extraordinary job of educating Japanese students about Chinese and China on Chinese soil for 45 years, was founded in Shanghai, where it remained until 1945. As Japan's largest cultural facility outside her territory, from the period from 1900 to 1945, 5000 students received education at the Toa Dobun Shoin (Reynolds, 1986, 947). And in 1946 when teachers and students from the Toa Dobun Shoin moved back to Japan because of the war, Aichi University was set up in Aichi prefecture, a school that remains loosely centered on China. Aichi University is now spread over Aichi prefecture and contains a bewildering number of
departments, departments among which administration is not necessarily harmonious. Consequently, a general discussion of Aichi University is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, as part of a massive rethinking of its mandate, partly inspired by the fiftieth anniversary of its founding, Aichi University set up a new Department of Modern Chinese Studies that opened in April, 1997. It is on this department that we will focus our attention.

4.1.1 Arao Sei: The Toa Dobun Shoin’s Inspiration

To understand the philosophy of the Toa Dobun Shoin and Aichi University’s new department, it is necessary to understand the thinking of the founding father of this institution, Arao Sei (1859-1896). Arao Sei was a controversial figure. On one hand, everything that he did had the scent of Japanese nationalism and a hunger to exploit China and her markets. On the other hand, his activities as an educator about China and Chinese bespoke an interest and fascination with ancient China that made his motivations complex. Arao was sent to China as a spy for the Japanese Army's General Staff in Tokyo (Reynolds, 1986), under the cover of marketing eye medicine. But while there, he resigned his military commission and began to raise money and recruit students for the Nisshin Trade Research Institute, the precursor to the Toa Dobun Shoin that would be set up in 1890. It was the nature of education in this school that makes Arao Sei controversial. Was it possible for Arao to quit his job and develop this sophisticated curriculum entirely for the “practical” purpose of furthering Japan's national interests?

If one merely listens to Arao's words one sees a contempt for China and a desire to exploit. In Hakata in 1889, at the school’s opening ceremony, Arao tells the first class that Japan was going to have to become “number one” in Asia and exert its influence on both Asia
and the West. The country had to become a military power, and had to use commerce to strengthen itself. And in order to develop this military power, Japan had to increase its economic presence in China, which was ultimately the job of his students (Rokkako, 1985, 139).

But other aspects of Arao's work show a profound interest in the cultural and social that ran alongside his fascist designs. Arao recognized there was a large number of factors that made trade difficult with China beyond the obvious, such as differences in markets and monetary systems and the like. Underlying factors affecting interaction with the Chinese such as the language barrier, different social customs, variety between regions, and the Chinese family system also had to figure in. Indeed, Arao's first year curriculum of the Nisshin Trade Research Institute reflects this vision. Along with bookkeeping, commercial geography, mathematics, and Chinese conversation, the students were also required to learn the commercial history of medieval and ancient China, along with Japanese and Chinese literature (Reynolds, 1986, 950). This ambiguity about intentions, then, is something that runs through the institution even today.

4.1.2 The Toa Dobun Shoin and the modern Aichi University

As Douglas Reynolds observes, the Toa Dobun Shoin was a bit of an "oddball" institute in that it was accountable to the Foreign Ministry rather than to the Ministry of Education (Reynolds, 1986, 949). In other words, the function of the Toa Dobun Shoin was more circumscribed by its value for the government's involvement in China than it was for education in Japan. The role that this school was playing then was not that of a university, which it eventually became in 1938; rather it was a senmon gakko. Likewise, we will see
that officials at Aichi University's new department envision a similar practical role for their new department. In this section, I will argue that the *senmon gakko* tradition liberates and handicaps Aichi University's Department of Modern Chinese Studies at the same time. On the one hand, the *senmon gakko* origins have granted the modern Aichi University a flexibility that was not possible in the more prestigious public universities, resulting in innovative and effectual language education. On the other hand, this *senmon gakko* tradition has limited the level of academic study possible at these two schools.

Probably the most striking characteristic of the Dobun Shoin tradition was the emphasis on fieldwork. The Toa Dobun Shoin was stationed in China, and as Reynolds (1986) points out, such a school had never been set up in occupied territory in the history of colonization. The system put the students in direct contact with Chinese speakers, and consequently, the Toa Dobun Shoin could produce extraordinarily fluent speakers of Chinese, and enjoy a level of success that no other language school had ever been able to do before (947).

Arao Sei observed that it was impossible to train soldiers that had never been to the field. Likewise, the institute that would later result from his plans was to send its soldiers to the field in its own way. After a period of gestation in which students went on small-scale research trips, in 1907, the Big Trip was established. Every year, fourth-year students were broken into groups of five or six, dressed in helmets, safari shorts, long socks, and boots and sent to the farthest reaches of China (*Toa Dobun Shoin to Aichi Daigaku* [TDSAD], 1995, 23). Braving the extreme heat and cold, sometimes on horseback, sometimes on camels, the students were able to study the living conditions, business practices, culture and customs of people from all over China (TDSAD, 1995, 24). And the research brought meaningful results, too. Students were able to see the results of their research reports transformed before
their eyes into meaningful reference works. Findings from two classes of the Shoin's first group of students were published as they were and called “Chinese Business Practices and Financial Matters” (TDSAD, 1995, 25).

Aichi University's Department for Modern Chinese Studies is carrying on this tradition. In what has been dubbed the “Aichi Model,” all of the first year students (164 in total) in the department were sent to Nankai University in Tian Jin where they studied for a four-month term. So integral is this experience to the program that students are sent in the second semester of their program, when they have only had several months’ experience with Chinese.

This trip is on a grand scale. Though there are 450 students from 40 countries studying at Nankai University, this is the largest entourage ever sent as a group to study there. This compares to the Big Trip of 1929 where eighteen units of three to seven members were sent everywhere from Xinjiang to Sichuan to Taiwan (Reynolds, 1986, 964). Also significant is Aichi University's willingness to cooperate with other universities in China in order to give credits to students back home (“Arata sozosei,” 1996, November 14). The education that students get abroad seems to be an integral part of Aichi’s program. While in China, students listened to lectures given by Chinese teachers and used Nankai University's texts for learning Chinese.

Hardships comparable to the first Big Trip made the the first trip from Aichi University similarly transforming. Dobun Shoin students lived in what was called the “demon city” of Shanghai, full of the chaos of 1920s China. One student described how these environs and the Dobun Shoin essentially shaped the students as people (TDBS, 1995, 91). The Aichi students are in a similarly challenging environment. As one teacher points out, students just through the “entrance examination hell,” students that have never lived abroad
or away from their families before, are plunged into life in a Chinese university. Indeed many
students see their experience in China as transforming ("Arata sozosei," 1996, November 14).

The Big Trip also puts the students into crucial contact with real Chinese. One
student describes how through contact with his tutor, with videos, and with TV, his study
was ten times more efficient than back in Japan ("Nanimo shiranu," 1997, December 9).
Moreover, the Chinese system of learning confronts students with a style they do not
experience in Japan. Teachers tirelessly make the students repeat a pronunciation until they
master it and require students to ask if they did not understand something ("Gyoshuku
jugyo," 1997, December 22). Just as the Dobun Shoin boasted of creating students fluent in
Chinese, Aichi's program is similarly ambitious. After just three semesters of study, one of
which is spent in Tian Jin, students are scheduled to begin taking lectures from Chinese
teachers in their majors.

Along with the fieldwork that both institutions managed to include in their programs,
these two programs both managed to integrate language study with other contemporary areas
of study. The Toa Dobun Shoin was much in advance of its time in this respect. Along with
nine hours per week that focused on spoken Chinese in the first two years of the program,
and a corresponding six hours in the last two years, students studied a variety of other classes
that would complement the language study. This contained the obvious such as courses on
economics, business, and banking. But it also included classes on Chinese history, on literary
Chinese, on the Chinese constitution, and on contemporary Chinese problems (Reynolds,
1986, 956).

Likewise, Aichi University's Department of Modern China Studies is broken into
three specializations which includes "politics and economics," "culture and linguistics," and
"international relations," with the study of modern Chinese being crucial for all three. So
integrated is language study and student specialization, after only three semesters of Chinese study (one in China) students will be expected to take lectures in their own specialization in Chinese.

The tradition behind Aichi University has allowed it the flexibility to build a sophisticated multi-dimensional curriculum. Like the Dobun Shoin that taught literature, language, geography, law and so on, Aichi University has done a remarkable job of seamlessly integrating language training, arts and culture, and modern concerns like business and economics. Moreover, this university is on the cutting edge of a trend for language universities to extricate themselves from the “Orientalist” tradition that has plagued China-related scholarship in the West and Japan alike. As Reynolds notes, the Japanese have traditionally left the study of modern China to journalists and researchers in government institutions outside of academia (Reynolds, 1986, 957). Like its title indicates, the Department of Modern China Studies, in a bold new move, tackles modern China.

But just as the senmon gakko tradition afforded these two institutions a flexibility that doesn't exist at the elite public Universities, this university also carries the curse of the senmon gakko. I will argue that Aichi University carries on the tradition started at the Dobun Shoin that ensured that the depth of academic study was limited, though students were able to pursue a large range of topics. Associated with this, in the Dobun Shoin, students were destined to never pass middle level management; student prospects at Aichi University are similarly limited. Finally, statements about the school’s raison d'etre have at their root Japanese self-interest, which resembles statements issued about the Dobun Shoin, statements that were essentially promoting Japanese hegemony in Asia. Such an approach raises questions about whether Japan’s self-interest in China is more important to the program than quality academic study.
First of all, the *senmon gakko* tradition determined the level of study that would take place at the Dobun Shoin. From its inception, the Dobun Shoin was never intended to become a university, even though that was what it became in 1938. In 1919 Nezu Hajime, founder of this institution, comments that the Dobun Shoin was never intended as a University with all its academic “disciplines.” If students wanted to specialize in one subject, they were better off going to a university (TDSDS, 1995, 90). For the most part, teachers in this institution had little more than a baccalaureate degree. Students received the daunting task of compiling information that would become massive reference works, which implied a rigorous attention to detail but prevented any “disciplinary depth.”

One gets the impression that Aichi’s Department of Modern China Studies covers a broad field with a similar lack of theoretical depth. For example, this new department has specializations of culture and linguistics, international relations, and economics and politics, subjects whose only linkage will be the word “China” and the fact that courses will be taught in Chinese. This department, as part of an Aichi University tradition as a whole, has entrusted Nankai University with students’ entire second semester. Similarly, students will have the option of studying abroad in their third year, and gaining credits from Chinese institutions. Students gaining diverse credits outside the home institution seems not to provoke any concerns about quality of student education. These concerns will later blend with a larger, more general discussion about the significance of the “area studies” orientation in modern Chinese language education.

The *senmon gakko* tradition also puts the students of both of these institutions in a peculiar slot. As Reynolds notes, the graduates of the Dobun Shoin were never destined for the top, even in China, even at a time when China was uniquely important for Japan. Of the institute’s 3652 graduates in its 45 years of operation, few ever went higher than upper-
middle level management (Reynolds, 1986, 949); the government tended to prefer graduates from prestigious imperial universities who had experienced Western learning.

When asked what they plan to do after they graduate, Aichi student responses show that they know that they have similar limited prospects. The vast majority say that they would like to work in a private company, work as a civil servant, or work as a teacher (Aichi University, 1997, questionnaire). And even though these students are going to graduate from probably the most sophisticated Chinese studies program in the country, they too will be prevented from high level government jobs relating to China on the basis of Aichi University’s status relative to Japan’s elite public Universities. In terms of academics, of the 168 students in the beginning class, only 24 students say they would like to go on to further study after they graduate. Just as the Dobun Shoin was never really meant to stand shoulder-to shoulder with Japan’s imperial universities before the war, Aichi University can’t expect to compete with Japan’s elite public universities.

But the philosophy of Aichi University and the Department of Modern Chinese Studies best illustrates the senmon gakko heritage. On one hand, as we have shown, this department is determined to create an understanding of China that includes culture, tradition, history, and China’s unique modern situation. But on the other hand, like that of the Dobun Shoin, the mandate of Aichi University and, consequently, the Department of Modern China Studies, is based on political and economic motivations that, for better or worse, influence the kind of study that is possible.

When Aichi University talks about its current direction, it often refers to its kengaku seishin (健学精神), essentially “school-building” spirit or ethos. The origins of this philosophy dates back to Nezu Hajime, founder of the Dobun Shoin, and the founding educational principles he drafted at the inception of his school. The mandate laid out in the
Shoin setsuritsu yoko (The College’s Founding Principles) is as follows. The school will: 1) attempt to foster a strong China; 2) strengthen the roots of Sino-Japanese cooperation; 3) “preserve” China; 4) work for a lasting peace in China; 5) cultivate gifted persons (TDSAD, 1995, 19).

On the founding of Aichi University in Japan in 1945, the school’s prospectus acknowledged the misery of the Japanese war-time aggression in Asia and Aichi University’s need to find a new direction that would take Japan toward world peace and morality and away from militarism and aggression (Aichi Daigaku Yoran, 1995, 6). But modern literature that describes Aichi University’s Dobun Shoin heritage still holds high the original principles as the foundation of the Dobun Shoin through until its removal to Shanghai in 1946. Even with the commemoration of Aichi University's fiftieth anniversary, nothing is said in their commemorative volume about the Dobun Shoin’s lingering reputation as a spy school, nor about the school’s extraordinary importance for the puppet state of Manchukuo. By the 1930s, 250 graduates of the Dobun Shoin had found their way into government service in Manchuria (Reynolds, 1986, 947). In fact, nothing much is said about Japan’s foray into China at all.

Similarly, at a forum to discuss the new Aichi University’s direction on the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of Aichi University, department directors glibly borrow this old school ethos to characterize the Department of Modern China Studies’ mandate. As the first principle mentioned, the new department is asking for a strong China. But it is clear that people who are involved with the founding of the Department of Modern China Studies feel that a powerful China is something that they are going to face rather than help bring about. Kagami, now director of the new department, observes that though China's economy is still only a fraction of Japan’s, by 2010, the Chinese economy
will be nearing that of Japan’s and by 2020, China will be shoulder to shoulder with Japan. And burgeoning China’s influence will not be restricted to the mainland: The leaders of Indonesia, Singapore, and Taiwan are all of Chinese descent. According to Kagami, Japan needs a university to deal with the Chinese century (“Kengaku,” 1996, November, 14).

The notion of “cooperation” is similarly problematic, a word bandied about in University statements, and one of the central mandates of the new department (“Arata sozosei,” 1996, November 14). Though Aichi’s elaborate study-abroad program and its accompanying move to recognize Chinese university credits implies a high level of cooperation, one gets the impression that, deep-down, the cooperation that Aichi University strives for is as pragmatic as that of the Dobun Shoin. One department director observes that Japan can no longer rest comfortably under the umbrella of America’s nuclear power; countries are looking forward to a new period of extreme competition in a post-Cold War world. Japan, as a world power, is going to have to factor into this situation, and cooperate with China to solve problems like poverty and dwindling resources (“Arata sozosei,” 1996, November 14). With the kind of cooperation envisioned here, it is unclear where the wariness stops and the desire to help and understand begins.

As in Nezu Hajime’s statement, the desire to “cultivate talent” is expressed countless times in the modern era also. As one director says, one important purpose of the Department of Modern Chinese Studies is for talented people to form a bridge between China and Japan that will last into the twenty-first Century. But the words “cultivate” and “talent” obscure real motives. Just as the graduates of the Dobun Shoin were pressed into service for the Japanese military and economic advance into China, the new department’s students have a similar role to fill. Department chair, Kagami, captures the “need for talent” nicely. Ninety-three percent of Japanese students studying in China are studying language, and with
a legendary lack of ambition, he notes. Of the 800 degree-seeking students, only about 50 a year return to Japan with degrees. On the other hand, of the 80,000 Japanese students studying in America, about 75 percent are studying in an academic program. Moreover, those who have taken degrees in the USA in the past have been extraordinarily useful in dealing with trade and political problems between the two countries. Logically, a similar need will be felt in Japan as China further develops ("Arata sozosei," 1996, November 14). What is being called "cultivation," then, could as easily be called "training" for Japan's future in Asia.

In conclusion, Aichi University's senmon gakko tradition has given it a fresh and innovative perspective absent in other universities, making its new Department of Modern China Studies equally unique and excellent. Though there is a center for American Studies at Doshisha University in Kyoto, Aichi University is the first university in Japan to found a department for language and cultural studies based on an Asian country, or any country for that matter. Moreover, this "Aichi model" has combined intensive language training with studies of economics, culture, and politics to make a curriculum truly ahead of its time.

But Aichi University's history as a senmon gakko limits the academic scope of the school at the same time. Like the Dobun Shoin, Aichi University's new department has not designed a program for high-level scholars or even for those destined for high-ranking foreign affairs jobs, and the level of scholarship reflects this fact. But most importantly, Aichi University's Department for Modern China Studies' mandate reflects a wariness toward China and a desire to produce as many persons knowledgeable of Chinese and China as possible to deal with political challenges in Asia in the twenty-first century.
4.2 Nagoya University: The Imperial University Tradition

Nagoya University comes from a tradition as grand as that of Aichi University and its predecessor in Shanghai, though, as we will see, its tradition could not be more different. Now one of Japan's seven most prestigious "national" universities, Nagoya University began as one of Japan's "imperial" universities.

The history of the imperial universities goes back to the 1877 when Tokyo University was established and the Meiji restoration was in full swing. The new university system was an integral part of this "renaissance," as the Meiji Restoration was sometimes referred to. In 1886, the official mandate of the university was as follows: "the Imperial University has as its goal the teaching of, and the fundamental research into, arts and sciences for the state" (MESC, 1980, 121). "Arts and sciences for the state," then, was really Western technology, and the best way to acquire this technology was to imitate the structure of the Western university systems. Basically modeled on the American University (ibid.), the Imperial University was broken into graduate and undergraduate schools. The five colleges of Law, Medicine, Engineering, and Science, each had a dean at its head, along with head teachers, professors, and assistant professors.

Given the importance of technology, it is not surprising that most of the university resources were devoted to science. Just as Tokyo University began as a medical school, Nagoya University was a hospital in 1871, Aichi Medical School in 1881, Nagoya Medical College in 1931, and finally became Nagoya Imperial University in 1939. And as the president of the university points out in the school pamphlet (1998), Nagoya University has kept this strong reputation in medicine, engineering, agriculture, and natural science.

Humanities research developed in a similar traditional, academic framework in the
imperial university. The literature department studied philosophy, history, and literature assiduously, and placed great importance on the culture and language of England, Germany, and France. Similarly, the Chinese classics and East Asian history were also very important, as the building blocks of Japanese culture. These subjects were taught through the medium of Japanese in an academic fashion and little attention was devoted to modern spoken foreign languages.

The study of modern spoken language at Nagoya University, then, is a relatively recent development. In 1949, the College of General Education contained a Foreign Language "section" and then the Language Center was established in 1974 to make language training available to students and staff at Nagoya University and to deal with the beginning trickle of foreign students. These two organizations merged in 1979 and became the Center for Linguistic and Cultural Research, which eventually took on its current name, the Faculty of Language and Culture, in 1991.

This faculty is essentially an organization that was created to deal with the study of modern languages. It offers some 800 language courses in English, German, French, Russian, Chinese, Korean, and Spanish, along with courses in Italian, Portuguese, Icelandic, etc., for upper-year students. Research is conducted in areas of Applied Linguistics, Area Studies, Comparative Studies, and International Linguistic Communication. However, this faculty is more a place to offer miscellaneous language classes and to do research not possible in traditional departments rather than one tidy "faculty." Despite the large number of language classes offered here each year, and despite the fact that full-time faculty outnumber those in the Department of Letters, students don't major in linguistics or language here; rather, this is a place to take electives. Similarly, though a graduate program in Japanese Language and Culture has existed for some time, and 1998 saw the founding of a new program called The
Graduate School of Languages and Cultures, this sprawling organization called the Department of Linguistics and Culture is not specifically for research either.

It is in this department, then, that Chinese education has really started to boom. As noted previously, there is no department at Nagoya University in which it is possible to major in Chinese language at an undergraduate level other than the literature department. Nonetheless, Nagoya University has had to deal with a great increase in the demand for Chinese language education. For example, in 1994, 416 students wished to take Chinese classes at Nagoya University’s Department of Linguistics and Culture. Though this number reflects an already growing interest in Chinese language education, proportionately this was only a little more than a third of the 1147 students wanting to study German. But by 1997, persons wanting to study German had decreased to 684, surpassed by 755 students wishing to study Chinese. This has put Chinese as the most popular second foreign language.

Probably the most common symptom of this increase in interest is the class size. Though the official class size given by the University pamphlet is 25 students, Chinese classes are much bigger. Forty students is a common class size, while classes can become much bigger, even approaching 80 students. Obviously, having enough teachers is a similar challenge. From April, there will be seven full-time teachers overseeing Chinese education in this department, with about 15 part-time teachers. 6

In terms of Chinese education, Nagoya University faces several challenges. The biggest problem is dealing with the influx of students who are studying Chinese as a second foreign language. Even in the last three years, long since the Chinese “boom” had begun, the number of students studying the language almost doubled. Naturally, class sizes have become almost unmanageably large, and it is difficult to find qualified instructors and to adequately

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6 Given the truly "part-time" nature of Chinese instructors (they are hired on the basis of one or two classes), the number of part-time instructors is not information readily available either from professors or administration.
supervise teachers if student numbers are unstable.

The large number of students and difficulty in supervising instructors means that it is very difficult to control what gets taught in the classroom. For example, many Chinese language courses are shared by two teachers; each teacher is responsible for one of the two classes that students attend in a week. Though half of the part-time instructors in Nagoya University are Chinese nationals, the university makes no attempt to pair one native instructor with one Japanese such that one teacher could work on pronunciation and conversation while the other focused on grammar and reading. Furthermore, even if instructors were paired in such a way, which in some schools they are, teachers tend not to communicate between themselves. Like Nagoya University's Department of Language and Culture, universities generally have a lounge for part-time instructors which prevents supervising teachers from regularly meeting with those teaching part-time. Moreover, there seems to be little communication between Chinese and Japanese teachers, and when this communication does occur, it often occurs in Japanese.

Finally, teachers are forced to teach in a certain way to accommodate the large number of students. Even though teachers would unanimously agree that mastering basic pronunciation and the four tones before moving forward is imperative at the beginning level, such goals are impossible to achieve with a class of 35, not to mention a class with 70 students. Consequently, course objectives tend to slide out of focus. The fundamental goal of the Chinese courses in Nagoya University is to promote communication skills and give fair treatment to the four basic skills, reading, writing, speaking, and listening. But by the second year, there is already more of a concentration on reading, perhaps due not only to student numbers, but also to the fact that Japanese students' reading quickly outstrips other skills, and instructors find reading easier to teach than the other skills.
A second major challenge is keeping in step with demands for more practical language skills. Twenty years ago, students of modern Chinese were somewhat out of the mainstream, with interests in Chinese communism, or some interest in modern China, while everyone else was interested in Europe. Though student motivation for studying Chinese is complicated, it is clear that at the end of the nineties, a command of spoken Chinese is in high demand, whether for work, travel, or academic pursuits. However, the problem is complicated. Even if universities decide to lessen their heavy emphasis on the classics and reading, they can’t simply begin teaching practical Chinese. After all, students could go anywhere, including China, to gain practical Chinese skills. Universities must begin treating modern spoken language as an object of academic study.

In the words of Professor Yamamoto, one supervising professor in Nagoya’s Department of Language and Culture, until now the elite academic universities have focused on the language and thinking of the West, with a preponderance of reading, while modern spoken language was never the object of academic interest. As mentioned before, in Japan’s modern history, the universities were busy studying the classics while the senmon gakkos were studying practical spoken language. As Yamamoto suggests, it is now necessary to approach language education as if there were first a language and then a grammatical system rather than the other way round. He condemns the stilted “computer language” that has been traditionally taught in Japan. If a native speaker says it without a subject, he argues, then that is how it should be said.

4.3 Conclusion

We have seen that, during Japan’s historical contact with China, Japanese academism
has shown utter contempt for modern Chinese and a deep respect for the classics. Traditionally, universities like Nagoya University investigated the classics and never stooped to teach modern Chinese, a job left to the more practically oriented schools like Aichi University. But now universities like Nagoya University grapple with burgeoning student interest in Chinese for communication purposes. Aichi University’s Department of Chinese Studies, on the other hand, must figure out not only how to make students fluent in modern Chinese, but to teach courses that are relevant to contemporary China. Moreover, in all the excitement about modern China and Chinese, we see almost no evidence of the thinking of educators such as Miyajima who held both classical and modern Chinese in esteem and wanted to teach them both together.
CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS

Early chapters in this study have shown how, in Japan, Chinese was traditionally either seen as a military, economic language, or as an esteemed classical language. These two divergent values have corresponded to the senmon gakko orientation and to the “university” orientation. However, the last chapter has shown a system in transition. Academic institutions have bowed to the pressure to teach practical language skills and the old senmon gakko approach has evolved into at least one prestigious university program. Moreover, the enthusiasts who wanted to see Chinese taught with equal value placed on the classic and the contemporary have disappeared, to be replaced with forward-thinking people who want to cultivate “Asian experts.” This chapter describes this modern Chinese language education system in Japan more generally. It provides descriptions of universities and the Chinese studies curricula, and gives student and teacher profiles.

5.1 The Universities

Analyzing the objectives and characteristics of Chinese language programs at Japanese universities rests on which “world” of language education is referred to. One world is made up of the language programs offered to language majors in Chinese language departments, often at “foreign language universities.” Aichi University’s Department of Modern Chinese Studies, unique as it is, represents this kind of program. Other universities also teach classes as a second foreign language, which essentially means that students are taking another language class after having already taken English credits. Nagoya University is typical as a traditional university that has had to deal with a sudden crush of students
wanting to learn Chinese as a second foreign language. Consequently, a clear distinction is needed between these two systems.

5.1.1 Chinese as a Second Foreign Language and the Traditional Japanese University

The Chinese boom occurred to a large extent in second foreign language programs, but, in a sense, these classes are merely a pressure valve. In the last ten years, universities with no Chinese departments have had to hastily hire Chinese teachers and set up classes. As a result, teachers are generally hired on contract as part-time teachers, and one can typically expect universities with no Chinese department to have no full-time teachers. Schools still lack a well-developed policy for their programs, and teachers often don’t know who is supervising their language classes and their performance. The demand for Chinese teachers means that teachers from all kinds of backgrounds are teaching; though teachers generally have a high level in Chinese, they do not necessarily have the knowledge to teach basic Chinese, where a good knowledge of grammar and developed oral skills to deal with the four tones is essential.

Despite forward-thinking designs to “modernize” (Westernize?) language education and introduce culture and communicative activities, and a consciousness that Chinese studies should not just be learning to read the Chinese textbook, second foreign language classes are still stuck in the grammar-translation model. In the end, teachers talk, students listen, and ask questions after class if need be. Moreover, many universities have Chinese classes that are even larger than those at Nagoya University, classes that can range up to over one hundred students, and it is all but impossible to conduct such “communication” activities. In other words, classes in second foreign language programs are crippled by student numbers, and
have little latitude for change and innovation. In any case, if one is to do an acceptable job of
teaching a cultural or communicative syllabus, coordination with other classes is necessary,
along with long-range planning.

Universities are left to puzzle over how the programs that they offer are any different
(and certainly how they are any more desirable) than the Chinese language programs popping
up in conversation schools and *senmon gakkos* in the large cities. After all, the texts written
for second foreign language classes target students considering travel or foreign study in China
rather than attempting to lay down a solid academic curriculum, which suggests the limited
scope of these classes.

Second foreign language programs have also become a vacuum, bringing students in
with no investment in Chinese, or in language for that matter. Many students take Chinese
simply for what they think should be easy credits, thinking that because Chinese study
involves Chinese characters, it will be easier. Others choose Chinese because they hate
English, and have an “allergy” to the alphabet. Similarly, the “common knowledge” that
having studied Chinese improves job prospects brings in other unmotivated students.

### 5.1.2 The Chinese Department and the Foreign Language University

Programs for Chinese majors haven’t experienced the “hot-house” growth that second
foreign language programs have experienced. Nonetheless, they have a better established
policy than the Chinese as a second foreign language system, and we will focus on the
Chinese “specialization” for this reason.

In the previous section of this thesis, Aichi University’s new Department of Modern
Chinese Studies was held up as a representative of a program that offers a specialization in
Chinese language. Indeed, the whole concept of Chinese studies is a new thing, and Aichi University is on the cutting edge of this trend. As noted previously, all of the universities in the Aichi area at least have had to deal with the renown of Aichi University’s Faculty of Modern Chinese Studies’ “area studies” approach and ask questions about their own programs; several articles were published in various newspapers when Aichi’s department was set up and a subsequent six-part article was published in the national Asahi newspaper about this program sending all of its first-year students to China for language study. But another influence has also shaped modern Chinese education. The “foreign language university” has a long history of teaching languages, and not only Western languages, but also languages regarded as less important, like Korean and Chinese (before the 1980s).

Tokyo University of Foreign Studies (Tokyo Gaikokugo Daigaku) and Osaka University of Foreign Studies (Osaka Gaikokugo Daigaku) are, in some respects, role models for other universities with language programs to follow. Both are elite, national universities with a long history and an extraordinarily good reputation, academic and otherwise.

Following the lead of Osaka University of Foreign Studies and Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Japanese language universities have changed from “language universities” into “area studies” universities. Douglas Reynolds (1986) argues that the area studies approach really has five elements that together make its approach unique. First is language study, with an emphasis on contemporary spoken and written language. Then there is an emphasis on the “contemporary aspects of the area.” Reynolds points out that this second element distinguishes area studies from the Orientalist approach, which concentrates on classical and culture, an approach that Japan has employed in its Sinology, just like the West. There is the multidisciplinary cutting across a variety of fields that might include anthropology,
economics, geography, political science, sociology, literature, philosophy, religion, or arts. Finally, there are fieldwork and specialized libraries (958). For the purposes of our study, we will restrict ourselves to the first four elements on the grounds that they encompass the broad philosophies of this approach.

Though Reynolds (1986) observes that the term “area studies” *(chiiki kenkyu)* was an “alien imposition” on the Toa Dobun Shoin (946), no one would argue that in Japan “Chinese studies” really is not nowadays Chinese “area studies.” Universities and language departments have gone through a thorough make over and institutions such as Osaka and Tokyo University of Foreign Studies have attempted to put these four key elements (modern language studies, a concentration on “aspects of the area,” a multidisciplinary approach, and “fieldwork”) together in their programs.

Osaka University of Foreign Studies and Tokyo University of Foreign Studies have a tradition of teaching practical language skills, the first element in “area studies.” The previous chapter on the Chinese language and modern Japanese history notes that in 1874, English, French, and German, the prestigious Western languages, broke away from the Tokyo Foreign Language School *(Tokyo Gaikokugo Gakko)* to form a Tokyo University Preparatory School. The rest of the “practical” languages, Russian, Chinese, and Korean, were sent to Tokyo Business School. It is this Tokyo Business School that is the forefather of the modern-day Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. This school bore a number of “practical” designations, being called the School of Secondary Business Studies-Koto Shogyo Gakko (1887), the Foreign Language School of the School of Secondary Business Studies-Koto Shogyo Gakko Fuzoku Gaikokugo Gakko (1897), again the Tokyo Foreign Language School-Tokyo Gaikokugo Gakko (1899), and Tokyo Special School for Foreign Affairs-Tokyo Gaiji Senmon Gakko (1944). It wasn’t until 1949 that this school gained its current name, and
became a university.

Though Osaka Foreign Studies University was only founded in 1921, it followed a similar course in the sense that it was similarly called Osaka Foreign Language School-Osaka Gaikokugo Gakko until 1944 when it became Osaka Special School for Foreign Affairs-Tokyo Gaiji Senmon Gakko. Like Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, it was elevated to university status in 1949.

Modern realities have further pressured language departments to teach practical language skills. Language programs have taken a lot of criticism going back a decade or so for the language skills they have been able to produce. People were asking why students couldn’t speak if they had just spent four years in a language program. If they weren’t learning to speak, what exactly were they learning and how could they use it? Schools had been stuck in a reading-translation based curriculum and more speaking skills were needed.

The problem is exacerbated in Chinese programs without the academic status of Tokyo and Osaka University of Foreign Studies; these schools experience even greater pressure to teach practical skills. To get a “good” job in Japan, a job in a well-known company or a bank, one must have a degree from a prestigious university. Paradoxically, if a graduate lands such a job, he or she will not expect to use much of what he or she learned in college. The initiate will begin an intensive training period that sometimes lasts years, where he or she will learn about aspects of the company that might include everything from law to finance. Having finished the training program and gained a little seniority, he or she might be then sent abroad to, in our case, China. But previous Chinese studies (if not completely forgotten) may or may not benefit the employee, his or her position at the company being most important. But on the other hand, graduates of a much lower level program, such as the Chinese program at Nagoya University of Foreign Studies, will almost certainly not be
qualified for such “good” jobs. They might be expected to find work at a travel agency, in the office of a trading company, or in some other small or mid-sized company doing business in China. In this situation, practical Chinese skills are paramount because graduates will have to compete with native Chinese speakers from the mainland; it is much cheaper to hire local Chinese than to station Japanese personnel in China. Chinese programs, then, are supplying the demand for people who can actually use Chinese and departments must make sure students have a complete grasp of practical skills.

Recently universities have risen to the challenge to teach practical skills, and accordingly, programs aim for simple outcomes. One professor of Nagoya University of Foreign Studies says that if students can learn to write letters, read a magazine or newspaper, and speak Chinese by the time they graduate, teachers will be happy. Another at Nagoya Gakuin University says that if students can go to China and be understood, their goal as teachers is achieved. And Aichi University’s Faculty of Modern Chinese Studies’ concrete mandate is to teach students to use Chinese to talk about their area of specialization.

But along with the pressure to focus on practical language skills, universities are also under pressure to give students as broad a knowledge as possible about China. Since China’s economic reform and opening-up policy that got into full swing in the mid-eighties, course content in Chinese language programs became hopelessly out of date, and universities had to demonstrate how their courses were relevant to modern China. The second and third elements of the “area studies” approach, then, a focus on contemporary aspects of the area and a multidisciplinary approach, have come into play.

Nowadays, foreign language universities are careful to not hem themselves into just teaching language classes. For example, following the lead of Osaka and Tokyo, the English translation of gaikokugo daigaku (language university) has become “foreign studies
Indeed, both Osaka and Tokyo Universities of Foreign Studies have recently gone through a massive rethinking of their roles. The president of Tokyo University of Foreign Study asks equivocally, “What kind of university would we have if we didn’t take advantage of and actively deal with the transition period that we are in?” (university promotional pamphlet, 1998). In 1995, the school completely abolished its old departments that were divided by language. In place they created three broad specializations: 1) information and linguistics; 2) general culture; and 3) area and international studies. Within this framework, students choose one of seven area specializations, and from that, one language. Osaka University of Foreign Language did a similar thing in 1993, also throwing out the old language departments. In place they put two broad specializations, international culture and area culture. As one might expect from the name, the international culture major investigates international relations, the environment, development, and related topics. The other specialization is more focused on the culture of one area chosen by the student.

Although these two universities have been singled out, this tendency to see their function in terms of international studies, area studies, and cultural studies exists in all of the language schools.

Department mission statements illustrate how schools are attempting to produce a new breed of cultural expert. Tokyo University of Foreign Studies wants to create future international leaders that will shoulder the responsibility of international activities; Nagoya Gakuin University would like to teach practical language as a basis, but also produce experts in Asian politics, economics, and culture; Nagoya University of Foreign Studies wants to create communicative ability to accompany the rapid improvement of the Sino-Japanese relationship. The purpose of Aichi University’s Department of Chinese Studies is the most well-defined: to both create a broad and deep environment for dialogue with China, and to
produce people to enter into this dialogue.

The area studies university, then, ends up with a twofold function. On the one hand, they are under intense pressure to produce practical language skills; after all, this has been their historical mandate. At the same time, universities recognize the need to cultivate people with a more sophisticated knowledge of China. The next section will give a brief overview of the curriculum in language programs, showing exactly how these two objectives are achieved together.

5.2 The Curriculum

The first two years of the programs are generally devoted to studying the language intensively. The schools generally teach from nine to twelve hours of Chinese language class per week which corresponds to at least 120 hours of language training per semester, ranging up to 180 hours. This early training in language basics involves a heavy dose of pronunciation practice in the first several months to familiarize students with the sounds of Chinese, along with reading, grammar and conversation practice, conversation often being done with native speakers.

Basic language study is not approached in an academic way. If one looks to the myriad Chinese language textbooks published every year, the aura that permeates most of Japanese education that study is difficult but beneficial is conspicuously absent. Several authors comment in their prefaces that they avoid monotonous repetition in grammar and pronunciation practice to avoid discouraging or boring their students. Indeed, the texts go to great ends to be practical. Most of the textbooks deal with Chinese money, and many situate practice in a hotel, bus, train, or restaurant. This "realistic situation," then, defines
how the language is to be used: One is much more likely to use it on a Chinese street than in a classroom in graduate school. Nagoya Gakuin University’s Chinese department boasts that they are teaching “Chinese that you can use.”

Indeed, on the surface, all of these programs purport to give students skills they can use. Responding to criticism that their graduates couldn’t speak the language in which they were majoring, “communication” (コミュニケーション) is the current buzzword. Textbook authors are anxious to avoid the orthodox approach, the lecture format with the teacher talking and the students listening. Grammar and pronunciation are learned “by doing” and comparatively little formal instruction is devoted to either. Moreover, texts found in each chapter are almost all based on small conversations, and a premium is put on “naturalness.” But traditional Japanese teaching styles seem to be changing slowly; official policy and what one sees in the classroom are entirely different. Even though students tend to participate more in the upper-level language classes, lessons remain centered on the teacher, and students are generally reluctant to participate voluntarily. Though the phenomenon is more exaggerated in second foreign language classes, students who major in Chinese still end up studying a lot of grammar and doing a lot of reading.

Foreign study is also an important component to these programs that keeps them practical, and “hands on,” and corresponds to what Reynolds refers to as “fieldwork.” Most of the programs have a study-abroad program in the summer of the students’ second year where students have an opportunity to study in a Chinese university for several months. And in two of the schools I visited, there is a further opportunity to spend a year in China in which students are eligible to take up to thirty credits, a year’s worth. As mentioned before, Aichi University has gone so far as to require all students to spend their second semester in China.
These foreign study programs are crucial to new Chinese programs. Not only is it necessary for students to practice, but to have real interaction with the country and the people that speak the language that they are learning. Indeed, one teacher at Nagoya Gakuin University comments that there is a huge difference between the students that have studied abroad and those that haven’t, and foreign study makes the difference whether students end up being able to use what they have learned in the classroom. Bearing this out, the progress of the top class of ten in Aichi University’s first year program is striking after one semester of class in Japan and four months in China.

As noted before, the departments consistently say that they would like to create talent for an international age and produce people that can function in an international society. Clearly they want to make students familiar with the “contemporary aspects of the area.” This imperative means universities must offer a sprawling field of Chinese linguistics, history, culture, economics, culture, and politics. How exactly does a university do all this?

I will offer as examples possible programs that students could follow from Aichi University, Nagoya University of Foreign Studies, and Aichi Prefectural University respectively. Suppose I choose to go in Aichi University’s Faculty of Modern Chinese Studies’ International Relations stream. Along with the mandatory Chinese courses, in my first two years I could take as electives classes such as Science and Technology, Modern Japan and China, Minorities in Asia, German, or one credit in Qi Gong and Tai Chi while I am in China, though my options are by no means limited to these choices. In my third and fourth year, I might choose a class in Chinese social history and several others from my major, even though the total credits required for my international relations specialization only make up less than one sixth of my total required credits. As requirements for my specialization I might take International Relations Theory, Economic Theory of Developing
Economies, and so on.

At Nagoya University of Foreign Studies my choices are a little more limited to language and linguistics, though I would still have a lot of choice. Along with my basic language classes, I would take Chinese history, philosophy, linguistics, geography. In my last two years, I could dabble in the classics, current events, phonetics, or even the language of China’s Fujian province. And there are a host of electives offered to all of the language majors in their final two years, ranging from comparative literature to secretarial studies, also options for credit.

Aichi Prefectural University is in the process of sorting through the dilemma of what to teach as they set up a new Chinese program, and they would like to straddle the two above examples, spreading things out even further. As one of their policy documents notes, they are not interested in just modern industrial Asia but also Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the Chinese peoples in southeast Asia. Professor Ozaki, a professor involved in the founding of this department, says that they would like a program different than Aichi University’s where students specialize in modern China and different from the other language programs that concentrate on language and literature. Aichi Prefectural University wants a program that focuses on the historical continuity of the development of Chinese culture, economics, politics, history, and so on.

And all of the Chinese programs offer literature classes, if not as requisites, at least for electives, but few of the programs focus on it. Students show no interest in studying the classics, especially in the last few years; one teacher blames the modern manga (comics) where students merely want amusement rather than challenge in what they read. They lack creativity, he says, and don’t read as a spiritual or cultural activity. Other professors see students as more interested in speaking Chinese on a trip in China rather than delving into the
past. Similarly, professors are often adamant that their interest in China and Chinese has
nothing to do with literature and the classics.

The classics and literature, then, get very short shrift in modern Chinese programs. Nonetheless, many teachers think that an understanding of the classics is something lacking in modern Chinese education, because of their spiritual and cultural value. Moreover, the feeling among teachers is that departments would be short-sighted to not at least nod to the long Chinese literary history; many departments do include a very minor literature specialization for interested students, pointing to the millenia-old linguistic heritage of the Chinese language.

5.3 The Teachers

What kind of teachers might one expect in these new Chinese area studies programs? When I visited Aichi Prefectural University, administrators were just in the process of creating a new Chinese specialization. Fourteen new instructors had just been selected and their widely varying research interests were typical of those of the instructors in all of the Chinese language programs that I investigated. Two were Chinese nationals with an unspecified specialization, obviously hired for their skills as native speakers. Of the Japanese instructors, three specialized in Chinese linguistics; the rest of the professors' specializations varied greatly and included the linguistics of the Chinese minorities, literature, comparative culture, Chinese society, modern Chinese history, sociology, Chinese politics, Chinese economics, and Southeast Asia. But whether sociologists, linguists, or economists, professors of Chinese programs are generally specialized in a narrow field that, more often than not, has little to do with the language classes that they are teaching. A professor with a background in modern history might bring modern Sino-Japanese relations to bear on a
current events class, but in general, teachers are teaching language classes that don’t have a lot to do with their training. Chinese graduate students who are studying Japanese literature and linguistics are also often enlisted. Any research that these professors might be doing, then, is a completely separate task from the teaching responsibility that got them the job in the first place.

5.4 The Students

Having outlined the characteristics of the modern language department, and its teachers and curriculum, the question that remains, what kind of student chooses to study Chinese?

While television programming of a decade ago would have shown Chinese peasants working in the fields, nowadays one sees images of Shanghai and Beijing skylines with construction cranes and skyscrapers. The Japanese are bombarded with information about China’s economic development in the media. Likewise, students are constantly told that Japan demands experts on China like them. The next century is the Asian century, they are continually told. Indeed, just as Japan has naturally begun to turn its attention from the stagnating Western economies to China’s huge market and burgeoning economy, one would expect to find more people to study China and Chinese. Teachers generally think that students choose to study Chinese because they want to somehow take advantage of the opportunities that are developing out of China’s continued economic growth.

Indeed, schools seem to be banking on the fact that students are most interested in career opportunity when they choose to study Chinese. Aichi University’s Department of Modern Chinese Studies aggressively seeks students by touting great job prospects. Their
latest brochure contains the results, neatly arranged in colored pie graphs, of a 1994 survey of 190 companies doing business in China. More than half planned to expand in China; three quarters lack qualified personnel; more than eighty percent will increase their staff stationed in China two-fold in the next five years; and more than half would be interested in hiring a graduate from a Chinese department. In its promotional literature, Osaka University of Foreign Studies, despite its more academic reputation, publishes a list of companies that have hired their graduates in the past years.

But to get a clearer understanding of what kind of students choose to take Chinese studies, one must ask what kind of investment students have in what they are studying. Before making any drastic conclusions, one must remember the tendency for Japanese students to find themselves in a program because the university fits their "level" rather than because the program fits their interests. And one must recognize that many of the Japanese students seem to have modest goals in their Chinese studies. Most Japanese university programs are a relaxed breathing period after intensive study that builds up to the entrance exams. As one professor observes, to learn a language, or even to live in China as a foreign student, is a big job and involves a certain amount of hardship, and many students don't seem to want to devote the energy that proficiency might require. It is only after staying several months in China, an Aichi University professor notes, that some students actually get interested in China.

Nonetheless, of the three thousand students in the Bennese (1996) study sample,\(^7\) three quarters of the surveyed students cited a fascination with China as being a reason for choosing to study Chinese, while only half pointed to career opportunity. Of my

\(^7\)The Bennese survey allowed students multiple responses to why they chose Chinese, while my survey required students to give their greatest reason for choosing to study Chinese.
Table 1: Universities Surveyed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Universities</th>
<th>Chinese language major offered</th>
<th>Part-time teachers interviewed</th>
<th>Full-time professors interviewed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aichi Prefectural University</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aichi University</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chubu University</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifu Economics University</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gifu University of Language and Education</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meijo University</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagoya Gakuin University</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagoya University</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagoya University of Commerce and Business Administration</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Nagoya University of Foreign Studies</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagoya Social Welfare University</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ogaki Junior Women’s College</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Full-time professors were affiliated with only one university while the five part-time teachers taught at several universities.
Table 2: Distribution of Questionnaires

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Universities</th>
<th>nature of surveyed classes</th>
<th>number of surveys collected</th>
<th>classroom observation conducted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aichi University</td>
<td>first year; first foreign language; history, economics, and philosophy majors</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chubu University</td>
<td>third year; second foreign language; International Relations majors with International Culture specialization</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan Social Welfare University</td>
<td>first year; second foreign language; social welfare majors</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanazawa University</td>
<td>second year; Chinese majors in a foreign language department</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meijo University</td>
<td>first year; second foreign language; economics majors</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagoya University</td>
<td>first year; second foreign language; economics and information systems majors</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ogaki Junior College</td>
<td>first year; second foreign language; international education majors</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

69
respondents, sixty percent claimed that that they chose Chinese because of a fascination with China, and only a very small percentage pointed to employment opportunity as a motivation. Even though students did not seem to know much about China, many had gotten involved because of an interest in some aspect of popular culture, such as music and movies.

In my survey, students were also eager to differentiate the study of Chinese language with the study of English. Chinese clearly had a fascinating newness that was a welcome relief from the traditional reading-translation method of studying English. Students tended to be intrigued with the Chinese pronunciation, which was borne out by the Bennese (1996) survey. Many students said they liked the sound of Chinese and liked pronunciation practice. Students were also clearly fascinated by the similarities and differences between Japanese and Chinese. The Chinese characters were used in sometimes subtle and sometimes vastly differing ways in the two languages. The case was the same for the Japanese pronunciation of Chinese characters; sometimes Japanese and Chinese pronunciations resembled each other, and sometimes they didn’t. Students also often commented about the unexpected difficulty of learning Chinese.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter outlined general findings of my investigation of modern Chinese language studies in the Japanese university, and put new developments in Chinese language education in the context of a new “area studies” orientation that appeared in the last few years. The following chapter will take these findings and frame them in a broader discussion that puts

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As a previous chapter has mentioned, the Japanese language has two pronunciations for kanji. One is the kunyomi, or Japanese reading of the character, and the other the onyomi, the Chinese pronunciation. This imported Chinese pronunciation tends to resemble some of the southern Chinese dialects more than modern standard Chinese because of the period and area from which it was borrowed.
historical and modern developments together.
CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

This discussion of modern Chinese language education will readdress the historical split between modern and classic and attempt to situate the “area studies” approach and other modern developments in Chinese language education within this framework. In the course of this study, the word “classics” has come to represent one general view of the Chinese language, in opposition to the word “modern Chinese” which implied an entirely different mind set. This opposition could be defined in terms of “cultural Chinese” versus “communication Chinese;” academicism versus practicality; intellectual curiosity versus self-interest; the university versus the senmon gakko; education versus training; and respect versus exploitation. For lack of better terms, the “classics” approach and the “modern Chinese” approach will be kept to mark these two general philosophies. This discussion will show what the modern Chinese language education system has inherited from both of these systems. Though modern Chinese language education immediately appears to be in the modern camp, under the surface, vestiges of the old classics approach remain, and even show signs of revival. Finally, this chapter will speculate about how modern Chinese language education reflects current views of Japanese society toward China and its language.

6.1 The “Modern” Approach

The modern approach to Chinese language education is not difficult to define. It is the practical, self-interested, training-oriented, senmon gakko approach to learning Chinese that was born when Japan first noticed economic and colonial opportunities in China. Indeed, the very nature of the university, the practical goals of language study, and the cautious attitudes
of teachers and students suggest that modern undergraduate Chinese language education has grown out of this "modern" tradition.

The nature of the language universities puts modern Chinese education in the modern, utilitarian camp. Aichi University and Osaka and Tokyo Foreign Studies Universities were never intended to be in the same league as Japan's elite imperial universities whose main function was to pursue Western learning. Rather, these institutions were always doing more training than they were educating. Aichi University began as a senmon gakko in Shanghai, and as mentioned before, its founder never intended for the original Toa Dobun Shoin to ever offer a university education. The original aim of the Toa Dobun Shoin was to prepare students to participate in the Japanese penetration of China; Aichi University's Department of Modern Chinese Studies has a similar mission in that it wants to create students to "enter into a dialogue" with China. Similarly, Osaka and Tokyo Foreign Studies Universities have their roots in a business school in Tokyo before the turn of the century and their history as universities is less than fifty years old. Their mandate has always been to provide extremely practical training in not only the European languages, but in some of the world's less common languages that the Japanese encountered in foreign relations. Moreover, even though many of the universities have graduate programs in Chinese studies or have thought of founding graduate departments, it is clear that the underlying goal of Chinese programs is not to produce scholars. All of the schools that I surveyed marketed themselves by promising students to qualify them for some kind of non-academic career.

And both the academic universities teaching Chinese as a second foreign language and the language departments teaching Chinese to Chinese majors seem primarily interested in practical, "communication" Chinese. While ostensibly the university has moved away from the reading-translation based curriculum on the grounds that it has realized that modern
spoken language should also be an object of study, the real reason is probably more practical. China’s opening up and rapid economic development has created a market for spoken Chinese, and universities have risen to the occasion. Moreover, students show little interest in reading and they know that if they can speak Chinese, this will raise their value in the job market.

Oddly enough, even though language skills are extremely important in the “area studies” approach, administrators don’t seem too interested in the quality of Chinese language classes, which further suggests that schools have simple, practical outcomes. The university’s uncommitted approach suggests that if students can communicate, this is good enough. Universities have been slow to set up Japanese classrooms to foster communicative abilities. As mentioned before, students never feel obligated to participate in classes because this has never been their role; teachers do most of the talking.

Universities seem to accept that students must go to China if they are going to really master Chinese in four years; we are reminded of the remarkable success of the Toa Dobun Shoin students who were able to get a high level of Chinese precisely because they were studying in Shanghai. One cannot really learn Chinese in the Japanese classroom anyway, the logic seems to say, so students are sent off to China to make real contact with China and Chinese people, and to get credits for their work there. One gets the sense that Chinese programs don’t care how students learn Chinese, as long as they do learn Chinese.

Aichi University has circumvented concerns about teaching quality by requiring its

10 The Japanese pay lip service to the benefits of the “communicative” approach to language learning, but these methods never seem to get implemented in Japan. One is reminded of the push in the People’s Republic of China in the late 1980s to adopt Western EFL methodology and the movement’s subsequent mixed success. Even though this methodology was cloaked in terms of technology, improvement, and modernization, Chinese teachers showed great resistance to its implementation, on the grounds that these methods were poorly adapted to the Chinese system (Burnaby + Sun, 1989). One wonders if the case is similar in Japan: perhaps Japan’s traditional Confucian education is an obstacle that the “communicative” approach and Western-style curriculum modernization will never overcome.
sister school in Tian Jin, Nankai University, to bring the students up to a level of 5 or 6 on
the HSK (Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi), the mainland’s main Mandarin level test. Aichi
University has also had significant input into Nankai’s curriculum for the study abroad
period and there are weekly meetings where Chinese and Japanese teachers can troubleshoot
and make adjustments. Nonetheless, most of the Japanese universities don’t seem to mind
that they are relinquishing control over their own curriculum. After all, mainland universities
are in financial straits and are often more attracted by the foreign currency that comes via
student tuition than they are by providing quality education and improving programs. The
sudden upsurge in interest since the late eighties in learning Mandarin has also meant that
teachers completely without language teaching experience have been pressed into service,
which classrooms often reflect.

Furthermore, if we assume that language departments are really teaching area studies,
the problem becomes what to teach above and beyond basic language skills. We have seen
that “area studies” is not only language study but a multidisciplinary approach to topics
about the “area.” While it is clear what practical language studies should entail, program
administrators have to decide what to include in their programs so that their programs don’t
lose their focus.

The very nature of academic study is specialization. If a scholar studies hill tribes in
Thailand, then one would expect her to focus on a narrow aspect of culture, even if she
chooses to approach her topic from the perspective of various disciplines. But how does one
keep this sharpness of focus in a department when the topic (China) is so broad? Aichi
University’s program is already spread out, as it tries to give its students a general knowledge
of modern China. Aichi Prefectural University wants a curriculum that will not only include
everything from economics to history, but also cover Taiwan, Hong Kong and South East
Asia insofar as they are involved with Chinese culture. Obviously, the broader the schools attempt to go, the more superficial their approach becomes.

The lack of attention to language teaching credentials in Japan is further evidence of this non-academic, utilitarian approach. As long as a teacher has specialized in something to do with China and has a high spoken Chinese level, s/he is qualified to teach, a situation reminiscent of war-time when all sorts of teachers were hired with no regard for qualifications. Part of the problem is that the “area studies” approach of Chinese departments perpetuates a situation where teachers’ main research interests generally have little to do with language education. Though the phenomenon of teachers teaching one thing and researching something completely different is common in Japan, it is especially prevalent in Chinese studies programs. Part of the problem is that no one has hitherto been interested in investigating modern Chinese language education, and as a result, there are few qualified people to develop curriculum or concern themselves with the Japanese acquisition of Chinese language. Japanese have approached English and Japanese education in an academic way for some time but it was only recently that Chinese language education itself became an object of academic interest. The Tokai Association for Research on Chinese Language and Education convened only for the third time in January 1997.

Moreover, one still senses a lingering suspicion of China in Chinese programs that also illustrates that the enthusiasm for Chinese studies is motivated by self-interest. In Japanese society, a faint climate of suspicion still surrounds China despite its economic development, which argues against a positive interest in China. In September, 1997, the Asahi Shimbun did a nation-wide survey comparing Japanese and Chinese opinions about various aspects of their own and their neighbor’s society. When Japanese were asked whether or not they liked China, only 29 % said they liked China; 19% disliked it; 48% were
in the grey category of "neither." Moreover, when asked if Japanese industry should increase its thrust into the Chinese market, almost forty percent of Japanese people said that the move into China should be contained (Asahi Soken Report, 1997, October). This wariness extends into Chinese classrooms. In the questionnaire I conducted, Japanese students were asked about how they felt about Chinese people. Of close to 200 responses, the overwhelming majority (64%) responded that they "couldn't really say." One can assume that these noncommittal answers represent at least some kind of reserve about the Chinese, even if the respondent knew no Chinese people: after all, the clause "If I had to say one way or the other..." was meant to make the students come down on one side or the other. And students seemed quite negative about the political and economic system of China.

Overall, students seem to be buying the "China-skills" approach being marketed to them. If more people were becoming truly fascinated by China and its language, one would expect to see a dramatic increase in students studying Chinese fine arts, literature, history, and linguistics in the more traditional academic universities, which is not the case. Students still seem to view China cautiously, from a distance.

This phenomenon exists among Chinese teachers, too. One Chinese national finds the attitudes of Japanese teachers very negative about China. It is a shame, she says, that scholars investigating China with such a level of education could not be more optimistic. One professor of Chinese explained how the objective of their program was to deepen the understanding of China, which was a very typical comment. But when asked about this "understanding" his Chinese department would like to give, he said that he would like to give students a clear idea of the relationship between China and Japan. He would like to improve relations with China, he said, but any consideration of China had to have Japan as a starting point; China represented a challenge and a threat to Japan. Japan could no longer rest quietly
under the American nuclear umbrella. Japan’s mutual protection treaty with the United States is about to expire and China has started modernizing its army. Indeed, despite having a profound knowledge through their research on some aspect of China, many of the teachers seemed to preserve this wary attitude.

The contemporary attitude of Chinese teachers stands in stark contrast to those of some of the previously mentioned educators in Japan’s modern period. Even though these scholars in modern Japan also lived in an atmosphere of war-time tension and suspicion, they obviously loved China. Miyajima Daishachi was so enamored with China that he followed his teacher around the continent and on his return to Japan founded schools called Return Home Singing and the Good Neighbor Academy. And Ogairi Yoshio went so far as to dub himself “friend of China.” In the earlier period, a kind of admiration and a desire to communicate with China was embedded in students’ and teachers’ fascination with China. However, in the attitudes of teachers nowadays, anything more than basic good will toward China is unusual and Japanese teachers don’t seem to seek any intellectual dialogue with the Chinese.

A somewhat bleak picture has been painted of modern Chinese language education, particularly the “area studies” approach. I have shown how the program philosophies reflect self-interest, a utilitarian outlook, and evidence of Japan’s traditional isolationism in it relations with China. However, the next section will argue there are also elements of the “classics” approach lurking beneath the surface of Chinese education that cannot be ignored.

6.2 The “Classics” Approach

The “classics approach” is a problematic term, and requires some introduction. To begin, I would like to describe how a kind of frustrating question about Chinese classics
became a central research problem in this study. I asked professors of Chinese studies about where it might be possible to study Chinese in an “academic” way. But when pressed on it, I found it hard to define what I exactly I meant by “academic” and harder to define “Chinese.” Was it linguistics that I referred to, I was asked. Literature? Basic skills such as listening reading, and speaking? I eventually realized that it was the Western “classics” approach to which I was referring.

The University of Toronto’s French program is presumably representative of language programs as a whole in Canada, and I have chosen it as a point of comparison particularly because perhaps the shared Latin roots and shared cultural background of English and French are analogous to the relationship between Japanese and Chinese. When one chooses to major in French, it is assumed that one will be studying French literature or linguistics (the French Department also offers a drama specialization, but this could be fitted under the umbrella of literature). In the first year, regardless of major, a student must take one course in French that gives an intensive practical introduction to writing and speaking in French, unless the student can demonstrate skills in French language making this unnecessary. Literature majors take courses in language practice, literary criticism, and linguistics in their second year, and in upper years, required literature courses from various periods. Linguistics majors have a corresponding focus on French linguistics. In any case, the object of study is always works that have been written, filmed, or somehow created in French. Why did Chinese language education not operate in the same way? After all, at the turn of the century, Sino-phile Miyajima Daihachi began by teaching modern Beijing language in the first years of his program and by the fourth year was teaching the Four Books and Five Classics.

Several factors make this a naive question. First, classical and modern Chinese have no direct connection; what is called classical Chinese has nothing to do with an exchange
such as “Where are you going?” “I am going to the store.” I asked Nagoya University’s professor of Chinese literature why they did not start with simple modern Chinese and then approach the classics, just as one might expect a French program to work in English Canada. But what exactly did I mean by French classics, he wanted to know. Something in the seventeenth or eighteenth century? His research was centered on texts written two thousand years ago. Just as one could never say that it is necessary to speak French or Italian to study Latin, one would not start with modern Chinese to approach the Chinese classics.

Second, the Japanese have a long history of reading Chinese texts in Japanese, a reading mentioned before called kundoku, which involves reading the Chinese characters in the Japanese syntax. This reading method was, and has been, a way of internalizing and domesticating the Chinese script since the Heian period (794-1192). The complexity and comprehensiveness of this method illustrates that the Japanese were willing to go to considerable lengths to make these texts Japanese rather than settling for a rudimentary knowledge of Chinese pronunciation sufficient for reading purposes. Japanese high school students still learn this system. In this sense, then, the classics are as much Japanese as they are Chinese, and have been so for more than a millennium, and one often sees the study of the classics under the umbrella of Japanese literature departments.

Third, modern Chinese literature tends to split itself over the modern and the classic. Modern Chinese literature, which in the 1920s first recognized the modern spoken language as a written form, completely rejected all things classical. This writing attempted to create a modern world that was distinctly different from the feudal, classical world that had gone before. Similarly, those who study the classics have traditionally been suspicious of modern Chinese literature, seeing it as a field apart, and not as worthy of academic attention.

However, even if one agrees that there is no need to teach classics 2000 years old in a
Chinese studies program like Miyajima did, the “classics approach” can still exist. For our purposes, this approach means approaching Chinese studies with intellectual curiosity, respect, and a desire to understand the historical and cultural continuity from past to present. This section shows how, in some respects, modern Chinese education contains important elements of this “classical” tradition.

The previous section showed that the “area studies” approach prevented “disciplinary depth” in Chinese studies and suggested this approach reflected a lack of interest in the serious academic study of China and the Chinese language. However, this view may be one-sided. In the West, the multidisciplinary, holistic “area studies” have been liberating in studying unknown cultures; they have even been seen as a “new approach to knowledge” (Reynolds, 1986, 958). The notion of “area studies” meant that a variety of kinds of knowledge could inform scholarship. Aichi Prefectural University, a university just setting up a Chinese studies program, criticizes other programs for just focusing on modern industrial China or for concentrating on literature on the grounds that they would like to understand the whole Chinese culture sphere. Even if this program is designed to train students to be a kind of Chinese expert, one cannot deny the desire to educate. After all, this program acknowledges the importance of this “Chinese cultural sphere” where a purely utilitarian approach would simply study business and economics and other subjects that could immediately be put to practical use.

Second, we have already mentioned myriad reasons why one would conclude that these new Chinese studies programs are about training for activity in China rather than for education. But the term “education” and “training” are also problematic. There is a danger of being too inflexible, and assuming that the two are always mutually exclusive. China’s civil service exams were a historical way of selecting individuals for service to the state, but the
exams were also fundamental to China's Confucian education. Similarly, the CIA in the United States occasionally hires bright people with graduate degrees to protect their interests around the world. Though one might not expect a person with, say, a graduate degree in Middle Eastern Studies to be interested in doing sensitive work for the U.S. government in the Middle East, some certainly end up doing just that. Similarly, even though these Chinese studies have at their root a need for Japanese personnel knowledgeable of China, these programs are far from being how-to programs for someone going to live in China. All of the language programs offer dozens of classes that have no value if not for their educational value. This kind of education is all part of the tradition that Arao Sei started at the end of the nineteenth century when he required his students in China to learn not only geography and Chinese conversation, but also the history and culture of ancient and medieval China.

Teachers of Chinese also prove that Chinese studies also have elements of the university-style, knowledge-for-the-sake-of-knowledge approach, even if they are somewhat cynical, as I have shown. In the last decade or so, teachers of Chinese have changed dramatically. While the old-style teacher of Chinese used to have a degree in Chinese literature and classics from a prestigious academic institution, young teachers of Chinese language have a wide variety of research interests and a much higher level in spoken Chinese. One professor observes that there is a generational difference: the older the teacher, the poorer the oral language skills and the more likelihood of s/he having studied the classics. He observes that most of the Chinese teachers in their fifties still have poor spoken Chinese while most of the young teachers will typically have spent more than a year in China. Indeed, we have pointed to a program that had teachers who specialized in various fields such as Chinese linguistics, sociology, and economics.

I have been critical of the fact that universities hire people from such diverse
disciplines on the grounds that it shows a lack of interest in quality language teaching. However, to be fair, all the new blood in the system has created an exciting academic environment for new research. In some respects, new Chinese teachers are not breaking the tradition with the classical scholars; they are still scholars as well as teachers of Chinese. All of them have significant academic training and are expected to continue their research along with their teaching responsibilities. The result is that exciting research is getting done in universities that up until now has been left to journalists and non-academic governmental organizations.

It has been suggested that Japanese students enter Chinese language programs for many reasons other than interest in China and Chinese; teachers often comment that their students don’t really know much about China at all when they enter. Nonetheless, one can not minimize the new excitement among students that surrounds Chinese studies, an excitement that bespeaks intellectual curiosity rather than self-interest.

Surprisingly, according to the Bennese (1996) survey, only a small percentage of students were interested in China because of Japanese industry’s penetration of China. Rather, students seem more fascinated by the culture, customs, and everyday life of Chinese people in contemporary China (9). Teacher comments tend to bear this out. One teacher tells how students are intrigued to hear how Chinese customs about chopsticks differ from those of the Japanese or to hear about the perils of crossing a street in a big Chinese city. With respect to materials, students also liked the textbooks that contained information about everyday life in modern China, with pictures that made it possible to imagine what China was actually like (Bennese, 1996, 23). And many students enjoy native Chinese teachers because it gives them real contact with Chinese people.

And the foreign study programs seem to inspire students. Aichi University students,
in particular, come back fascinated by what they have discovered in China and anxious to speak Chinese. Other enthused students return from language study in China and marvel at how China could be so different from the impression that the media gives them.

Moreover, on a classroom or interpersonal level, students also seem to be showing a new spark of interest in Chinese language and culture that is profoundly significant. First, Japanese students have a deep consciousness of Chinese culture that comes through their education. Whether they are interested or not, students have been exposed to Chinese literature, culture and history from an early age. For example, one might find a Japanese video game based on the Three Kingdoms period in Chinese history. The Japanese know about these historical characters right from when they are children. Similarly, people would know that a certain phrase came from Confucius even if they had never studied the Analects. Japanese students begin the monumental task of learning characters from childhood, and from high school, begin to study Chinese written works. Furthermore, about half of the Japanese lexicon comes from Chinese, with its accompanying Chinese readings (onyomi). Students are fascinated to study something completely new about a world with which they are already familiar. In other words, Chinese is interesting because Japanese students are figuring out a puzzle for which they already have some information.

Consequently, written Chinese fascinates students. They like the process of being able to guess at the meaning of a Chinese word or character and look it up in the dictionary and confirm its meaning (Bennese, 1996, 17). Teachers often comment that students are fascinated by the cases where the meanings of Chinese characters have strayed apart. For example the character for daughter in Japanese (娘) means “mother” in Chinese. Students are also interested to discover that the character Japanese uses for “eat” (食べる taberu) is actually an archaic Chinese form. In general, students seem interested in how to translate things back and
forth in the two languages where the characters are the same. In one class I observed, one student sheepishly rephrased her Japanese translation of a Chinese expression after the teacher pointed out that her translation (based on characters) was correct, but she had translated it too literally and her Japanese was not natural.

Pronunciation also fascinates students. Much is made of the difficulty of Chinese pronunciation for Japanese students, but students find pronunciation the most enjoyable part of their lessons (Bennese, 1996, 14). Students seem to like the process of using their voice to practice a seemingly impossible pronunciation, first working away at it, and then eventually getting it right. Moreover, the similarities and differences between Chinese and Japanese pronunciations intrigue students. For example, the word for "library" is toshokan in Japanese and tushuguan in Chinese. The complexity of the Chinese pronunciation also startles students. For example, the pronunciation sho in Japanese could correspond to shao, xiao, shang, zheng, sheng, xiang, and song in Chinese. And though students find the tones difficult, they often find Chinese sounds musical and pretty.

6.3 Conclusion

In this section, I have shown that there are many elements of the prewar "peddler-soldier" orientation in modern Chinese language education in Japan, particularly in the "area studies" approach. No one could deny that there are aspects of the modern universities and curriculum that would like to exploit China in the same way as did the Rakuzendo, the nineteenth-century Japanese company that taught Chinese to its employees to market eye medicine to the Chinese. On the other hand, I have shown that there are more similarities in modern Chinese education to the classicist, academic approach than might be readily
apparent. Universities have realised that to understand China, it is necessary to explore the historical continuity of the Chinese culture, an assumption implicit in the study of the classics. Moreover, one senses a new excitement in both teachers and students about exploring Chinese studies, really a new academic field. For teachers, the research field, and hence, the possibility for research, has broadened immensely. And students seem to enjoy connecting their Chinese studies both with China’s modern situation, and their consciousness, as Japanese, of Chinese culture and history.

Changes in modern Chinese education in Japan show that the Japanese view of China is in transition. These programs show a society that is moving from outright suspicion and exploitation of China to one of interest and engagement. Though a multitude of factors in the modern history of Chinese education suggest that the Japanese attitude toward their Chinese neighbors has not budged much since the Meiji Restoration, it is also clear that the opening-up policy and rapid economic growth in China has had a profound effect. Modern Chinese studies shows a recognition of the diversity in Chinese culture which reminds Japanese that they do not know as much about China as their shared culture and history made them assume. By studying the Chinese language, the Japanese are discovering a civilization that is different from theirs, a civilization that, up to now, has been seen as familiar and understandable.
CHAPTER 7: A SYNTHESIS

This thesis has surveyed the tortuous path that Chinese language education in Japan has taken from the earliest Japanese contact with China right to contemporary Chinese courses in the modern Japanese university.

The study began by showing how Chinese has really always had two functions for the Japanese. On the one hand, Chinese language represented the classics themselves, and as such, classical Chinese writing has been exceptionally important for the Japanese even into the twentieth century. At the same time, Chinese has always been the means to communicate with the mainland.

The Meiji Restoration marked a break in Japan’s traditional relationship with the Chinese language. Japan had begun its apprenticeship with the West and classical Chinese declined in importance, while modern Chinese counted for nothing except as “peddler” or “soldier” Chinese. One world was kanbun, classics that had been almost fully integrated into Japanese culture, and the other was shinago, the language of a tottering, weak China. However, despite the waning fortune of Chinese studies, I have also shown how there were always fringe individuals and academics who came to see these two kinds of Chinese as branches of the same tree, and attempted to teach them together.

Chinese studies from the late eighties saw a new interest in modern Chinese. The conservative academic universities were forced to teach practical Chinese, a job that had previously been relegated to the senmon gakko and the language university, both institutions having a strong practical bent. The language university itself also changed dramatically. Before Japan and China had a close economic relationship, language departments based the curriculum on practical Chinese language and a smattering of literature. However, as the
countries' relationship developed, Japan felt a need for talented people with a sophisticated knowledge about modern China beyond simple language skills. Consequently, as a part of a more general trend, the language university started to teach Chinese “area studies,” which brought other aspects of modern China into the curriculum. Gone were the idealists who wanted to teach literature and modern Chinese together.

The central research question of this study has asked what recent trends in Chinese language education say about the Japanese attitude toward China and the Chinese language. In the previous chapter, I have argued that the new Chinese Studies trend along with the new interest in Chinese language in Japan represents a shift in consciousness toward China. Suspicion is being replaced by interest, and exploitation by cooperation. I have attempted to show recent interest in modern Chinese language not only serves the needs of economic relations, but a cultural interest in Chinese language is growing and Chinese is gradually starting to be treated as a legitimate object of academic interest. Now I would like to take one further step back.

In his acceptance speech for his Nobel Prize in literature, Oe Kenzaburo said:

After a hundred and twenty years of modernization since the opening up of the country, contemporary Japan is split between two opposite poles of ambiguity. This ambiguity, which is so powerful and penetrating that it divides both the state and its people, and affects me as a writer as a deep-felt scar, is evident in various ways. The modernization of Japan was oriented toward learning from and imitating the West, yet the country is situated in Asia and has firmly maintained its traditional culture. The ambiguous orientation of Japan drove the country into the position of an invader in Asia, and resulted in its isolation from other Asian nations not only politically but also socially and culturally. And even in the West, to which its culture was supposedly quite open, has long remained inscrutable or only partially understood (Oe, 1994, 117).

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One still senses in modern language education the "ambiguous orientation" Oe believes drove Japan into being an invader in Asia. Japan is still economically, politically, and culturally tied to the West. Indeed, from the moment Japan began its colonization in Asia, it became an honorary member of the powerful Western countries. Even today, English, French, or German have a cultural prestige that Chinese does not have, despite all of its popularity. Moreover, the "area studies" approach implies a certain cold instrumentalism and pragmatism reminiscent of the Toa Dobun Shoin in Shanghai in the first half of the twentieth century. At the same time, Japan has always treasured its ancient culture that has its roots in China without paying much attention to modern China. Today the study of the classics and the study of modern Chinese are still carefully separated. Japan remains isolated in Asia.

Any study of Chinese language education also leads to speculation about the future. In a recent article entitled "The Significance of Confucianism's Third Stage of Development," Tu Wei Ming shows how kanji has survived in Japanese despite constant political threats to change the Japanese script to Roman letters or to just get rid of characters and use the Japanese kana. That the Japanese have kept the Chinese characters is very significant, he says, and compares this situation to Hebrew in Israel: Hebrew was revived in Israel to become a symbol of Jewish identity. Confucianism and Chinese characters are inseparable, and as long as the characters remain, a Confucian kind of nucleus of society also exists. He goes on to argue that the industrialization of Asia is the third wave of Confucianism; as Asia becomes more economically and politically significant, so will Confucian thinking. Indeed, this thinking is part of larger talk of an Asian ethos, a new sense that Asians share a common culture that is fundamentally different from Western culture (Tu Wei Ming, 1993, 34).

Will Chinese studies in Japan make Japan a more dedicated member of the Kanji
Cultural Sphere? Even though thus far Japan has largely taken an instrumental approach to
Chinese education, one can assume that treating Chinese language as a legitimate object of
study will naturally make scholars rethink Japan's old supercilious attitude toward China and
realize the essentially Confucian basis to both of their languages. Moreover, a more powerful
China will make Japan and China more equal on the international stage, which will make it
more comfortable for Japan to ally itself with China culturally. Finally, if nothing else,
Chinese study will make Japan reexamine its old relationship with English. Though there are
still no signs that English is losing its importance to Japan, Chinese language study will
remind the Japanese that a language with the same characters and cultural roots as their own
is also an excellent second language to have.

This study has touched on a number of topics that bear further research. First,
scholarship has tended to ignore the fact that Chinese was Japan's first second language
before they adopted the Chinese script and that to borrow from China on such a grand scale
implied bilingualism on behalf of both the Chinese and Japanese. The history of the initial
contact needs to be reread keeping in mind that second language speakers, readers, and writers
were doing all the work.

There is also a need of further examination of the role and status of Chinese language
in the Meiji period. The Toa Dobun Shoin or the Good Neighbor Academy in Tokyo are
fascinating examples of how modern Chinese Studies had primarily a utilitarian value, but also
represented a deep cultural interest. Similarly, the personalities that fought to elevate modern
Chinese to part of the academic study of Chinese bear further study. Did they represent a
certain sector of Japanese society or were they simply a fringe group who carried over the
fascination with Chinese from the Tokugawa period? What were their motivations and
influences?

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Modern Chinese language teaching and learning also presents various topics for further inquiry. The fact that Japanese are now studying Chinese raises certain language acquisition questions. For example, what exactly are the advantages that Japanese have when they learn to read Chinese? How does the Japanese knowledge of Chinese characters work in the acquisition of Chinese? How does it disadvantage the Japanese? Similarly, the Japanese must now pour the energy into researching Chinese education that they have into English or Japanese education.
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APPENDIX A

Survey Distributed to Students of Chinese Language

1. 中国語を選択理由はなんですか。What are your reasons for choosing to study Chinese?

   a. 中国に魅力がある。 fascination with China.
   b. 就職に有利だから。 employment opportunity
   c. 単位が取りやすそうだったから。 easy credits
   d. 周囲の人にも進められたから。 encouragement of others
   e. その他。 other (please state)

2. 中国語の学習についてどう感じていますか。How do you feel about studying Chinese?

   a. 退屈。 It’s boring.
   b. あまり面白くない。 It’s not that interesting.
   c. どちらでもない。 It’s neither boring nor interesting.
   d. 結構面白い。 It’s interesting.
   e. とても面白い。 It’s very interesting.

3. A: 中国の文化に興味がありますか。Are you interested by Chinese culture?

   a. まったく興味がない。 not interested at all
   b. あまり興味がない。 not really
   c. 少し興味がある。 a little interested
   d. とても興味がある。 very interested

      (C, dと答えた方は For those that answered C or D)

B: 中国のどんな点に興味がありますか。What aspects of China are you interested in?

      (複数回答可 Multiple responses are acceptable.)

   a. 中国の伝統・習慣。 the customs and traditions of Chinese people
   b. 日常生活における生活様式。 everyday life of Chinese people
   c. 有名な名所の周辺。 famous tourist attractions and historical sites
   d. 文学・思想・歴史などの伝統文化。 traditional culture such as history, philosophy, or literature
   e. 映画・音楽などの現代文化。 modern culture such as movies and music, etc.
   f. その他。 other

4 A. 中国文化は日本文化と似ていると思いますか。Do you think Chinese and Japanese culture resemble each other?
a. 似ていない。no
b. 少し似ている。 a little
c. 良く似ている。 quite a lot

B. 日本文化と中国文化の類似点・相違点はどんな点だと思いますか。What are the similarities and differences between Chinese and Japanese culture?

5. 中国人に対してどんな感情を持っていますか。How do you feel about Chinese people?

a. 好きだ。 I like them.
b. どちらかと言えば好きだ。 If I had to choose one way or the other, I would say I like them.
c. 一概に言えない。 I can't really say.
d. あまり好きではない。 I don't really like them.
d. 嫌いだ。 I dislike them.

B. またそれはどんな点についてそう思いますか。Explain.


7. 中国人の友達いますか。何人位？Do you have any Chinese friends? If so, how many?

B. 中国人の友達がほしいと思いますか。Would you like to make Chinese friends?

a. ほしくない。 no
b. あまりほしくない。 not really
c. 普通の友人がほしい。 as an acquaintance
d. 仲の良い友人がほしい。 I would like some good Chinese friends.

C. 中国に滞在・留学したいですか。Would you like to live or study in China?

a. 3 年以上住んでみたい。 I could live there for more than three years.
b. 1 - 3 年位なら住んでみたい。 I could live there for one to three years.
c. 6 カ月 - 1 年くらいなら住んでみたい。 I could live there for six months to a year.
d. 6 カ月以内なら住んでみたい。 I could live there for less than six months.
e. 旅行程度なら行ってみたい。 I could go there on vacation.
f. 行きたいと思わない。 I wouldn't like to go there.
8. Which skill would you most like to get from studying Chinese?

a. I would like to speak with Chinese people.

b. I would like to read Chinese newspapers, books, or magazines.

c. I would like to be able to understand Chinese television or radio programs.

d. I would like to be able to write in Chinese.

9. Japanese uses Chinese characters and these characters make up about 48% of the Japanese vocabulary. Taking this into account, how similar are the two languages?

a. not similar at all

b. a little similar

c. very similar

B. How difficult did you expect Chinese pronunciation to be before you began studying?

a. difficult

b. a little difficult

c. relatively easy

d. very easy

e. I can't really say.

B. How did you feel about Chinese pronunciation after you began your studies?

a. more difficult than I thought

b. about what I thought it would be like

c. easier than I thought

C. How does this make you feel about studying Chinese? Explain.
11. Where did you get the knowledge you have about China?
   a. I have been to China.
   b. Family or friends.
   c. Newspaper, television, magazine, mass media.
   d. From school.
   e. Other.

12. How important to your career or life do you think Chinese language will be?
   a. Not important.
   b. Of minor importance.
   c. Very important.

(b, c answered) How will you use Chinese?
   a. For work.
   b. As a hobby.
   c. For travel.
   d. For communication with Chinese people.
   e. Other.

13. Which language is more interesting: English or Chinese?
   a. English.
   b. Chinese.
   c. The same.

(a, b answered) What point is that you changed your image of China since you began studying?

14. Has your image of China changed at all since you began studying? How so?
After having studied Chinese, has your image of foreign languages changed at all? How is Chinese different from the other languages that you have studied? Please write any other general comments you have about language study.

大学(University) 学部(university) 男／女(male/female) 年(year in program) 年齢(age)