

Asia Notes

University of Washington Department of Asian Languages & Literature Autumn 1990

Yen Fu Awards Established

Recently established by the University of Washington are the Yen Fu Endowed Translation Prize Fund, "to recognize the student in the Department of Asian Languages and Literature who, in the judgment of a faculty selection committee, presents the best translation (of publishable quality in a scholarly journal) from Chinese to English," and the Yen Fu Endowed Scholarship Fund, the purpose of which is "to provide financial assistance to deserving undergraduate or graduate students who have demonstrated a knowledge of or interest in the Chinese language and culture, and concern for the welfare of others." These awards are named in honor of Yen Fu, one of China's greatest translators and modern thinkers. He was the grandfather of Isabella Yen, Associate Professor Emeritus, Department of Asian Languages and Literature, who, together with Shu-koo Kao, is responsible for the establishment of the funds.

Yen Fu (1853-1921) was born on the eve of Confucian China's

In his quest for China's transformation into a nation of wealth and power, Yen Fu turned his translations and commentaries into major interpretive acts on the value and history of China and the West.

major encounters with the modern West. In his youth he received an education in the traditional classical learning of a Confucian gentry-scholar. In his teenage years in the 1870's he was sent to the Greenwich Naval Academy in London to learn navigation and technology on government fellowships. He took it upon himself to study the values and institutions of the West.

Back in China, Yen Fu began a series of projects of translation that included Thomas Huxley's *On Evolution and Ethic*; J.S. Mill's *On Liberty*; Montesquieu's *The Spirit of Law*; Edward Jencks'



*Renowned Chinese Scholar,
Yen Fu*

On Logic; and Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*. Yen Fu rendered these works into an elegant classical prose that was the language of Confucian scholars. His publication of them along with his own extensive commentaries and other essays in the 1890's led to a profound reconsideration of China's cultural heritage and political tradition.

In his quest for China's transformation into a nation of

wealth and power, Yen Fu turned his translations and commentaries into major interpretive acts on the value and history of China and the West. He has been widely credited as the thinker who introduced Chinese intellectuals to the philosophies of the Western Enlightenment and of Social Darwinism. In his reevaluation of the Confucian tradition he brought attention to Daoist and Legalist thought, and was instrumental in a critical reconstitution of the Chinese past at the turn of the century.

Even as Yen Fu brought Nineteenth-Century Western culture to China, his granddaughter, Isabella YiYun Yen, can be said to have brought Chinese culture to the West.

Yen Fu's writings inspired a whole generation of young educated elite who went on to become leaders of the May Fourth Movement of 1919. Among his vociferous admirers who acknowledged his intellectual influence was the young Mao Zedong.

Even as Yen Fu brought Nineteenth-Century Western culture to China, his granddaughter, Isabella YiYun Yen, can be said to have brought Chinese culture to the West.

Born in Peking in 1912 to a family of scholars and intellectuals, Isabella Yen was

educated in the traditional classical learning of Chinese, English, and French before receiving her B.A. in Education from National Peking University in 1938. In that same year, Peking, Tsinghua, and Nankai Universities formed the wartime Southwest Associated University in Kunming. The Ministry of Education established a Normal College within the University, and a five-year pilot program aimed at enhancing and upgrading elementary and high school teaching in Yunnan. Students in the program had the opportunity of attending classes given by American-educated professors and were introduced to the most up-to-date education theories. Additionally, students were required to observe, participate, and practice teach in an actual classroom. Despite her sex (of three-hundred successful applicants to Peking University when Professor Yen attended, six were female) and because of her outstanding academic achievement and extensive experience in elementary and secondary classroom teaching, Isabella Yen was chosen by the University to instruct and train the new teachers. It was during this time, probably in 1943, Professor Yen recalls, that an American professor from Oneonta, New York, Doctor Willis P. Porter, serving in the armed forces in Kunming "was invited by the Dean to visit our experimental school (we stood out as the school that encouraged freedom and responsibility; we paid attention to individual differences and needs, creativity and self-expression)." It was a fortuitous visit, culminating some years later in an invitation to Isabella Yen to become a critic teacher (i.e., supervisor

and instructor of student teachers) at Bugbee School of Oneonta State Teachers' College (later part of State University of New York--SUNY). Professor Yen accepted the invitation, and on November 1, 1947, arrived in San Francisco where she visited friends, and three days later travelled by train to Oneonta, New York.

It is one thing to be a scholar, but a scholar with the sensitive creativity to guide the young is a jewel of great price; and such was Isabella Yen throughout her long career.

"Oneonta is in New York state," Professor Yen comments wryly, "but it seemed miles away from New York City. We couldn't even find soy sauce in the largest grocery stores." No matter. Yen persevered with her class of sixth graders, creating things Chinese from scratch: chopsticks, Chinese slippers, the abacus. Yen taught the children Chinese characters; introduced folktales and stories transposed into skits and acted for the school. One year Yen's class conducted a Chinese Fair in the gym for the citizens of Oneonta, who were treated to demonstrations and exhibitions, sales of small Chinese souvenirs; Chinese cooking and recipes; and Chinese cultural entertainment, such as the dance *Niu Yangge* (a farmer's dance which,

(Continued on page 5)

Eulogy for Hellmut Wilhelm

The distinguished China scholar Professor Hellmut Wilhelm passed away on July 5 in Seattle. Professor Wilhelm was born on December 10, 1905, in Tsingtao (Qingdao), Shandong Province. His father was the prominent Sinologist Richard Wilhelm (1873-1930), who went to China in 1899 to teach for the German Church Mission in Shandong. Richard Wilhelm is the renowned translator of the *I Ching* or *Book of Changes*, and Hellmut continued his father's study of this venerated classic of the Chinese tradition.

Hellmut Wilhelm received his early education in China, and he thus gained an intimate familiarity with the Chinese intellectual world around the time of the Chinese Revolution. After World War I, he returned to Germany with his father,

[Wilhelm] taught almost every aspect of Chinese studies, including literature and philosophy, politics and religion, ancient and modern history.

who was appointed to the first chair of Sinology at the University of Frankfurt. Hellmut Wilhelm served as his father's assistant at the newly founded China Institut, which published the renowned scholarly journal *Sinica*.



Professor Hellmut Wilhelm

After the death of Richard Wilhelm in 1930, Hellmut decided to continue his father's Sinological work and undertook a Ph.D. degree in Sinology at the University of Berlin. He completed his degree in 1932 with a dissertation on the great seventeenth century scholar Ku Yen-wu. The rise to power of Hitler and the Nazi party made it impossible for Hellmut to stay in Germany, and he went to China, where he remained until 1948. During this time he held an appointment as Professor of German Language and Literature at National Peking University and began publishing scholarly work on Chinese history, thought, and literature. In the early 1940's he delivered a series of lectures on Chinese thought and history to the German community in Peking. One set of lectures on the *I Ching* has been published in English under the title *Change: Eight Lectures on the*

I Ching, and this remains the most widely read introduction to the *Book of Changes* in a Western language. Hellmut Wilhelm was appointed to the faculty of the University of Washington in 1948. He taught almost every aspect of Chinese studies, including literature and philosophy, politics and religion, ancient and modern history. He was a leading member of that grand constellation of Far Eastern and Russian specialists that was created in Seattle under the leadership of George Taylor.

Professor Wilhelm's first love was the *I Ching*, a book that he believed embodied the essence of Chinese thought and values. Between 1951 and 1967 he presented a series of lectures at the annual meetings of the Eranos Society in Ascona, Switzerland.

(Continued on Page 5)

Professor Cox Honored

This year's Liberal Arts Professorship has been received by Assistant Professor Collett Cox. The award, bestowed annually by the College of Arts and Sciences, is an honorary rank conferred on a faculty member on the basis of demonstrated excellence in teaching, commitment to undergraduate liberal arts education, and significant contributions to scholarship. "The Liberal Arts Professor will receive a monetary award and honorary title for one year; will teach one course, perhaps specially designed, in the general education program; will be recognized by the College for distinguished teaching; and will have the option of pursuing a special project to further undergraduate liberal education." In conjunction with this honor, Professor Cox received summer salary support for the revision of an undergraduate general education course and the preparation of a new honors section.

Professor Cox also received a University of Washington Arts/Humanities Research Professorship Award that supported her research Spring quarter on the translation and exegesis of sections on the topic of causation from an Indian Abhidharma Buddhist text extant in Chinese translation.

This past year Professor Cox finished the final revisions of her manuscript: *Disputed Dharmas: Early Buddhist Theories on Existence. An Annotated Translation of the Section on Factors Dissociated from Thought from*



Assistant Professor Collett Cox

Saṅghabhadra's Nyāyānusāra, accepted for publication by *Studia Philologica Buddhica: Monograph Series*, The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, Tokyo, Japan. Professor Cox is also co-editing with Michael Williams and Martin S. Jaffee, both of the University of Washington, a collection of articles on the topic of religious innovation (to be published by Mouton de Gruyter).

Visiting Manuscript Libraries In Rajasthan

Associate Professor Alan Entwistle will spend Winter quarter, 1991, visiting manuscript libraries in Rajasthan. He is working on a translation and critical edition of *Acaḍās khīcī rī vacanikā*, a text in the Rajasthani dialect of Hindi which recounts the 1423 battle of a Hindu ruler against the Muslim Sultan Hoshang Shah. Professor Entwistle's project is funded by a Research Professorship award from the Graduate School Research Fund, and the American Institute of Indian Studies.

Chinese Dialectal Grammar Project Continues

Associate Professor Anne Yue-Hashimoto has recently completed an eighteen-month NEH-supported pilot project on Comparative Chinese Dialectal Grammar. Collaborating with Professor Yue on the research this past academic year has been China's foremost contemporary grammarian, Professor Zhu Dexi of Peking University. The project centers around a set of topics related to structures marked by *de* in Mandarin and their equivalents in various dialects of the Hakka, the Yue, the Min, the Wu, the Gan and the Southwestern Mandarin group. Professor Jerry Norman served as project adviser. Two graduate students, Mr. Marvin Li (two quarters) and Ms. Li Zhuqing (three quarters), served as research assistants.

Professor Yue has recently received two new grants to continue the project onto the second stage, focusing on the V-not-V question form across major Chinese dialects as well as historical colloquial texts such as the *Zutangji*, the *Bianwen* and some Southern Min drama. A grant from NEH has enabled Professor Yue to invite several scholars from Peking University for collaborative research, including the distinguished scholar, Professor Zhu Dexi, who will rejoin the project next Summer and remain through Autumn, 1991. Professor Liu Xunning, with broad interests in grammar and dialectology as well as phonology, and recipient of a Young Chinese Fellowship from

(Continued on page 6)

Yen Fu Awards, *continued from page 1*

incidentally, was being vigorously promoted in Communist China at the same time, causing Yen some moments of anxiety!)

It is one thing to be a scholar, but a scholar with the sensitive creativity to guide the young is a jewel of great price; and such was Isabella Yen throughout her long career. Yet more than this was to be required of her. "Before I came to the States," Professor Yen says, "I thought that Bill [Doctor Willis P. Porter] wanted me to come over to teach at his school. I soon realized that that was only a part of it. He also wanted me to broaden the perspective of a closely-knit white community like Oneonta. Sooner or later I would have to go to a larger city to pursue advanced studies." Aware of the diverse environments Yen would face, Doctor Porter arranged for her to attend conferences, give speeches, and visit campuses before making up her mind what field to enter and what University to attend.

And the rest is history, documented in *Who's Who of American Women*, *The Directory of American Scholars*, *Who's Who in American Education*: M.A., Linguistics, University of Michigan, 1951; Ph.D., Cornell University, 1956; marriage to Shu-koo Kao (co-founder of the Yen Fu Endowed Translation Prize Fund and Yen Fu Endowed Scholarship Fund), 1958; Research Associate, 1952-54, and Instructor, 1955-56, Cornell University; Assistant Professor, Asiatic Studies, University of Southern California, 1956-1960; Associate

Professor of Chinese, University of Washington, 1960, until her retirement in 1980.

Over a span of twenty years, Professor Yen strongly influenced the Chinese language program at the University of Washington with her customary originality.

Over a span of twenty years, Professor Yen strongly influenced the Chinese language program at the University of Washington with her customary originality. Believing language should be taught within the framework of its cultural milieu, Yen organized weekly teas and weekend camping trips wherein Chinese was spoken exclusively. She produced and directed Chinese plays featuring language students; and conducted a Chinese language course for KCTS television in 1964. Beyond teaching and scholarly publication, Professor Yen brought Chinese culture and concerns into the community, joining and serving on the board of many organizations, among them the American Oriental Society, West Coast Branch; the Modern Language Association of California; the Philological Association of the Pacific Coast; the Wing Luke Museum and Chinese Community Service Organization; the Asian American Commission of Washington State. Yen served as Program Chairman of the Chinese Society of Southern California; International Second

Vice-President of Alpha Mu Gamma, Foreign Language Honorary; and Chapter President of Delta Kappa Gamma, Education Honorary.

Among the teachers of English as a second language, Isabella Yen is known as "the author of the Yellow Book," taken from the color of the cover of *Spoken English for Mandarin Speakers*, one of the Series published by the Council of American Learned Societies.

Professor Yen continued the scholarly cross-cultural tradition started by her famous forebear, Yen Fu, whom she and Shu-koo Kao now honor with the Yen Fu Translation Endowed Prize Fund and the Yen Fu Endowed Scholarship Fund.

Eulogy for Wilhelm Hellmut, *continued from page 3*

Eranos Society in Ascona, Switzerland. In these lectures, which were published in 1977 by the University of Washington Press under the title *Heaven, Earth, and Man In the Book of Changes*, Professor Wilhelm showed how the *I Ching* addressed the most profound questions of human life: the place of man in the cosmos and his relationship to nature; change versus continuity; peace as an intellectual concept; leadership and authority; freedom. Hellmut Wilhelm was the last of the universalist China scholars who knew China at first hand and from its great books. His like will not be seen again.

Department Welcomes New Japanese Faculty

The Department of Asian Languages and Literature welcomes Assistant Professor Christopher J. Brockett, who will teach Third-Year Japanese beginning Autumn Quarter, 1990. Born in New Zealand, Brockett began his Japanese studies in high school, and specialized in Japanese and Chinese at Auckland University in New Zealand. He later earned an M.A. in modern Japanese literature at Waseda University, concentrating on the literature of the first two decades of this century. The title of his Ph.D., taken at Cornell University, was *Wa-Marking in Japanese and the Syntax of Generics*. Brockett is especially interested in the interface between syntax, semantics, and discourse.

Also welcomed to the Department this Autumn and Winter quarters as a visiting Professor is Ms. Kazuko Kobayashi. Ms. Kobayashi is a doctoral candidate at Tsukuba Daigaku, where her thesis advisor, Professor Toshio Hiraoka, one of the leading literary scholars and critics in Japan today, has organized the first Ph.D. program in modern Japanese literature in Japan.

Ms. Kobayashi's published work has dealt with the novels of Natsume Soseki and Yukio Mishima, and it is the work of the latter which she will teach in our graduate student seminar, Japan 580, Autumn quarter. Ms. Kobayashi will also teach Fourth-Year Japanese, Japan 431.

J. Levenson Prize for Chinese

Professor Jerry Norman, currently researching Chinese dialects in Xiamen, is the recipient of the **Joseph Levenson Prize**, Honorable Mention, Pre-Twentieth Century Category, for his book *Chinese*. "The book is compact yet comprehensive," says the *Asian Studies Newsletter*, "accessible to non-specialists yet rigorous, reflecting an exhaustive study of primary and secondary materials in many languages.

As a survey of the Chinese language and its scholarship, Norman's work combines the best of traditional Sinology with a valuable introduction to the most recent developments in Chinese linguistics. Written with sparkle and wit, and deeply involved with comparative questions, the book will assert itself in the writings and lectures of China scholars in many disciplines."

Tatsumi Awards

This year's Tatsumi Award winners are Ms. Laura Hess (Asian Languages and Literature) and Ms. Michelle Wing.

Chinese Dialectal Grammar, continued from page 4

the CSCPRC to visit this Department, will join the project during the academic year 1990-91. Doctor Chang Min, a recent Ph.D. and lecturer of Peking University, will also join the project during the academic year 1991-92. Professor Jerry Norman will continue to be the project adviser. A grant from the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation will enable Professor Chang Yu-hung of National Taiwan University, with major interests in Min and various Southeast Asian languages, to join the project during the Summer of 1991 and of 1992. The same grant will also enable Professor Yue to carry out field work on various Chinese dialects. If the reader of this Newsletter knows of any genuine native speaker of Chinese dialects (except standard Mandarin) please contact Professor Yue at 543-4995, or leave a message at the Department office (543-4996).

Asia Notes

Asian Languages & Literature
University of Washington
Seattle, WA 98195

Editors: Eva Dalton
Youngie Yoon