

stanford east asian studies ALUMNI NEWS

校 友 通 訊

Autumn, 1977

Prof. Yasuo Morikawa

JAPANESE PSYCHOLOGIST ADDS NEW DIMENSION TO PALM

by DAVID HOLLEY

The students at Japanese PALM (Program for Advanced Language Maintenance) expected the visiting professor to talk about his research in psychology. But as he opened an atlas to a map of Hiroshima, he said, "I have a personal experience I want to talk about."

On the morning of August 6, 1945, Morikawa's mother had helped him make the trip to junior high school, as she did every morning, for his legs had been crippled since his birth, and, although he could limp along slowly on his own, it was hard for him to make the trip alone. He had said goodbye to her and gone in for classes when, at 8:15 a.m., the bomb exploded.

His friends died in the rubble and the fire; but somehow he pulled himself free. Through the streets of the broken city, he walked the several miles to his home, at one point swimming across a river where the bridge was gone.

Telling his story, Morikawa hid the pain behind a mask of smiles and laughter, as the Japanese often do. But he could not smile as he told his silent listeners that his mother, caught in the open while crossing an athletic field and burned by the flash, died three months later.

Morikawa's openness and sincerity made a deep impression on the students who heard him speak. The students must have made an impression on him too, for he soon became an active member of the PALM group.

"I come because I want to know where Americans and Japanese are different," he says. "That's what I'm most interested in. When we're talking, that kind of thing comes out bit by bit...I can study psychology in Japan as well as here. More than that, I want to understand how Americans think about things."

Born prematurely in Hamada City, Shimane Prefecture, on May 6, 1931, Morikawa has overcome difficulties all his life. He nearly died at

birth. When he was about a year old and had not yet begun to crawl, his parents realized his legs were paralyzed.

While Morikawa was still a baby, his father, an officer in the Japanese army, received a transfer to Tokyo. It was a fortunate move, for it made possible Morikawa's attendance at Komei Elementary School, a school for handicapped children. It was the only one of its kind in Japan at the time.

See PROFESSOR MORIKAWA, page 2.

WISDOM FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

by PETER DUUS

When Laotzu saw Confucius off after their legendary meeting, he remarked, "I've heard it said that the man of wealth and power makes parting gifts of money, and that the good man makes parting gifts of words." While we would prefer to act like the wealthy and powerful, the Center will continue this year to send you "parting gifts of words" by way of the Alumni Newsletter.

The Center is a bit more crowded than usual. Fifteen first-year students entered the M.A. program this year, and together with the five second-year students, they make the largest M.A. group we have had in recent years. We also have an increasing number of undergraduates frequenting this Center. Some are co-terminal B.A.-M.A. students, and are enrolled in the East Asian Studies undergraduate major, newly instituted last year. It is gratifying to see that interest in East Asian studies continues unabated despite the increasing concern among students about career opportunities and job security.

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One day in early November, Morikawa sat and talked with students from noon, when Japanese PALM began, until past 5:00. Dressed informally, tieless in a blue suit jacket and gray suit slacks--he always wears suits in Japan but that's too formal for Stanford, and he says he doesn't have blue jeans--Morikawa scratched his head with one hand and gestured with the other, a smile coming easily to his face as, soft-spoken but confident, he shared his opinions with the others in the group.

This five-hour discussion began on the question of whether, when people from two cultures mix, it's possible that any of the individuals can learn to completely understand the other culture. One student said this was possible and others strongly disagreed. The conversation flowed on to topics such as whether Japanese people can understand foreigners' non-verbal communication, the question of "burakumin"--the low-caste group still discriminated against in Japanese society, classical Japanese literature, and research into the pronunciation of ancient Chinese.

For the students, such a long, free-wheeling conversation recreates some of the benefits of being in Japan. As for Morikawa, his attitude is perhaps shown by his comment, "Coming to America, I didn't expect to be able to have this kind of conversation!"

Pages 3-8 alumni list with mailing addresses removed by request.

STANFORD STUDENTS INTERPRET FOR PRC DELEGATIONS

Soccer Teams and College Deans

Two Stanford graduate students, Andy Andreasen and Carl Crook, accompanied delegations from the People's Republic of China on their travels in the United States autumn quarter.

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"The team had never played on artificial turf," reported Carl, "so they went to Annapolis to try it out. They ate at a mess hall with 4,000 cadets, at the same table with students who were studying Chinese at Annapolis, and the school's soccer team."

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About half the group had taken degrees in the United States in the 1920's and 30's, and spoke English, Andy said. So he stayed close to those members who did not speak English, doing simultaneous interpreting for them. He was also called upon to interpret at official functions.

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CONNIE CHIN

PROFESSOR JAMES J.Y. LIU RECEIVES N.E.H. GRANT FOR INDEPENDENT STUDY

James J.Y. Liu, Professor of Chinese at Stanford University, recently received a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship for Independent Study.

He will use the fellowship when on sabbatical next year to undertake a project on a critical approach to traditional Chinese poetry.

Professor Liu is the author of several well-known texts on Chinese poetry and literary criticism, including The Poetry of Li Shang-yin, Major Lyricists of the Northern Sung, and Chinese Theories of Literature.

"I plan to work out a critical approach to traditional Chinese poetry with the Western reader in mind," Liu said. There are different problems involved in teaching Western students about Chinese poetry than in teaching Chinese students, he added.

Liu said little theoretical work had been done on interpreting a text written in one language in terms of another language, although some of the most influential books in the world (the Bible, Mencius, Marx, Freud, Mao) have had their impact from translations.

The second problem Liu plans to tackle is critical evaluation of traditional Chinese poetry. By what criteria should the texts be evaluated, he asks: by the standards of the time

Jack G. Lewis is in Japan for a year on an SSRC grant doing research on mayoral recruitment.

they were written, by the standards of modern Chinese, by standards of modern English criticism?

His research should culminate in a book on these two problems.

RESEARCH PUBLISHED BY ALUMNI

The following alumni have recently published their research.

Frederick P. Brandauer, "Women in the Ching-hua Yuan: Emancipation toward a Confucian Ideal," Journal of Asian Studies, Vol. XXXVI, No. 4, August, 1977.

David D. Buck, "Ta Ch'ing: A Model Industrial Community in the People's Republic of China," The China Geographer, No. 7, Spring, 1977; and Urban Change in China: Politics and Development in Tsinan, Shantung, 1890-1949 (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1977).

Susan P. Chizeck, "Case Reopening: An Emergent Issue in Child Welfare," in Child Welfare, forthcoming. Susan is also working on a bibliography and paper on The Model of Social Services in the PRC, and would be interested in anything being done by Stanford people in the field.

Tom Gottlieb, Chinese Foreign Policy Factionalism and the Origins of the Strategic Triangle (Santa Monica, The RAND Corp., Nov. 1977).

Dorothy J. Solinger, "Minority Nationalities in China's Yunan Province: Assimilation, Power, and Policy in a Socialist State," World Politics Vol. XXX, Oct. 1977, No. 1.

Jim White, Social Change and Community Politics in Urban Japan, with Frank Munger, eds., Chapel Hill, Institute for Research in the Social Sciences, 1976.

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