Uchiyama Kanzō: A Case Study in Sino-Japanese Interaction

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Much has been written lately about the dynamics and difficulties in modern Sino-Japanese relations. Akira Iriye has expressed this relationship in the opposing dyads of commonality/disparity, interdependence/autonomy, mutual respect/suspicion, attraction/repulsion, and admiration/condescension.[1] All of these dualities, of course, express some part of the truth. To bring this dynamic into better focus, though, it is better to look at the human actors involved. It is on this level that mutual and individual, national and regional aspirations were funneled. Here the thorny questions of cooperation and leadership come out into the open. The resolution of these problems is a concern not just for each nation but also for peace and stability in East Asia as a whole. The preceding sentence echoes almost exactly the words and thoughts of Japan's prewar China activists. There were many Japanese who ventured to the Asian mainland: some were mere adventurers; some went burning with a desire to instill the ideas of freedom and popular rights; others were agents of Japanese expansionism; others had vague notions of restructuring China; while still others were driven by an amorphous or a deeply rooted Sinophilia.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to attempt a comprehensive classification of Japan's China activists in the prewar period, although the field of Sino-Japanese relations desperately needs one. However, the terms rōnin 浪人 and advisor immediately come to mind. Rōnin (literally, "wave men") is pejorative, traditionally referring to disenfeoffed samurai, while in contemporary Japan the appellation has been affixed to students who fail their university entrance examinations and must spend the year on the loose, cramming to take them again. The term is both overly value-laden and an essential part of the historical vocabulary of modern Sino-Japanese relations; consequently, ways must be made to give it scholarly understanding or, at least, credence.

Within the two categories of rōnin and advisor, there are numerous divisions. For rōnin alone, we can speak of revolutionary rōnin such as Miyazaki Tōten 宮崎滔天 , commercial rōnin such Arao Sei 荒尾精 , ultranationalist rōnin such as Uchida Ryōhei 内田良平 , and even educational rōnin such as Nezu Hajime 根津一 . In fact, for the case of Uchiyama Kanzō 内山完造 , I am proposing a new category which I shall discuss below.

The term advisor is even more vague, and simple divisions between formal and informal, full-time or part-time, salaried or non-salaried are insufficient. Because China was lacking a firm central authority and was plagued by deep factional divisions, we need to

know to whom the flow of advice was directed. Which agency of government, which group within society or among the people received "advice"--these become critical questions. The converse is true for Japan as well. With the rise of pluralism and competing elites at the beginning of the last decade of the Meiji period, who the advisors were serving is also a central issue in Japan.

There are also linguistic implications to be assessed. The Japanese word for advisor is komon 顧問 (Ch. guwen), but how often was this term employed by the Chinese themselves? Were other terms employed and, if so, in what context? In the Meiji period, the so-called "foreign advisors" were yatoi 雇い ("hired hands") which in today's parlance would be akin to the derogatory term suketto 助っ人 (the shortened form of sukedachi 助太刀), implying "helper" or "hired hand." H. J. Jones has referred to the hired foreigners of the Meiji era as "live machines."[2] In contemporary China, there is a Foreign Experts Bureau (Waizhuanju 外専局) through which "experts" are hired. Experts are, of course, advisors, but the terms are not interchangeable. They demand clarification as a first step in analyzing the structural-functional impact of Japan on China's modernization process.

For our purposes here, we can discern fundamental differences between rōnin and "advisors" and within each of these groups. Prewar Japanese advisors, in the strict sense, generally were in China in an official capacity for a specific purpose. Their tenure in China was also relatively brief. They might even be on leave from an official post in Japan, and there was rarely any question about confusing loyalties. One need not be a Sinophile to be an advisor to China. The commitment could be merely contractual.

The prewar rōnin were different. At times connected to sources of power and influence, they were more often than not independent agents pursuing their goals. They were drawn to China by the spirit of adventure and for some service to the state. Romanticism was also a common trait as was, in some cases, the lure of an idealized China, one of Confucius not of confusion. For many of these so-called Shina rōnin 支那浪人 , a type of Meiji-era Orientalism was at work. Edward Said has remarked that the English and French were quite comfortable with the image amd romantic idea of a faraway Egypt but horrified when they actually arrived there.[3] Some Japanese, with vague thoughts about reforming and saving China, came back horrified from their first visit to the Asian mainland and were convinced that the situation in China was hopeless. It could not be saved. In spite of their rhetoric of cooperation, most Shina rōnin looked at China through the prism of Japanese power and advantage. In political science terms, the goals of their endeavors were the goals of national expansion and national preservation. Few would dare to engage in the rare national act of self-abnegation, that is the relinquishing of an advantage for the greater goal of regional solidarity and harmony.[4] For the most part, and with few exceptions, the exhortations

of cooperation voiced by Japan's prewar China activists fell on unresponsive Chinese ears.

This is a key point, for no matter how seriously a Japanese activist felt his activities were on behalf of Sino-Japanese cooperation, it is essential to see how the native population viewed these same activities. My previous work on Arao Sei has led me to conclude that, although he may have felt that he was working for the greater good of both China and Japan, the Chinese viewed him as a spy and an expansionist. The same may be said not only of individuals but of organizations such as the prewar Tō-A Dōbun Shoin 東亜同文書院 (East Asian Common Culture Academy), established in 1901 by Konoe Atsumaro 近衛篤麿 and the largest Japanese school in China. Local sentiment and local perceptions must be taken into strict account when judging the activities of Japan's individual activists and the multifarious organizations which their efforts spawned. Although the word "cooperation" was bandied about, more often than not, it was ultimately not based on mutuality and common hope but rather on something forced and involuntary.[5]

The points of similarity between rōnin and advisors were simply:

(1) They were in China.
(2) They had contacts with Chinese.
(3) They made a contribution to China's modernization.
(4) They were on a "mission."

But, these attributes do not connect, they separate. The most important points of departure must be the Chinese contacts each individual had and what each individual sought to do. It was the perception of the individual and his activity by the indigenous population that help us define the type of individual and the level of cooperation.

What can be said about the case of Uchiyama Kanzō in light of the foregoing discussion? In my readings, I have come across two descriptive expressions for him, rōnin and senkaku 先覚 (pioneer).[6] In what context were these terms used? Where and how does Uchiyama fit into the dynamic of modern Sino-Japanese relations?

From 1917 until 1947, Uchiyama Kanzō was the proprietor of the largest Japanese-language bookstore in Shanghai. The Uchiyama Shoten 内山書店 functioned as a major conduit of politico-literary information to scores of Chinese intellectuals and writers who had studied in Japan. Uchiyama was the close friend of both Lu Xun 魯迅 and Guo Moruo 郭沫若 , going so far as to hide each one at different times when their lives were in danger. Between 1935 and 1944, Uchiyama wrote six books outlining and describing in warm tones everyday life in contemporary China to a largely ill-informed Japan. The first of these books, Ikeru Shina no sugata 生ける支那の姿 [China As It Is], carried an introduction by Lu Xun. Later, this book was translated into Chinese under the title Yige Riben ren de Zhongguo guan 一個日本人的中国観 [A Japanese View of China].[7] In these six volumes, which I have dubbed the "Shanghai Series," Uchiyama paints an overly exotic

and sympathetic picture of a China he obviously loved deeply. He was also highly critical of Japanese attitudes towards the Asian mainland.

In preparing this essay, I asked some of my undergraduate Japanese students to read a few of Uchiyama's essays. Two essays, "Momotarō to Seiyūki" 桃太郎と西遊記 (Momotarō and A Journey to the West) and "Nihon jin to Chūgoku jin to" 日本人と中国人と (Japanese and Chinese), were of special interest.[7] The reactions of my students were surprising. They all felt that Uchiyama thought that the Chinese were superior to the Japanese in almost every respect. They also could not understand how the folktale "Momotarō" could be interpreted as a story encouraging Japanese militarism, which was Uchiyama's point.[8] One said that he thought Uchiyama's feeling for China was too reverential. My students intense defense of Japanese culture surprised me. If this was the reaction of contemporary Japanese undergraduates, we can only imagine the response of the public at large to these essays when they were first published over 40 years ago.

In the immediate postwar years, Uchiyama traveled around Japan, lecturing sympathetically about China and the Chinese. He called these speaking tours "pilgrimages" (angya 行脚) and, given the times and the themes of peace, friendship, trade, and reconciliation, they indeed represent an itinerant priest's attempts to strengthen ties between two countries ravaged by war. He also published these lectures and other material (in eight separate volumes) in the hope of educating his readers about the true nature of China's affairs.[9] In addition, Uchiyama was a founding member of the Japan-China Trade Promotion Association (Nit-Chū bōeki sokushinkai 日中貿易促進会) and the first Chairman of the Japan-China Friendship Association (Nit-Chū yūkō kyōkai 日中友好協会) from its inception in 1949. Until his death in Beijing in 1959, Uchiyama was thus deeply involved in Japan's relations with China.

He has earned from the Chinese perhaps their highest plaudit, that of being called a lao pengyou 老朋友 . How did he accomplish this feat given the extraordinary times in which he lived? How many Japanese who were living in China throughout the years of crisis and war have been elevated to such a high position? How many Japanese could serve as a bridge to the People's Republic of China in the 1950s? There must have been something about his character, personality, and activities that earned him such extraordinary respect on the Chinese mainland. In a different era but in a similar way, the only other Japanese of comparable stature in Chinese eyes was Miyazaki Tōten. As far as Westerners are concerned, there is only the legendary Norman Bethune, who has become far more important in death than he ever was in life. Other foreigners have received high praise. For example, in September 1984, the Three "S" Society of China (Zhongguo san "S" yanjiuhui 中国三S研究会) was formed, with powerful political backing. The group's purpose was to study the

activities of Edgar Snow, Agnes Smedley, and Anna Louise Strong.

One should add the important note that respect among Chinese for Uchiyama is not limited to the People's Republic. In perhaps an even greater compliment, I found a pirated edition of the Chinese edition of Uchiyama's 1935 book, Ikeru Shina no sugata, reissued on Taiwan.

Let us turn now to some of Uchiyama's prewar activities. He was born in Okayama in 1885, the eldest of four brothers and three sisters. His father was the village headman and also a member of the village assembly. His behavior as a child was so unruly that he earned the nickname shiokara 塩辛 (the most indelicate translation of which would be "salted fish guts"). Although bright, his excess energy found him apprenticed at the age of twelve to an Ōsaka merchant. He worked for four years but developed extravagant tastes and embezzled the shop's money. Fired, he was soon hired to work in a factory. It was unsuited to his temperament and he returned to Okayama, stayed awhile, and then stole money from his father and ran away to Ōsaka. When his money ran out, he went to his former factory boss who offered him a job as a shop assistant in Kyoto. At the age of sixteen, he had a second start in life, and he worked in Kyoto for ten years.

At the age of 27, Uchiyama became a Christian. He remarked that this was "the first day of a revolution in my life."[10] A clear similarity with Miyazaki is evident here. The pastor of the church in Kyoto was Makino Toraji 牧野虎次 who would later become President of Dōshisha University. They would remain friends for life. Reverend Makino, beside offering friendship, also provided Uchiyama with a path to China. Uchiyama recounted that one day after services Makino called him in and asked him what he was planning to do in the future. Uchiyama said that he did not want to be a merchant because they were always compelled to tell lies. Makino then suggested that he go to China as a pharmacist selling eye medicine.[11] It is ironic that, a generation before, Kishida Ginkō 岸田吟香 and Arao Sei had both penetrated China through the selling of an eye ointment. With thoughts of Miyazaki Tōten, Hirayama Shū 平山周 , and Sun Zhongshan 孫中山 , he decided to "plunge into the Chinese revolution."[12] So, at the age of 28, Uchiyama set foot on the Asian mainland for the first time.

What were his feelings before embarkation? He was hardly an effete member of the elite but had known economic hardship. His biographer, Ozawa Masamoto 小沢正元 , stresses this point. Uchiyama had worked with his hands for years and possessed a desire to do good. He also felt that he could not make his mark in Japan, which was already too developed, but could do so in China which was at a lower level. His first reaction upon setting foot in Shanghai and seeing the foreign settlement was a reinforced feeling of China's smallness as a nation and his desire for it to become larger. Ozawa juxtaposes Uchiyama's first impressions with Miyazaki's.[13]

The basis for Uchiyama's status as a symbol of Sino-Japanese relations rests with his role as the owner of the Uchiyama Shoten

and, more symbolically, his friendship with Lu Xun. Furthermore, although space does not permit an extended discussion here, Uchiyama had a hand in the promotion of modern woodblock printing in China through the introduction of Japanese works, techniques, and teachers.

Uchiyama and his wife opened their bookstore in Shanghai in 1917. It began as a small operation. He later recalled in an essay written in Japanese (in obvious imitation of Miyazaki Tōten) but bearing the Chinese title "Dapo le sanshi nian zhi meng" 打破了三十年之夢 (Destruction of my thirty-year dream):

> I received a single box of over 80 books, packed in a [Kirin] beer case. Inside were bibles, hymnals, and even so-called faith diaries. I opened the box and, for the first time, lined them up on a chest of drawers on the second floor. This was not very business-like, so I took the now empty beer case and used an old board to make a two-tiered desk and put the books on the lower level. This was the beginning of the Uchiyama Shoten.[14]

Starting slowly, Uchiyama and his wife were able to build up stock gradually. His bookstore soon attracted the attention of Chinese students and those Japanese interested in Chinese culture. By all accounts it turned into the largest Japanese-owned bookstore in China. Uchiyama's dream was "to establish a branch store in every province so that the strength of Japan's culture could spread throughout China and so as to help her new culture."[15]

Uchiyama could only hope to do this by the coincidental publication of "one-yen books." This short-lived boom in the Japanese publishing business had a long-term effect on readership and the very structure of knowledge in Japan. The practice of one-yen books was initiated by the publisher Kaizōsha 改造社 with a 63-volume series on contemporary Japanese literature, Gendai Nihon bungaku zenshū 現代日本文学全集 . Soon, other publishers followed suit. For example, Shinchōsha 新潮社 joined in with its own 57-volume series on world literature, Sekai bungaku zenshū 世界文学全集 . Iwanami Shigeo 岩波重男 , founder of Iwanami Shoten 岩波書店 , also participated with a series of classics in the well-known Iwanami Bunko 岩波文庫 . Although the enpon jidai 円本時代 or "one-yen books era" ended in the 1930s, due to a glut on the market, the pattern of publication for zenshū 全集 , kōza 講座 , and sōsho 叢書 was established. Consequently, Uchiyama was able to sell these books in China. His associations with Kaizōsha and Iwanami Shoten were very strong, with both presses combining to publish five of his works.

Uchiyama's bookstore obviously would have had only limited scope if it catered only to the large Japanese community in Shanghai. The basis for Uchiyama's fame rests on the fact that he also actively sought out a Chinese audience. He not only sought them out but he created a salon for them to meet and talk among themselves and with Japanese. Uchiyama was an active participant in these discussions, which he termed mandan 漫談 (idle chats). These types of salons were

very important in the 1920s. Chinese writers, intellectuals, and political activists needed a safe haven to meet, discuss, and vigorously argue. From the salons of the early 1920s, they later went to the streets, as intellectual discussion eventually gave rise to intense activism. Uchiyama's salon, one among many, provided such a place for these ideas to incubate.

In a curious parallel, another Okayama native, Kishida Ginkō, had a generation before provided another center for Japanese who wished to explore the Asian mainland. It is here, however, that the parallel ends. Kishida was intimately connected to expansionist circles in Japan and provided a vital contact not for intellectuals but for militarist rōnin connected to the Army. His name figures prominently in Tō-A senkaku shishi kiden 東亜先覚志士記伝 [Biographies of Pioneer Adventurers in East Asia].[16]

Volume Nine of the 13-volume Japanese edition of Lu Xun's selected works (Ro Jin senshū 魯迅選集) provided an interesting forum for a discussion of the role of Uchiyama Shoten.[17] In the only negative reference I have read about him in Chinese sources, two writers, Bai Yuxia 白羽遐 and Xin Wan 新皖 , in back-to-back essays criticize Uchiyama as being a rōnin-spy only interested in finding out who were members of the Chinese Communist Party and then relaying that information to the Japanese government. Lu Xun, in an immediate rebuttal, claimed that nothing could be further from the truth and that Uchiyama's interest rested solely in the spread of literature. Lu Xun added that he and Uchiyama never discussed politics and that Lu trusted him with his life. There were, however, those in Shanghai who equated everything Japanese with expansionism. What is remarkable is that Uchiyama's bookstore continued to flourish as the environment became ever more dangerous.

Although Lu Xun could see beyond narrow stereotypes, it would take years before others could view Uchiyama and the role of his bookstore outside the emotions of the time. A regular habitué of Uchiyama's was Tian Han 田漢 . A major playwright and pioneer of the modern theater movement, Tian later became a prime target of criticism during the Cultural Revolution; he is perhaps best known as the author of China's national anthem, written during the Sino-Japanese War. Tian Han's friendship with Uchiyama may provide an even starker example than that of Lu Xun or Guo Moruo of how Uchiyama was able to bridge the gulf between politics and literature. A vocal critic of Japanese expansionism, Tian was arrested by the Guomindang in 1932 for conducting an anti-Japanese propaganda campaign which the authorities considered two inflammatory and virulently anti-Japanese. Yet, years later, when Uchiyama died suddenly in Beijing in 1959, Tian among many others took a major part in the memorial services.[18]

Uchiyama was seen as non-threatening by China's returned students. He provided works on all contemporary subjects. The writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Kawakami Hajime 河上肇 filtered into China partly through Uchiyama's bookstore. In an interview with his

nephew, Uchiyama Magaki 内山雅 , the present proprietor of the Uchiyama Shoten in Tokyo's Kanda district, I asked about his uncle's politics. Magaki replied that his uncle was apolitical. This is an obvious understatement.[19] Uchiyama Shoten carried not only the largest collection of Japanese books in China but also had in stock almost all of the 830 Japanese works translated into Chinese at that time. Uchiyama wrote of this: "These books were supplied from my store, especially the 330 Chinese translations by the League of Left-Wing Writers. When I think of the relationship between these things and my store, I find that there are many Japanese cultural influences on China through my store and I'm very proud of it."[20]

It is no coincidence that the Uchiyama Shoten, the home of Lu Xun, and the building which housed the League of Left-Wing Writers should all have been located in the Japanese Concession of Shanghai. As C. T. Hsia has caustically written, China's intellectuals could not help being influenced by the literary revolution which had first taken place in Japan during the Meiji period. It was "the infectious Japanese example that gave impetus to the Communist literary movement in China."[21] I would counter this by showing how absolutely important Japan was as a model of social protest in East Asia. The success of Meiji was, after all, only partial. Japan's prewar movement for equal rights and social justice, sometimes voiced in terms of Marxism-Leninism, was a natural model for some in China who had seen the first-hand effects of Japan's forced pace of industrialization. Just as the Chinese language had provided a bridge toward interpreting the West during the mid- and late 19th century, Japan's writers and the Japanese language provided the forces of the left in China with a revolutionary language during the 1920s.

Uchiyama's major role in the prewar period was to facilitate the spread of information. If he was a rōnin-type, I would have to call him a tosho rōnin 図書浪人 or bibliophile rōnin.

Notes

1. Akira Iriye, "Introduction," in The Chinese and the Japanese, ed. Iriye (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. 3.

2. H. J. Jones, Live Machines: Hired Foreigners and Meiji Japan (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980).

3. Edward Said, Orientalism (New York: Random House, 1978).

4. Arnold Wolfers, "The Pole of Power and the Pole of Indifference," in International Politics and Foreign Policy, ed. James Rosenau (Glencoe: The Free Press, 967), pp. 147-148. See also Paul

Scott, Japan-China: Arao Sei and the Paradox of Cooperation (Ōsaka: Kansai University of Foreign Studies, 1988).

5. See Paul Scott, "The Etymology of Cooperation," Sino-Japanese Studies Newsletter I.2 (March 1989), pp. 13-17; and Douglas R. Reynolds, "Recent Sourcebooks on Tō-A dōbunkai and Tō-A dōbun Shoin: A Review Article," Sino-Japanese Studies Newsletter I.2 (March 1989), pp. 18-27.

6. The terms are used in a special edition commemorating the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Uchiyama Shoten in Tokyo: Uchiyama Shoten to Uchiyama Kanzō 内山書店と内山完造 [Uchiyama Bookstore and Uchiyama Kanzō], volume 3, no. 9 (Spring 1985).

7. Uchiyama's six prewar books are: Ikeru Shina no sugata, 1935; Shanhai mango 上海漫語 [Shanghai Chats], 1938; Shanhai yago 上海夜語 [Shanghai Night Talks], 1940; Shanhai fūgo 上海風語 [Breezy Talks in Shanghai], 1941; Shanhai ringo 上海霖語 [Chattering about Shanghai], 1942; and Shanhai kango 上海汗語 [Restless Shanghai Talks], 1944. The Chinese edition of Ikeru Shina no sugata was translated into Chinese by Yu Bingzhe 尤炳圻 in 1936 and published in Shanghai by Kaiming Shudian 開明書店 . The pirated Taiwan edition appeared in 1985 with a second printing the following year.

8. An excellent study of wartime propaganda and in particular the tale of Momotarō is found in John Dower, War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986).

9. This material is gleened from Ozawa Masamoto 小沢正元 , Uchiyama Kanzō den 内山完造伝 [Biography of Uchiyama Kanzō] (Tokyo: Banchō shobō, 1972).

10. Ibid., p. 30.

11. Ibid., pp. 30-32.

12. Ibid., pp. 35-36.

13. Ibid., pp. 40-41.

14. "Destruction of My Thirty-Year Dream" first appeared in Uchiyama's Kakoroku 花甲録 [Memoirs] (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1960). A selection of Uchiyama's writings has recently been reissued by Tōhō Shoten 東方書店 under the title Chūgoku jin no seikatsu fūkei 中国人の生活風景 [A Landscape of the Lifestyles of the Chinese].

15. Ibid.

16. For Kishida's biography, see Kuzuu Yoshihisa 葛生能久 , Tō-A senkaku shishi kiden (Tokyo, 1933-1936), 3:658-660.

17. Matsueda Shigeo 松枝茂男 and Masuda Wataru 増田渉 , trans., Ro Jin senshū (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1964), 9:243-248.

18. Kakoroku, p. 434.

19. Interview with Uchiyama Magaki at the Uchiyama Shoten, April 10, 1989.

20. Ozawa Masamoto, Uchiyama Kanzō den, p. 101. The figures come directly from: Konoe Haruo 近衛春雄 , Gendai Chūgoku no sakka to sakuhin 現代中国の作家と作品 [Authors and Works in Contemporary China] (Tokyo, 1969).

21. C. T. Hsia, A History of Modern Chinese Fiction, second ed. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1971), pp. 22-24.