

Sino-Japanese Studies: Three Problem Areas¹

Liu Tianchun 劉天純

Translated by Douglas R. Reynolds
Georgia State University

I. The Proper Content and Objectives for Research

The study of Sino-Japanese relations, now an independent specialized field of historical inquiry, is a branch within the historical sciences and at the same time a new discipline of history. Because of its newness, opinions still vary with respect to the appropriate content of Sino-Japanese studies (Zhong-Ri guanxi shi yanjiu 中日關係史研究). There are those who argue that the study of Sino-Japanese relations is essentially the study of the history of Sino-Japanese friendship, and that within periods of Japanese aggression and warfare against China the glittering "sparks" of Sino-Japanese friendship should be painstakingly sought out. This group believes that we should concentrate our research efforts in the premodern period [lit., "ancient," gudai 古代; but, since Liu ends gudai in the 19th century and follows it with "modern," I prefer "premodern" here], because premodern relations basically involved friendly intercourse. Moreover, the premodern period was one during which Chinese society was in an advanced state of development and a time when Japan sought knowledge from China. Many fat volumes could thus be written about it.

The modern period, on the other hand, saw Japan become aggressive toward China, while Chinese society fell behind. No longer could much be written because relations between China and Japan became "unfriendly," and the relationship one between an aggressor and its victim. This way of looking at Sino-Japanese relations has not only been accepted by many scholars over the years but is actually considered proper. Thus, whenever the subject of Sino-Japanese relations comes up, attention gravitates toward cases of friendship.

Others scholars are of the opinion that this viewpoint is one-sided and fails to reflect the full substance of research on Sino-Japanese historical relations. This group proposes that the proper content of Sino-Japanese historical studies be both the "history of friendship" and the "history of unfriendly relations." Those holding to this viewpoint consider that the history of relations before the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95 was friendly and, thereafter, unfriendly. They thus divide relations into friendly and unfriendly, demarcated by the war of 1894-95.

Looking at the actual state of Sino-Japanese studies in terms of its development historically, people's understanding of the subject

and its proper content are less than thorough. This is despite the distinctive contributions of important pioneering investigations by scholars of the past. The problem is that the content of past research emphasizes Sino-Japanese cultural interactions and contacts, primarily to introduce the history of friendly relationships. Before 1949 and the establishment of the People's Republic of China, studies mostly looked at relations from the angle of the history of contacts or from the angle of the overland and maritime trade in silk; after 1949, studies mostly looked at relations from the angles of the history of Sino-Japanese cultural interactions and of the Sino-Japanese friendship movement as well as of Japanese aggression against China.

In the case of post-1949 studies, the Japanese scholar Kimiya Yasuhiko 木宮泰彦 wrote in his monumental Nik-Ka bunka kōryū shi 日華文化交流史 [History of Sino-Japanese Cultural Interactions] (1955)²: "There exists no comprehensive or systematic study of Sino-Japanese cultural relations." He considered the most important facet of the history of Sino-Japanese relations to be cultural interactions, stating: "The period of uninterrupted cultural interactions between Japan and China extends over the past 1800 or 1900 years."

In his earlier Nis-Shi kōtsū shi 日支交通史 [History of Sino-Japanese Contacts] (1927),³ Kimiya similarly placed emphasis upon cultural history, explaining: "Although the present book is called a history of contacts, it is more than just a history of foreign relations and trade, and it might better be called a history of cultural interactions."

Kimiya's works have enjoyed a wide dissemination in China and have exercised a major influence. His earlier book was translated by Chen Jie 陳捷 (in 1931), and the later one by Hu Xinian 胡錫年 (in 1980).⁴ These works may well be considered representative of the best studies of the history of Sino-Japanese relations by Japanese scholars. However, the content of both emphasizes cultural dimensions and both take Sino-Japanese relations only up through the Qing period. In terms of both content and time coverage, therefore, they leave much to be desired.

Of works by Chinese writers influential among scholars at home and abroad, I consider Wang Yunsheng's 王芸生 multivolume Liushi nian lai Zhongguo yu Riben 六十年中国与日本 [China and Japan Over the Past Sixty Years] (1932-34)⁵ as definitely representative. This book stresses the history of modern foreign relations between China and Japan. It was the product of special historical circumstances, as indicated by the author's forward to the revised edition:

Liushi nian lai Zhongguo yu Riben was itself a product of history. The Mukden Incident of September 18, 1931 was a major disaster for our country. People everywhere pondered long and hard the roots of this national calamity, reflecting upon how to alter the direction of things. At the time, I was a journalist in the editorial department of the Tianjin Dagong bao 大公報, where everyone was talking about the

situation. What produced this book was anxiety about our country.

Were Kimiya's works considered to epitomize early-period friendly histories, then Wang Yunsheng's could be considered to epitomize modern-period unfriendly histories. Both authors' works are of genuine scholarly value, worthy of special attention even among Chinese scholars today. Nonetheless, from the angle of the proper content of research in Sino-Japanese studies, none of these reflects fully what, in the final analysis, that content ought to be. (What should it entail? What should constitute the objects for study? What criteria apply to which tasks?)

Put briefly, the proper content of research in Sino-Japanese studies is: the study and elucidation from earliest times of the course and pattern of interactions between China and Japan as individual states and between local areas in one country and those in the other, political exchanges between groups as well as individuals, economic and trade relations, science and technology, culture and education, religious beliefs, military relations, and wars. More concretely, such research should encompass the following points.

First, political dimensions--research on the course and patterns of political interactions between China and Japan as states and between regions of the two, as well as between groups and important individuals, official and unofficial missions, governmental envoys, scholars, treaties of alliance signed, agreements as well as diplomatic disagreements and other exchanges, in order to understand the impact of these activities upon each country domestically and in foreign policy-making, and their role in social and economic developments.

Second, economic dimensions--research on the course and patterns of economic interaction between the states of China and Japan and between regions of one with the other, as well as between groups and important individuals; also research of products traded, transportation, joint business undertakings, finances and currency, taxation, and the creation and interaction of various economic structures; and on economic exchanges with respect to their role and place in the development of Sino-Japanese relations.

Third, scientific and technological dimensions--elucidation of the historical process and characteristics of scientific and technological exchanges between the states of China and Japan and between localities of one with the other, as well as between groups and important individuals in the formation of each state, to sum up the historical lessons of their respective efforts at scientific and technological development both in terms of institutions and policies. Namely, this includes the investigation of the content and patterns since earliest times of exchanges with respect to agriculture and handicrafts, as well as modern heavy industry and contemporary science and technology.

Fourth, cultural and educational dimensions--research on the

course and characteristics of the dissemination and exchange of culture and education as well as of social theories, religion, and morality. This includes the patterns and methods of exchanging, disseminating, absorbing, and digesting culture and learning within all the various fields of the natural and social sciences, in the formation of each country's distinctive theories and doctrines.

Fifth, military dimensions--research on the exchange of military technology between China and Japan and on wars between the two. To investigate the distinctive development of relationships during actual military conflicts and wars between China and Japan, and the role and influence of those conflicts upon domestic politics, economics, life, and theories of social morality.

Sixth, comparisons and contrasts--comparative research on China and Japan is also a theme for Sino-Japanese studies. The history of relations and interactions do not of themselves constitute concepts for study, but the history of direct interaction between the two countries falls naturally within the purview of Sino-Japanese studies. Within any given time period, moreover, we must not neglect to examine comparatively the differences in their respective developments. To take but one example, in the mid-19th century both China and Japan faced the threat of imperialist aggression and the possibility of being colonized or reduced to semi-colonial status, yet the historical outcome took two different courses. Or, as another example, we could benefit from comparative research on China's self-strengthening movement and Japan's reforms in the bakumatsu 幕末 period, or on the late Qing reform and revolutionary movements in China and the Meiji Restoration in Japan, in order to distinguish between the inevitable and the merely coincidental, and to sum up the historical lessons of those experiences.

From the above it should be apparent that the content of scientific research in the history of Sino-Japanese relations is extremely varied and abundant, and it can by no means be subsumed under [the rubrics of] "friendly" or "unfriendly" histories. In a word, the object of research in Sino-Japanese studies is the course of interactions relating to politics, economics, science and technology, culture and education, and the military between the two states of China and Japan, between regions in one with the other, and between various groups and individuals. That is not all, however. We must also investigate patterns and distinctive characteristics, reaching correct conclusions in conformity with the historical facts through scientific analysis, so as to arrive at practical lessons for historical reference.

Thus, the field of Sino-Japanese studies is an exceedingly important and rich one for research, a strictly scientific and rigorous field of inquiry. For this reason, academic groups organized to carry out research, such as the various Associations for Sino-Japanese Studies (Zhong-Ri guanxi shi yanjiuhui 中日関係史研究会) must maintain the highest standards of historical scholarship and re-

main distinct from run-of-the-mill "friendship associations." This characteristic must be clung to tenaciously, for without it we lose our raison d'être and cannot fulfill our fundamental academic mission. Let there be no doubt about the basic task of our various Sino-Japanese studies associations: to pursue the scholarly study of the history of Sino-Japanese relations (to raise its standards while simultaneously publishing our findings), and to organize essential academic exchanges and visits.

From the content of our research, one can readily understand its objectives: to sum up the practical historical lessons of Sino-Japanese relations, to provide historical reference points, to provide reference material for the government in setting domestic and foreign policies, and to educate the masses in advancing both their patriotism and their internationalism. At the same time, we need to help build up the historical sciences, particularly to make contributions to research on the history of international relations, to provide writings on practical historical lessons, all the while helping historical research to flourish in our country. To be more concrete:

First, the objective of our research into the history of Sino-Japanese relations is to provide the government with reference materials for deciding domestic and foreign policies, for the sake of promoting good Sino-Japanese relations into the 21st century.

Second, to sum up the practical lessons derived from the facts of history, through studying various examples of interactions between China and Japan, analyzing successes and failures as well as policies and tactics political, economic, and cultural, in periods of equal and unequal relations and in times of war and peace.

Third, to provide materials concerning patriotism and internationalism and to expose the ruthless crimes of imperialism and fascism, raising the Chinese people's class consciousness and ethnic self-awareness. Over the course of several thousand years of Sino-Japanese relations, one encounters numerous instances of patriotic movements, events, and heroic individuals. Clear elucidation of these can arouse the patriotic feelings of the entire people. At the same time, one encounters a great many events bearing on internationalist thinking which can be offered for study and emulation today. And, without a doubt, the exposure and denunciation of the criminal outrages of imperialism and fascism within the history of Sino-Japanese relations will be of major educational benefit for the people.

II. Periodization of the History of Sino-Japanese Relations and Its Systemization

Historical periods, generally speaking, should be demarcated according to the developmental level of the forces of social production and of class relationships reflecting such levels, along with major political and economic events. The periodization of the his-

tory of international relations requires that one also consider domestic political and economic developments in countries having multiple relationships as well as the major political, military, and economic incidents between these countries. All this is necessary because policies aimed outside a country are determined by policies directed inside that country, and any country's internal and external policies are set by that country's character and general material requirements. Accordingly, the history of Sino-Japanese relations might best be divided into three broad historical periods.

Period One: Premodern (gudai), from the mid-5th century B. C. to the mid-19th century A. D., or approximately 2300 years.

This first period of Sino-Japanese relations is distinguished by the following characteristics: overall, in terms of the level of social development, China was in its period of feudal society, which was advanced for social formations in the world at that time.⁶ This was reflected in Chinese social systems, political thought, culture, morality, and particularly in the level of economic production in Chinese society. During this same time period, Japanese society was relatively backward. Its opening found Japan at the end of its primitive period and in its slave stage.⁷

Japan entered its feudal period extremely late, and its socio-economic development lagged far behind China's. For these reasons, the beginning stages in the history of Sino-Japanese relations saw Japan in every aspect of its learning take and transplant elements of Chinese politics, economics, science and technology, culture, education, and religious beliefs, which it absorbed and digested over the centuries, gradually Japanizing (Ribenhua 日本化, [naturalizing]) all manner of Chinese knowledge and experience according to its own particular needs. This was, then, a period of Japanese Sinification (Hanhua 漢化) and internationalization (guojihua 國際化). Because China at the time was a center for an advanced mode of production in the world as a whole, it stood out all the more in East Asia. Clearly, as early as its premodern period, there was little that was conservative about Japan. It had an openness in policy, and the country as a whole learned from the advanced technologies and cultures of the world.⁸

This period may be subdivided into several phases.

(1) The Qin-Han 秦漢 phase, 5th century B. C. to 3rd century A. D.⁹ During this phase, Chinese feudalism was on the rise, while Japan remained in the slave stage. Japan's Wa 倭 country of Nu 奴 was in contact with Han and Wei 魏 China, and Shōtoku Taishi 聖德太子 carried out his Sinifying reforms [sic., Prince Shōtoku's dates are 574-622, placing him well outside this phase], and Chinese (Hanren 漢人) who had immigrated to Japan spread Chinese technology, culture, and religious beliefs.

(2) The Wei-Jin-Nan-Beichao 魏晉南北朝 phase, 3rd to 7th [sic., 6th] centuries, or more than 300 years. The Japanese state of Yamato

大和 established relations with the Nanchao or Southern Dynasties in China. Japan carried out its celebrated Taika 大化 Reforms, absorbing major elements of Chinese political institutions, economic policies, and cultural traditions.

(3) The Sui-Tang-Five Dynasties 隋唐五代 phase, 7th [sic., late 6th] to 10th centuries, or more than 300 years. This was a period of Chinese political unity and cultural splendor and a peak period in Sino-Japanese relations. Japan sent numerous study and diplomatic missions to Sui and Tang China, resulting in a major flow of Chinese culture and technology into Japan. Moreover, the Five Dynasties period saw maritime contacts flourish spectacularly.

(4) The Song-Yuan 宋元 phase, 10th to 14th centuries, or about 400 years. This phase witnessed the further development of maritime contacts, and the widespread dissemination of Song culture and technology to Japan. Trade between China and Japan reached considerable proportions during the Yuan period, and Japan transplanted Song culture wholesale, Japanizing it in the process.

(5) The Ming 明 to early Qing 清 phase, 14th to 19th centuries, or about 500 years. This period was one of ongoing trade relations, with communications between China and Japan most active in the late Ming, and trade continuing into the Qing period primarily at Nagasaki. Ming and Qing culture and technology spread and developed in Japan.

Period Two: Modern (jindai 近代), from the mid-19th to the mid-20th centuries. The "modern" period of relations extends generally from the Opium War, after which China entered its semi-feudal and semi-colonial age, and from the Meiji Restoration when Japan entered its age of capitalism. Generally, this period witnessed a break from relations in the feudal past, entering an entirely new era. Its chief characteristics were that China's social system and its technology and culture fell behind the times, whereas Japan entered the ranks of the advanced capitalist societies. From Sinification Japan switched over to Westernization (Ouhua 欧化), and from learning from China Japan changed to attacking China, so that the main streams in Sino-Japanese relations changed completely.

This period may be subdivided into several phases:

(1) 1840-1880. During this phase, Japan successfully carried out the Meiji Restoration, creating the political and economic structures and scientific and technological systems required of a modern capitalist state, and accomplishing industrialization and modernization. In its relations with China, Japan basically maintained a peaceful and non-hostile stance.

(2) 1882-1911. This was the phase during which Japan began to pursue wars of aggression against its neighbors, including the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95 and the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05, and to provoke various other aggressive wars against China and Korea. Thus, during this phase Sino-Japanese relations began to enter into a

hostile state.

(3) From the 1911 Revolution to the 1937 eruption of Japan's total war of aggression against China. During this phase, Japan moved from partial aggression against China to its war of total aggression. Relations between the two countries assumed the form of a life-and-death struggle.

(4) From the [Marco Polo Bridge] Incident of July 7, 1937 to Japan's military defeat and surrender of 1945. During this phase, Sino-Japanese relations came to a virtual deadlock, with the Chinese people absorbed in struggling with all their might to resist the Japanese fascist war of aggression, and with the forces of Japan madly occupying Chinese territory and massacring Chinese. It was a critical moment of frontal war to the death between the two countries.

Period Three: Contemporary (xiandai 現代), from the late 1940s into the 1980s. This has been the best period in the history of Sino-Japanese relations and can be subdivided into several phases.

(1) From 1945 until the eve of the founding of the People's Republic in 1949. During this phase, Japan lost the war, was occupied by the United States' armed forces, and carried out a whole series of significantly progressive reforms. China and Japan broke away completely from [earlier] military confrontation. At the official level, there were very few contacts, but somewhat more contacts at the popular level.

(2) From the founding of the PRC in 1949 until the normalization of diplomatic relations in 1972. This was the time during which the Chinese carried forward their socialist revolution and reconstruction, maintaining foreign relations with Japan through the good offices of Japanese outside of government, while at the same time opposing the revival of Japanese militarism and struggling against those out to sabotage the normalization of Sino-Japanese relations. A wide spectrum of Japanese in and out of government along with the Japanese people in general carried out a protracted struggle for normalization of Sino-Japanese relations, contributing to the restoration of diplomatic relations.

(3) 1972-1985, the height of relations between China and Japan. Both national and inter-regional exchanges and cooperation at the group and individual levels--in every arena from politics, economics, science and technology, to culture, education, and religion--have been launched which in their breadth and extent are historically unprecedented. These developments have given great impetus to deepening and broadening the parameters of Sino-Japanese relations.

The research objectives and periodization necessary to the systemization of the study of Sino-Japanese relations should now be evident. I believe these may be summarized in the following points.

First, in researching the history of Sino-Japanese relations, major attention must be given to treatments that are faithful to the

chronological order of historical developments. They should be true to the vertical [or diachronic] progression of those developments, while at the same time they should accord due consideration to coherent horizontal [or synchronic] elements related to the main topic. In general, we must emphasize the vertical without neglecting the horizontal.

Second, research in the history of Sino-Japanese relations must proceed from the fundamental policies and basic interests of each country and must analyze all aspects of the substance and character of relations and interactions--political and diplomatic, military, economic and trade-related, and scientific and cultural. In order to avoid historical distortions, we must be wary of placing undue emphasis upon certain so-called key points and topics apart from their historical contexts.

Third, in researching the history of Sino-Japanese relations, make China the main subject, first studying the general and specific policies of China toward Japan in each historical period and the conditions and effects of the various contacts and interactions with Japan; and make Japan an auxiliary subject, looking at Japanese demands and policymaking toward China by analyzing Japanese official relations with China; then, through further analysis, determine the merits and demerits of China's policies toward Japan and draw conclusions about what was right or wrong, to sum up their practical lessons for people's reference.

Fourth, the problem of mainstream versus sidestream in researching the history of Sino-Japanese relations. Some people argue that the content of our research should make Sino-Japanese friendship the mainstream and wars and resistance sidestreams. Others consider political exchanges to be mainstream, with economic and cultural flows as sidestreams. They each want their own way of thinking to run through all research into Sino-Japanese relations, from start to finish. I regard the manner in which these people dictate what is mainstream and what is sidestream to be unscientific and out of accord with historical realities. What one researches as mainstream must be determined with reference to the objectives and content of research discussed above, differentiating the content according to historical periods, and it must then be carried out within a specifically designated historical era. One cannot designate a priori what topic is mainstream or sidestream, subjectively choosing so-called cases of mainstream history without consideration of historical realities. Frequently, within a given historical time period, there will be several factors operating together causally, and we must not arbitrarily designate one as primary and others as secondary. Proceeding from the facts of Sino-Japanese relations, we must objectively research the various forces and changes of factors within historical relations, concretely analyzing the realities in the history of our relations, according to the fundamental principles of historical materialism. Only then can we reach final scientific conclusion.

III. The New Challenges Confronting Our Traditional Historical Methodology

To be clear about the subjects, content, and objectives of Sino-Japanese studies, as discussed above, we need to resolve certain questions regarding historical research methods. For some time now, our study of history has continued to use traditional methods centered around class analysis. This has produced positive results, but it has also created some problems. Now, we discover that our traditional methods are in need of reform and refinement.

In the postwar period, the appearance and development [outside of China] of the "new historiography" has led to the adoption of various new historical methods that pose fresh challenges and problems for Marxist historiography and its methodology. What exactly are the new historical research methods and of what significance are they to our traditional historical methods?

First, the interdisciplinary (kuaxueke 跨学科) method of historical research is one of the new historical methodologies arising in the postwar period; it can, however, be traced back to discussions of the methodology of "historical synthesis" raised in the journal Revue de synthèse historique, founded in 1900 by Henri Berr. In the postwar years, interdisciplinary historical research developed particularly rapidly in Great Britain, the United States, West Germany, Japan, the Soviet Union, and Eastern European countries, becoming one of the world's most exciting (re 熱) methods for historical research. Although the various countries employing this approach have their own characteristics and styles in its application, they agree on the basics of the methodology. The fundamental points of the theory are as follows: what may be called "total history" (zongti lishi 總體歷史) has two concrete components, namely, the "long-term theory" [la longue durée] referring to long-term developments in human history extending over the ages, in which history is linked to such fields of study as economics, sociology, geography, demography, statistics, and linguistics; and "in-depth history," referring to an in-depth understanding of the general psychological mood of a given historical period, in which history is inherently linked to such fields of study as psychology, anthropology, ethnology, ethnography, folklore, religion, and ecology.

Such interdisciplinary synthesizing research breaks free of the narrow bounds of historical study hitherto confined by politics. In research on Sino-Japanese relations, it breaks through the confines of friendly and unfriendly histories, enabling Sino-Japanese studies to develop greater depth and bring to light the role and place of various factors at work at deeper levels of society. When using the interdisciplinary method in historical research for studies of Sino-Japanese relations, while adhering to the guidance of historical

materialism, one must pay particular attention to psychological factors in the historical movements of the past; and by studying a variety of social and historical phenomena from various angles, what is truly most beneficial in our research into Sino-Japanese relations will become apparent. It is worthwhile for Marxist historiography to take these developments seriously, and it would be a mistake to affirm or dismiss them simplistically. For only through research can we achieve our objective of eliminating the false and retaining the true for future use.

Second, the quantitative method of historical research is well worth our attention. This methodology was developed in the United States in the 1950s. In 1957, Alfred H. Conrad and John R. Meyer of Harvard University first applied quantitative methods to the study of economic history. In 1963, Robert W. Fogel [no relation] delivered a paper before the American Economic Association entitled, "A Provisional View of the New Economic History," after which this method became an important new school in the United States. American historians now use quantitative methods extensively in population history, social history, the history of social structures, family history, gender history, local history, urban history, women's history, ethnic history, and the history of social organizations such as factories, prisons, cities and towns, hospitals, and religious institutions.

At the 15th Congrès Internationale des Sciences Historiques (CISH) in Bucharest in 1980, responsibility for organizing an international committee for quantitative history was assigned to West Germany, the United States, Hungary, the Soviet Union, and Sweden. Now, many historians in the international community have amassed large amounts of data collated and organized by computers, statistical methods, and mathematical principles to carry out quantitative analyses and studies in history, utilizing statistics and mathematical methods, and they have successfully resolved many conundra of the past. It is thus apparent that quantitative methods have enriched and developed traditional historical research methods in certain spheres, thereby posing fresh problems for us. In relation to our own methods of Marxist class analysis, what utility is served by quantitative, statistical methods and are these two methodologies compatible? We await further study in these areas. As concerns research into the history of Sino-Japanese relations, scholars have long been unable to resolve basic numerical and statistical questions relating to military and economic relations. By combining class analysis with quantitative methods, perhaps these difficulties can be resolved.

Third is the comparative method of historical research and its extension and development. The comparative method has long existed, even as an early feature of Marxist thought. Because later Marxism

placed excessive emphasis on class analysis, however, Marxist comparative historical studies failed to develop. Instead, the comparative method developed within the [non-Marxist] historical scholarship of the West.

After the war, comparative historical studies flourished particularly in France. The Annales School represented by Fernand Braudel emphasized research across countries, studying in a comparative manner such matters as economics and everyday social life. In 1980, the American comparative historian Raymond Grew ["The Case for Comparing Histories," The American Historical Review 85.4 (October 1980), pp. 763-78] enumerated the following features of the comparative method in historical research: (1) questions concerning colonial territories and their intimate links to political movements of the day were most welcome; (2) questions related to women, birth control, crime, terrorism, and social welfare had been brought within the purview of historical research; (3) comparative research was particularly fruitful in examining such questions as slavery, land rent and land-use rights, and the problem of revolution; (4) comparative research enabled peasants and workers to see the mutual linkage between a broader cultural and ethnic awareness and economic structures; (5) the majority of researchers gave their full attention to only a single historical case; and (6) enlightening new insights had emerged from the comparative study of social mobility, political behavior, law, education, religious movements, modernization, and revolution.

At present, the comparative historical method is widely accepted and used, and it lends itself particularly well to the field of international relations. In Sino-Japanese relations, for example, comparative analysis of similar historical forces having led to differing results in a given period of time would enable scholars to make accurate judgments about the differences and the unique qualities in the social histories of both countries. Comparative analysis might examine such historical phenomena as political structures, economic organizations, and popular consciousness, and thereby enable us to grasp the course of history in its entirety and to distinguish special traits at different stages. This would allow us to break through the single-country geographic and academic confines of the field of Sino-Japanese studies and to reach the higher plane of global systems of international relations.

From this it is evident that the comparative method comes into conflict with the narrow research methods of our traditional approach to history. That this represents a challenge to Marxist historiography and its methodology cannot be denied. It demands a scientific response from Marxist historians as well as within the field of Sino-Japanese studies.

Fourth is oral history as a method for historical research. In the recent past, the methods of oral history have been adopted exten-

sively, particularly in the United States, in such fields as political history, business history, village history, religious history, ethnic history, family history, urban history, and the history of social groupings, as well as in music history, art history, drama history, film history, and television history. The United States government itself has proposed using oral history methods for a research project on American presidents, and it has drafted an official plan to conduct oral history research concerning former presidents Hoover, Roosevelt, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon. At present, plans are underway to preserve the papers of Ford and Carter, preparatory to carrying out new oral history projects.

Since the 1960s, oral history has spread from the United States to other countries of the world. Canada, Great Britain, France, and Japan have achieved impressive results, setting up appropriate research organs and publishing journals, so that oral history specialists are emerging in large numbers. Oral history methods have also spread rapidly to the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, making it a universally accepted new method of historical research. This new method is urgently needed in the field of Sino-Japanese studies, especially in research on the modern and contemporary periods. A considerable number of older people involved in past Sino-Japanese ties are still living. It is of the utmost urgency that oral histories be conducted concerning the important decision-makers and actors from both sides at the time of the Sino-Japanese War of 1937-45. For a variety of reasons, past studies have been based primarily upon documentary and archeological materials, with insufficient attention to oral histories of the persons involved. This is not merely due to scholarly neglect (circumstances often prevented scholars from conducting oral histories); for often the people concerned, such as top party or government leaders, were not in the habit of leaving oral accounts of their lives, nor were they encouraged to do so. Most older revolutionaries thus failed to leave materials for their own oral histories, which has surely been a loss for us all. It is now evident that oral history needs to be vigorously promoted and popularized in China, and it needs to be employed extensively in Sino-Japanese studies.

To sum up, the many new theories and methods in international historical research today give new life and impetus to our own present-day historical research, especially in the field of Sino-Japanese studies. Although many of the new research methods have their own set of theoretical bases and diverse aims, they may produce differing results when applied to actual historical research. In any event, with respect to our own traditional historical methods, these represent both a challenge and a fresh problematic worthy of our attention. We must correctly study and respond to the new historiography and its methods, taking what is useful to enrich and develop Marxist historiography.

To those of you in the field of Sino-Japanese studies, I say: Push Sino-Japanese studies to a new and higher stage. Push yourselves to produce new landmark works that reflect this great new age, works that are authoritative and that are guided by Marxist historical materialism. This is the shared historical task of those of us who work in the field of Sino-Japanese studies and of the broad masses of the people.

Notes

1. Liu Tianchun, "Guanyu Zhong-Ri guanxi shi yanjiu de jige wenti" 關於中日關係史研究的幾個問題 [Sino-Japanese studies: Three problem areas], in Zhong-Ri guanxi shi lunji, diwu ji 中日關係史論集第五輯 [Essays on the History of Sino-Japanese Relations, Fifth Collection] (1986), published as an unnumbered 1986 supplementary issue of Qiqihe'er Shifan Xueyuan xuebao 齊齊哈爾師範學院學報, pp. 230-36. The original was presented as a paper at the Fifth Symposium of the Northeast Association for Sino-Japanese Studies in Qiqihe'er, Heilongjiang 黑龍江, August 13-18, 1986. At the time of presentation, Liu (age 55) was an associate researcher in the Graduate Division of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing. Liu's critique of Sino-Japanese studies as a field and his bold challenge to China's narrow Marxist class analysis approach to historical research might thus be regarded as having a certain authority.

For help with obtaining valuable Chinese materials related to Sino-Japanese studies, including the present item, I am indebted to Professor Ren Hongzhang 任鴻章, immediate past director of the Japanese Research Institute of Liaoning University and a leader of the Northeast Association for Sino-Japanese Studies. He and his colleagues extended me countless courtesies and provided much intellectual stimulation during my visit to their campus in Shenyang from May 31 to June 3, 1988. For the introduction to Professor Ren, I am grateful to Yue-him Tam (Tan Ruqian 譚汝謙) of the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

2. (Tokyo: Toyama bō, 1955). Translated into Chinese by Hu Xinian, Ri-Zhong wenhua jiaoliu shi 日中文化交流史 [History of Sino-Japanese Cultural Interactions] (Beijing: Shangwu yinshu guan, 1980).

3. (Tokyo: Kanezashi hōryūdō, 1927), 2 vols. Translated into Chinese by Chen Jie, Zhong-Ri jiaotong shi 中日交通史 [History of Sino-Japanese Contacts] (1931; Taipei reprint: Sanrenhang chubanshe, 1974), 2 vols.

4. See notes 3 and 2, respectively.

5. (Tianjin: Dagong bao she, 1932-34; Beijing reprint: Sanlian shudian, 1980-82), 8 vols.

6. Editor's note. There is something awry here. In Chinese Marxist historiography (and Stalinist historiography, generally), gudai (or ancient) corresponds to slave society and feudalism must await the advent of medieval times. Liu, however, jumps directly from gudai to jindai (or modern), one of the reasons for translating the former as "premodern."

7. Editor's note. See note 6 above. The primitive period "should" accompany the pre-slave social formation of "primitive communism."

8. Editor's note. Lest readers think the contemporary overtones of this passage coincidental, the term used for "openness" is indeed kaifang 開放 (i.e., glasnost).

9. Clearly, Liu is dating the Qin not to its unification of China in 221 B. C. but to its earlier existence as a state in the Warring States period.