

Review

Wang Xiaoqiu 王晓秋 . Zhong-Ri wenhua jiaoliu shihua 中日文化交流史话 [Historical Accounts of Sino-Japanese Cultural Interchanges] (Jinan: Shandong jiaoyu chubanshe, 1992). No. 57 in "Zhongguo wenhua shi zhishi congshu" 中国文化史知识丛书 [Series on Knowledge of the History of Chinese Culture]. 128 pp. 2.25 yuan.

This slender volume is a most remarkably introduction to the general field of Sino-Japanese cultural encounters. Its very inclusion in this lengthy series (110 volumes planned) marks an important step in the development of the field of cultural history in China. That is, mutual Sino-Japanese influences in the cultural realm are effectively recognized as basic to the growth of Chinese culture, and not just in the last century where this contribution has long been recognized. As the general editor of the series notes, "Chinese culture is a developing, historical category, possessing both inclusiveness and continuity."

Wang divides his work into fifteen chapters, all but one of which feature an individual or group who played prominent roles in this interaction between China and Japan. He begins with the elusive Xu Fu 徐福 and concludes in the early twentieth century. Although the work is top-heavy toward the more modern end of the historical spectrum, there is still considerable attention to events in Tang, Song, and late-Ming through early-Qing.

In his introduction, Wang attempts to come up with a periodization for the history of Sino-Japanese relations that takes full account of cultural developments in both countries. As is rapidly becoming the standard terminology of periodization in research in the P.R.C., Wang divides history into three eras: ancient, modern, and contemporary. Some time over the past few years, the "middle ages" simply disappeared in China. For that reason, gudai 古代 is probably best translated not as "ancient" but as "pre-modern" in this context. The dividing point between "pre-modern" and "modern" history is, not surprisingly, 1840. Some things never change. The division between modern and contemporary is 1945. Wang subdivides all of his periods further and is clearly attentive to change within his eras; it is just what he has deemed the major divides that may evoke a yawn in most readers.

Let me now just list the chapter titles:

1. The Legend of Xu Fu: The Contributions of Chinese Migrants in High Antiquity
2. The Mystery of the Gold Seal: Proof of Interaction in the Han Dynasty
3. Official Missions to Tang China: The Heyday of the Study of Chinese Culture
4. Abe no Nakamaro 阿倍仲麻呂 : A Japanese Student Whose Bones Were Interred in the High Tang
5. The Buddhist Monk Ganjin 鑑真 : High Priest in Tang China Who Traveled East to Spread Scripture
6. Kōbō Daishi 弘法大師 : Kūkai 空海 , Priest of Learning Who Studies in China
7. Chōnen 奝然 : The Monk in Song China Whose Name is Recorded in History
8. Zhu Shunshui 朱舜水: Refugee from the Ming Dynasty Who Came to Live in Japan
9. Wei Yuan 魏源, [Sakuma] Zōzan 佐久間象山, [Yoshida] Shōin 吉田松阴 : Chinese and Japanese Progressive Thinkers in the Ear of the Opium War
10. Luo Sen 罗森 and His Riben riji 日本日记 [Diary of Japan]: Pioneer of Modern Sino-Japanese Cultural Interchange
11. Huang Zongxian 黄遵宪 and Minamoto Teruna 源辉声 : Interactions and Brush Conversations between Chinese and Japanese Men of Culture in the Qing Period
12. The High Tide of [Chinese] Study in Japan: Chinese Students in Japan in the Early Twentieth Century
13. Lu Xun 鲁迅 and Fujino sensei 藤野先生 : Deep Friendship between a Chinese and a Japanese
14. Miyazaki Tōten 宫崎滔天 : A Japanese Friend Who Supported the Chinese Revolution
15. Li Dazhao 李大钊 and Yoshino Sakuzō 吉野作造 : Sino-Japanese Cultural Interchange in the May Fourth Era

I found particularly interesting the chapter on Chōnen, about whom so little has been written in any language. Wang goes beyond the fairly well-known entry in the Song dynastic history in which Chōnen appears because of his audience with the Chinese emperor; he notes the various books brought to China from Japan, as well as brought back to Japan from China, and he examines some of Chōnen's own writings. He also mentions the little known fact that in 988 one of Chōnen's own disciples, Ka'in 嘉因, traveled to China two years after Chōnen's return as part of a trade mission.