

Preface

Professor Tsuneki Nishiwaki announced his wish to retire from his position at Kyoto University prematurely to take up a new position at Doshisha University to me sometime in July 2005. Although I had made a mental note to myself several times, not to be surprised by Nishiwaki Sensei's actions, I could not help but express astonishment. He however, determinedly and full of vigor as always, explained to me how wonderful it would be to begin teaching anew, without the administrative obligations and bureaucratic limitations that come with a senior position at a public university in Japan. At about the same time, the idea to try to collect some contributions for a volume in honor of Nishiwaki Sensei, which had been in the air for a while among students and friends, suddenly had to be put in practice earlier than expected.

Nishiwaki Tsuneki was born in 1943 in Shanghai, China, in the very country that would become the focus of his interest for much of his professional life. After spending the early years of his university education at Tokyo University of Education, he moved to Kyoto in 1968 and entered the Masters course at Kyoto University. This was a time of great unrest in Japanese universities and for about 2 years there was no regular class at Kyoto University. Nishiwaki Sensei, however made rather clever use of this time by his decision to spend some time in Germany to pursue further studies, he thus went to München (1969/70) and Tübingen (1971/72), which gave him the opportunity to gather intimate knowledge of the way sinological studies are pursued in Germany, but also to form what should become lifelong friendship with some of his fellow students of that time. In 1975, he finished the coursework, but continued at Kyoto University as Assistant Professor at the Department of Letters; his Ph. D. was granted to him in 1999 for his *Thought and Culture in Tang China*. In 1979, he went to Niigata University to teach there for some time, but returned to Kyoto in 1981 to take up a position at the Department of

General Studies (教養部), the department that provides general education to the first and second year students. He continued in this department, which was in 1992 redesigned as the ‘Faculty of Integrated Human Studies’ (総合人間学部), from 1993 as a full professor. In 2003, he changed to the associated Graduate School of Human and Environmental Studies, where he continued until March 2006. In 1989/90, in demonstration of his continued interest in academic Sinology in Germany, he accepted an invitation from the University of Hamburg to teach there for a semester as a guest professor. The number of contributions in this volume from colleagues and students from Germany, as well as the variety of themes covered, demonstrate vividly the breath and depth that this academic exchange has taken.

This interest in a “third look,” a view on the Chinese cultural sphere from the outside, was not limited to German sinology, as is also vividly demonstrated by a look at some of Nishiwaki Sensei’s publications, which at the same time also show the breadth of his academic interests. As early as 1976, he published a translation of Volume 2 “Disposal of the Dead. The Grave” of J. J. M. de Groot’s *The Religious System of China*, which was followed in 1978 by a translation of Edward Schafer’s *The divine woman: Dragon ladies and rain maidens in T’ang literature* and in 1994 by a translation of *Death ritual in late imperial and modern China*, a volume edited by James L. Watson and Evelyn S. Rawski. As to translations of Chinese primary sources, quite a different terrain is covered. In 1987, he published a translation of the monograph on sacrifices from Ban Gu’s *Han shu*, together with Kano Naosada 狩野直禎. This was followed by two monumental volumes, in 1989 and 2002, of the first historiographical work in Chinese intellectual history, the *Shitong* by Liu Zhiji 劉知幾 (661-721). Meticulously annotated and commented, this is the first translation of this important work in any language and will surely be the first reference for students of Chinese historiography for years to come.

In the nineties, there has been another shift in the academic interests of Nishiwaki Sensei, when he started to become interested in the collection of Manuscripts, early prints and other remains that have been brought to Berlin by the four Expeditions to Central Asia that were commissioned by the Prussian Academy of Sciences between 1902 and

1914 (the so-called Turfan Collection), which became accessible after the German re-unification and is now kept at the Staatsbibliothek and Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences in Berlin. The vast majority of fragments in this collection are Buddhist in content, but there are also some non-Buddhist fragments that had not received much attention so far. He started work on cataloging these, paying especially attention to the colophons that could provide important hints on the background and material history of the manuscripts. Two works introducing some of the findings, with analysis and translation, were among the immediate results of this work: *Studies on some Chinese Fragments in the Berlin Turfan Collection* [ベルリン・トルファン・コレクション漢語文書研究], 1997 and *Chinese documents in the Berlin Turfan Collection* [ドイツ将来のトルファン漢語文書], 2002. On top of that, in 2001 he published in the catalog *Chinesische Text vermischten Inhalts aus der Berliner Turfansammlung* detailed descriptions of non-Buddhist documents held in the Berlin Turfan Collection. The topic of his last lecture at Kyoto University, on the Fomu jing 佛母經, which is also contained in this volume, bears witness to this continued interest.

No appreciation of Professor Nishiwaki would be complete without mentioning the role he played for many international students visiting Kyoto University. He would never tire of taking care of whatever problem arose, be it academically or related to life in Japan in general, from opening doors and introductions to colleagues to renting his house he would do anything to make the stay in Japan a special and most rewarding experience.

Christian Wittern
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