

## Dr. KÔNO Rokurô. An Obituary Notice

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Dr. Rokurô Kôno, a member of the Japan Academy, a person of Cultural Merits, professor emeritus of Tokyo University of Education, passed away at the age of 87 on October 7, 1998 at 9:46 p.m. He studied Oriental languages based on Korean linguistics and Chinese phonology, as well as general linguistics, focusing on grammatology and typology. His work contributed greatly to the world academic society. It is our great regret that we lost Dr. Kôno. He was a distinguished and leading linguist of Japan, and I feel that a great star has fallen and am deeply saddened.

Dr. Kôno was born in Kobe on December 16, 1912 and after a short time moved to Tokyo. He graduated from Tokyo No.1 Middle School and No.1 Senior High School and then enrolled in the Department of Linguistics, Faculty of Letters of the Imperial University of Tokyo. After graduation in March 1937, Dr. Kôno began his career as a teacher in the Imperial University of Keijô, where he taught and conducted research until the end of the Second World War.

Following the repatriation from Korea at the end of the War, Dr. Kôno spent the next quarter century giving lectures at Tenri University, Tokyo University of Literature and Science and Tokyo University of Education, and fostering the next generation of scholars. In 1962, the University of Tokyo conferred upon him the honor of Doctor of Literature. Upon his retirement from Tokyo University of Education in 1976, he joined the faculty of Daitô Bunka University. Retiring from Daitô Bunka University in 1983, he devoted himself to writing papers focusing on the compilation of "The Sanseido Encyclopedia of Linguistics".

During that time, Dr. Kôno served as a trustee for the Toyo Bunko, as well as heading its general affairs division. He was also the chairman of UNESCO East Asia Culture Centre, and a member of Japanese National Commission for UNESCO. In addition, he was involved in the governmental academic administration serving as a member of Advisory Committee of the Institute for the Study of Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, and as a member of the Liaison Committee for Oriental Studies of the Japan Science Council. For his prestigious academic achievements and great contributions to governmental academic administration, Dr. Kôno was decorated with the Medal with Purple

Ribbon in 1980, the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon in 1985. In 1986, he was elected a member of the Japan Academy and was honored as a person of Cultural Merits. After his death, Dr. Kôno was decorated once again with the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star, the Senior Grade of the Fourth Court Rank.

Dr. Kôno's studies covered three different fields: Korean linguistics; Chinese phonology; and grammatology. His discernment and deep understanding of language and linguistics were evident in all of his studies. Dr. Kôno's great achievements are shown through following his works: "Selected Writings of Dr. Rokurô Kôno Nos. 1, 2, 3" (Heibonsha, 1978-1980), entries in "The Sanseido Encyclopedia of Linguistics" (Sanseido, 1984) and "Writings on Writing" (Sanseido, 1994).

Dr. Kôno specialized in the Korean language. The breadth of his scholarship was enormous, his research covering all facets of Korean linguistics. Dr. Kôno introduced the methodology of modern linguistics to the study of Korean language, establishing the linguistic study of Korean in a true sense. First, I would like to speak about "Essay on Korean Dialectology – A Study on the Word 'Scissors'" (1945), Dr. Kôno's great work in the study of dialectology and historical phonology. Dialects of Korean are essential tools in constructing the history of the Korean language, as there is a shortage of old historical records. For three years, he conducted field research on dialects in 149 locations throughout Korea and examined the collected data from the viewpoint of the methodology of linguistic geography. He greatly contributed to the study of phonological history by clarifying the *r* sound and *z* sound. The collected materials of dialects are very rare and valuable after the Korean War and the standardization of Korean was established.

Dr. Kôno devoted himself to the issue of verb tense systems, when he studied the Middle Korean, an important factor in elucidating the history of the Korean language. His work on Middle Korean includes such papers as "The Perfect Tense of Middle Korean" (1946), "On the Corean Suffix 'de' (Past Tense)" (1947), "On the Intensive Stem of Middle Korean" (1950) and "On the 'Tense' System of Middle Korean" (1952). He examined and clarified the verb tense system of Middle Korean as belonging to the category of modality systems and concluded that it evolved into the modern aspect system. These works are detailed and farsighted. In addition to these papers, there is an unpublished paper on morphological study of verbs of Middle Korean.

Dr. Kôno is also the first scholar to do a full-scaled study on accents of Middle Korean. He made clear the meaning of accent signs and clarified accent types of nouns in his work "Phonetic Signs as Seen in Ancient Korean Literature" (1951), and defined the rules of accent alternation in case of verb conjugation in his paper "On Accenting of Verb Stems of Middle Korean"

(1953).

Regarding Modern Korean, his work "Korean Language" (1955), which describes its construction precisely and systematically, is so suggestive and exact, that even after 40 years, we are able to trail the diachronic changes of Korean through his data.

Dr. Kôno used to say that predicate is highly significant in Japanese and Korean. He examined the sentence structure of Korean, quoting E. Sapir's theory of typology, in his work "On the Agglutination of the Korean Language" (1971). And he explained that the predicate at the end of sentence is the most important element in Altaic languages such as Japanese and Korean, the predicate consisting of a compound of stem and various kinds of suffixes (用言複合語體).

Dr. Kôno developed his idea further in his entry on 'Characteristics of Japanese' in "The Sanseido Encyclopedia of Linguistics Vol. 1- Languages of the World". There, he laid stress on the distinction between mono-branching languages, in which the sentence is just a predicate, and dual-branching languages, in which the sentence consists of a subject and a predicate, and elucidated the characteristics of the structure of predicative compound of Altaic type.

Dr. Kôno did not touch upon genealogy, as he felt a comparative study would be impossible due to the shortage of old materials. However, his work "Some Similar Points of Japanese and Korean" (1949) demonstrated a rigorous method of comparative study and warned us against anything less than strict diligence in our own work. His considerations on linguistic contact of Japanese with languages of the ancient Korean Peninsula in his work "Ancient Japanese and Korean" (1967) also helped illuminate the path for subsequent scholars.

Furthermore, Dr. Kôno conducted field research of spoken Manchu in the North-Eastern District of China, and his report titled "A Specific Character of Manchu Language in Hei-Hê District of Manchuria" (1944) is a very valuable resource for Altaic linguistics. Professor Paeg-in Söng of Seoul National University visited there last year, also for field research, and was surprised by just how accurate Dr. Kôno's description is.

Dr. Kôno was inspired to study Chinese phonology during his days at No. 1 Senior High School, after having been impressed by Professor Karlgren's book "Études sur la phonologie chinoise". There is a very famous episode in which Professor Karlgren helped him receive free access to the Toyo Bunko's Library when Dr. Kôno was a high school student, as they had been acquainted through letters. His BA dissertation of the Imperial University of Tokyo titled "Phonological Study of Fan Ch'ieh in Yü-p'ien" (1937) made it clear that the phonological system of Yü-p'ien was not significantly different from the system of Ch'ieh-yün and pointed out that both books were based on the standard

sounds of that time. Interestingly enough, a Chinese scholar, Professor Chou Tsu-mo, had written a thesis by the same title around that time and had come to the same conclusions. The BA dissertation had unfortunately been left in Korea on his repatriation and become lost. However, thanks to Professor Pyōng-hŭi An of Seoul National University, who found it in a second-hand bookstore and returned it to Dr. Kōno in 1972, it is now available for us all to read. We were moved by the kindness and heartfelt deed of a truth-seeking scholar, Dr. An, and we would like to express our thanks to him. In Dr. Kōno's work entitled "A Specific Character of Sino-Korean" (1939), he investigated the relationship between Sino-Korean sounds and Fang Ch'ieh in the "Ch'ieh-yŭn" and the "Yŭ-p'ien", and clarified the existence of initial doublets of Fang Ch'ieh in both "Ch'ieh-yŭn" and "Yŭ-p'ien". This work greatly contributed to the promotion of the study of Ch'ung-niu.

The book titled "A Study of Sino-Korean" was Dr. Kōno's doctorate dissertation, submitted to the University of Tokyo in 1962. In his work, he reveals, through a thorough investigation, the specific character of the system of Sino-Korean, and that the origin of Sino-Korean shows multilevel characters stacking sound elements of several eras on the base of Ch'ang-an dialect sounds used during the T'ang dynasty. Dr. Kōno gave us his view on Korean phonological history as well as diachronic change in the Korean vowel system, informed by his knowledge he gained through the study of Sino-Korean.

I would like to mention Dr. Kōno's achievements on grammarology as the third part of his areas of study. While still very young, Dr. Kōno began to study the structures and functions of writings, focusing on the Liu-shu, i. e. the Six Kinds of Chinese character. In this field, there are publications such as "A Study of the Hsieh-shêng Characters" (1953), "On Chuan-chu" (1977) and "On Chia-chieh" (1980), wherein he defined the meaning of 'Chuan-chu', the nature of which had not been distinct. He explains that 'Chuan-chu' is the means of using synonymic letters while 'Chia-chieh' is the means of using homonymic letters. Dr. Kōno clearly explained that the reason why written examples of 'Chuan-chu' as well as 'Chia-chieh' decreased and finally disappeared, was that their function as graphemes in distinguishing words were insufficient. And he further stated the Hsieh-shêng characters consequently developed, as a result the system of graphemes based on the rule of 'one letter, one word' being established. Dr. Kōno's insights into grammarology were based on his profound knowledge of Chinese character, Hangŭl, Hyangch'al, Idu, T'o, Egyptian hieroglyph, and cuneiform of the Ancient Orient as such as Sumer and Accad. He insisted that the fundamental linguistic functions of letters lead to logography ("A Nature of Writing" 1977). Combining the four above-mentioned papers with five others, he published a book titled "Writings on Writing" (1994). This text initiated the study of grammarology, and is nearly perfect in content. As

Professor Eiichi Chino noted, it is worthy of being called a classic of grammatology.

All of his achievements and works that I have mentioned above grew out of his profound insight and impeccable understanding of linguistics and language. For a long time, Dr. Kôno lectured on Hermann Paul's *Prinzipien der Sprachgeschichte* at the University of Tokyo. He also spoke often of Edward Sapir's linguistic theory and introduced us to the linguistic theories of André Martinet, Vilém Mathesius and Ivan Ivanovic Meščaninov and others. Although Dr. Kôno specialized in Oriental linguistics focusing on Korean, he had a thorough knowledge of Greek, Latin and Sanskrit, and understood completely the preciseness and strictness of European linguistics. He was interested in various kinds of languages of different linguistic structures, thus broadening his perceptions on language in general. On examining the sentence structures of Korean and Japanese, Dr. Kôno never confined himself to the narrow limits of his own specialized field, always paying close attention to the study of typology of other languages of the world. His studies were always concrete and his results clear, and his description simple and to the point, often reducing his explanations to concise formulas.

Even though I am aware that we human beings are mortal, Dr. Kôno's death came as a great shock. When I went to bid him farewell at his wake on October 10, his face looked very small in the coffin and I felt great sorrow. He always faced us, his pupils, with gentleness in his lecturing and guidance, and never scolded us with rough words. He always paid attentions to his juniors and pupils and genuinely cared about them. He was a man of remarkable tenderness.

So many scholars gathered together to pay their last respects to Dr. Kôno at the departing ceremony, held on November 29, 1998 drawn by their deep attachment to his virtuous influence. And not a few Korean scholars expressed their condolences. I am sure that he was, and will be thought of in the future, as the last great scholar and gentleman.

I would like to express my gratitude for his generous guidance and pray for the repose of his soul with my deepest affection and respect.

### Writings of Dr. Rokurô Kôno

#### I. Books

##### a.

*Chôsenjo Hôgengaku Shikô* – 'Hasami'go-kô (Keijô Teikoku Daigaku Hôbungakkai Ronsô No. 11) 朝鮮方言學試攷—「鋏」語考 (京城帝國大學法文學會論纂第11輯) (Essay on Korean

- Dialectology — A Study on the Word 'Scissors'), Tôto Shoseki 東都書籍, Apr. 1945 [1]  
*Chôsen Kanji-on no Kenkyû* 朝鮮漢字音の研究 (A Study on Sino-Korean), Tenrijihôsha 天理時報社, Sept. 1968 [2]  
*Kôno Rokurô Chosakushû 1: Chôseno Ronbunshû* 河野六郎著作集 1 朝鮮語論文集 (Selected Writings of Dr. Rokurô Kôno, Vol. 1, Selected Papers on Korean Linguistics), Heibonsha 平凡社 Oct. 1979  
*Kôno Rokurô Chosakushû 2: Chûgoku On'ingaku Ronbunshû* 河野六郎著作集 2 中國音韻學論文集 (Selected Writings of Dr. Rokurô Kôno, Vol. 2, Selected Papers on Chinese Phonology), Heibonsha 平凡社, Nov. 1979  
*Kôno Rokurô Chosakushû 3: Mojiron, Zassan* 河野六郎著作集 3 文字論・雜纂 (Selected Writings of Dr. Rokurô Kôno, Vol. 3, Grammatology and Miscellanea), Heibonsha 平凡社, Jan. 1980  
*Mojiron* 文字論 (Writings on Writing), Sanseido 三省堂, Sept. 1994  
*Moji-biiki* 文字鼻頂 (西田龍雄氏との対談) (Pro-writing: Master Linguists Discuss the Essence of Writing; A Conversation with Professor Tatsuo Nishida), Sanseido 三省堂, May 1995

#### b. Joint writings

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*Nihongo-no Rekishi 2: Moji-tono Meguriai* 日本語の歴史 2 文字とのめぐりあい (A History of the Japanese Language 2: Encounter with Letters), Heibonsha 平凡社, Dec. 1963  
*Nihongo-no Rekishi 4: Utsuriyuku Kodai-go* 日本語の歴史 4 移りゆく古代語 (A History of the Japanese Language 4: Changing Phases of Old Japanese), Heibonsha 平凡社, July 1964  
*Nihongo-no Rekishi 7: Sekai-no naka-no Nihongo* 日本語の歴史 7 世界のなかの日本語 (A History of the Japanese Language 7: Japanese Language in the World), Heibonsha 平凡社, Aug. 1965  
*Nihongo-no Rekishi, Bessatsu: Gengoshi Kenkyu Nyûmon* 日本語の歴史 別冊 言語史研究入門 (A History of the Japanese Language, Supplement: Introduction to Historical Linguistics), Heibonsha 平凡社, Jun. 1966

#### c. Compilations

- Gengogaku Dai-jiten 1: Sekai Gengo-hen (A)* 言語學大辭典第1卷 世界言語編 (上) (The Sanseido Encyclopedia of Linguistics Vol. 1 Languages of the World, Part One), Sanseido 三省堂, March 1988  
*Gengogaku Dai-jiten 2: Sekai Gengo-hen (B)* 言語學大辭典第2卷 世界言語編 (中) (The Sanseido Encyclopedia of Linguistics Vol. 2 Languages of the World, Part Two), Sanseido, 三省堂, Sept. 1991  
*Gengogaku Dai-jiten 3: Sekai Gengo-hen (C-1)* 言語學大辭典第3卷 世界言語編 (下・1) (The Sanseido Encyclopedia of Linguistics Vol. 3 Languages of the World, Part Three), Sanseido 三省堂 Jan. 1992  
*Gengogaku Dai-jiten 4: Sekai Gengo-hen (C-2)* 言語學大辭典第4卷 世界言語編 (下・2) (The Sanseido Encyclopedia of Linguistics Vol. 4 Languages of the World, Part Three), Sanseido 三省堂 Jan. 1992  
*Gengogaku Dai-jiten 5: Hoi; Gengo-mei Sakuin* 言語學大辭典第5卷 補遺・言語名索引編 (The Sanseido Encyclopedia of Linguistics Vol. 5 Supplement and Index of Language), Sanseido 三省堂 Jul. 1993  
*Gengogaku Dai-jiten 6: Jutsugo-hen* 言語學大辭典第6卷 述語編 (The Sanseido Encyclopedia of Linguistics Vol. 6 Terms), Sanseido 三省堂 Jan. 1996  
*Gengogaku Dai-jiten Serekushon: Nippon Rettô-no Gengo* 言語學大辭典セクション 日本列島の言語 (Selected Entries of The Sanseido Encyclopedia of Linguistics: Languages in Japan Islands), Sanseido 三省堂 Jan. 1997  
*Gengogaku Dai-jiten Serekushon: Yôroppa-no Gengo* 言語學大辭典セクション ヨーロッパの言語 (Selected Entries of The Sanseido Encyclopedia of Linguistics: Languages in Europe), Sanseido 三省堂, May 1998

#### d. Supervision

- Chôsen-go Yon-shûkan* 朝鮮語四週聞 (Four Week's Korean Course) 石原六三・青山秀夫著 (written

by Rokuzô Ishihara and Hideo Aoyama), Daigaku Shorin 大學書林 Jun. 1963

### e. Translations

- Yan Sereriyâ Saku *Gin-no Naifu* ヤン・セリヤー作 銀のナイフ (A Silver Sword by Ian Serraillier), Iwanami Shônen Bunko 岩波少年文庫, May 1959
- Echiennu Jiruson *Gengogaku to Tetsugaku - Gengo no Tetsugaku Teikô ni tsuite no Shiron* エチエンヌ・ジルソン言語學と哲學—言語の哲學定項についての試論 (Linguistique et Philosophie — Essai sur les constantes philosophiques du langage by Etienne Gilson), Iwanami Shoten 岩波書店, May 1974

## II. Articles

- Gyokuhen-ni Arawaretaru Hansetsu-no On'inteki Kenkyû 玉篇に現れたる反切の音韻的研究 (東京帝國大學文學部言語學科卒業論文) (Phonological Study of Fan Ch'ieh in Yü-p'ien, The BA Dissertation of the Imperial University of Tokyo), March 1937 [2]
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- Manshû-koku Kokuka-chihô-ni okeru Manshû-go no Ichi Tokushitsu—Chôsengo oyobi Manshû-go no Hikaku Kenkyu-no Ichi Hôkoku—滿州國黑河地方に於ける滿州語の一特質—朝鮮語及び滿州語の比較研究の一報告— (A Specific Character of Manchu Language in Hei-Hê District of Manchuria—A Report of Comparative Study of Korean and Manchu), Keijô Teikoku Daigaku Bungakukai Hen *Gakusô* 京城帝國大學文學會編 學叢, Vol. 3, Oct. 1944 [1]
- Chûki Chôsengo-no Kanryô Jishô ni tsuite 中期朝鮮語の完了時稱に就いて (The Perfect Tense of Middle Korean), *Tôyôgo Kenkyû* Vol. 1, Oct. 1946 [1]
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- Nihongo to Chôsengo no Ni San no Ruiji 日本語と朝鮮語の二三の類似 (Some Similar Points of Japanese and Korean), Hachi Gakkai Rengô Hen *Jinbun Kagaku no Sho Mondai-Kyôdô Kenkyû 'Ine'* 八學會聯合編 人文科學の諸問題—共同研究稻 (*Problems of Cultural Science—A Joint Research on Rice Plant* edited by the Union of Eight Academic Associations), Nov. 1949 [1]
- Chûgoku-on'ingaku to Chôsen 中國音韻學と朝鮮, (Chinese Phonology and Korea), *Chûgokugogaku Kenkyûkai Chûgokugogaku* 中國語學研究會中國語學, Vol. 33, Dec. 1949 [2]
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- Chûgoku-on'inshi Kenkyû no Ichi Hôkô—Daiichi Kôgaika ni Kanrenshite—中國音韻史研究の一方—第一口蓋化に關連して— (A Trend of the Study of Chinese Phonology), Tokyo Bunrika Daigaku *Chûgoku Bunka Kenkyûkai Kaihō* 東京文理科大學中國文化研究會會報, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1950 [2]
- Onmon Ko-bunken no Seiten ni tsuite 諺文古文獻の聲點に就いて (Phonetic Signs as Seen in Ancient Korean Literature), *Chosen Gakuho* 朝鮮學報, Vol. 1, May 1951 [1]
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- Kaisei Seifu ni mirareru Choku-yô Kôtai ni tsuite 諧聲聲符に見られる直拗交替に就いて (On the Alternations of Palatalized and Non-palatalized Sounds as Seen in the Phonetic of Hsieh-shêng Characters) *Tokyo Bunrika Daigaku Chûgoku Bunka Kenkyûkai Ronbunshû* 東京文理科大学中國文化研究會論文集, Vol. 2, No. 4, Jun. 1952 [2]
- 'Iroha'no Onmon Hyôki ni tuite — Chôsengogaku no Tachiba kara — 「伊路波」の諺文標記に就いて — 朝鮮語學の立場から — (On the Korean Transcription of 'Irofa' — from the Viewpoint of Korean Linguistics), *Kyoto Daigaku Bungakubu Kokugo Kokubungaku Kenkyûshitsu Hen Kokugo Kokubun* 京都大學文學部國語國文學研究室編 國語國文 Vol. 21, No. 10, Nov. 1952 ("Irofa" A Commemorative Publication of the Tenth Anniversary of the Founding of Kagawa University 香川大學開學十周年記念出版「伊路波」刊行委員會 伊路波 May 1959; *Kyoto Daigaku Kokubun Gakkai Kôji 5 Nen Chôsen-ban Irofa* 京都大學文學部國語國文研究室 弘治五年朝鮮版 伊路波 (*Korean Alphabetized IROFA Published in 1492*), Jul. 1965) [1]
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## Abbreviations

[1] [2] [3] = *Kōno Rokurō Chosakushū* 河野六郎著作集 1・2・3

[W] = *Mojiron* 文字論 (Writings on Writing), Sanseido 三省堂