

Tomoyuki Kojima, 1943–2008

Ryosei Kokubun

Tomoyuki Kojima, professor and former dean of the Faculty of Policy Management at Keio University, passed away on 4 March 2008, at the age of 64. Professor Kojima had undergone surgery in February 2007 to remove a brain tumour, after which in an almost miraculous recovery he had returned to his research and even paid visits to China and Taiwan. But the tumour recurred in the autumn of 2007, and despite intensive medical treatment Professor Kojima died soon thereafter. Kojima's passing was a great shock; the news of his death was broadcast across Japan's newspapers and on public television, and the word quickly spread to the Chinese mainland and Taiwanese press.

Professor Kojima was an exemplary scholar in the field of Chinese politics and foreign relations. His scholarship was recognized worldwide, and for more than a decade he served on the editorial board of the most prestigious international journals on China studies, including *The China Quarterly* and *China Perspectives*. Within Japan, his expertise was widely recognized and keenly sought. He contributed a wealth of insights on policy matters concerning China or Asia as an adviser to the Japanese government, as the director of collaborative research teams at Japan's leading think tanks, and as a commentator in the media. Making full use of his fluency in Chinese and English, he travelled around the world to participate in countless international conferences on China as a highly distinguished representative of Japan's China scholarship.

Born in Hiroshima in 1943 and raised in Fukuoka, Professor Kojima honed his expertise on contemporary Chinese politics at Keio University under the supervision of the late Professor Tadao Ishikawa. In the early 1970s, the young Kojima, still a graduate student, developed his research expertise at the University of California at Berkeley under the supervision of Professor Franz Schurmann. While at Berkeley, he forged friendships with many distinguished China scholars in the English-speaking world. Upon his return to Japan, he was appointed associate professor at Kyoto University of Foreign Studies from 1975 to 1982, and then professor at Kyoto Sangyo University from 1982. In 1991, he joined the Faculty of Policy Management at Keio University, and was promoted to dean in 2001. In addition to his academic appointments, Professor Kojima served as a special researcher in the Japanese Consulate of Hong Kong from 1974 to 1975, as a visiting scholar at the Japanese Embassy in Beijing from 1984 to 1985, and as a visiting researcher at The George Washington University in 1995.

Tomoyuki Kojima's research was landmark both for its scale and its quality, and created a legacy that any ordinary scholar could only dream of achieving in the course of a lifetime. He authored 23 volumes on contemporary China in Japanese, edited or co-edited another 25 volumes, published 358 academic articles and wrote short articles and essays for newspapers and magazines on over 300 occasions. He was a prodigious scholar, and while most of his written work could only be enjoyed in the Japanese language, the impact of his presence in the China studies field was felt around the world.

In hindsight, one can distinguish three currents in Professor Kojima's career. Firstly, in his early years his doctoral research on the history of the Chinese Communist Party – focusing on the party's mass line in particular – demonstrated his scholarly promise in the field of China studies. The fruit of this labour was realized in his first book, *Chinese Politics and the Mass Line [Chugokuseiji to taishurosen]* (Keio University Press, 1985). In this book Kojima argued that the mass campaign led by Mao Zedong was essentially mass class struggle, and that the mass line purported by Mao manifested itself as a mass movement. He established the underlying processes and problems in China from the 1920s to the 1950s, when mass line work broke out of the party's organizational channels and expanded into a mass movement founded on class struggle under Mao's supreme leadership. With abundant and convincing empirical evidence, he demonstrated, using the relationship between central and local government, the process by which Mao's absolute authority had been consolidated. The cases he employed for analysis included the Chinese Soviet Republic period and the beginning of the mass line, the Futian Incident in the Jiangsu Soviet period, the 1950s agricultural collectivization and the people's commune.

Secondly, Professor Kojima engaged in analysis of contemporary Chinese politics and diplomacy. This effort was crystallized in 24 years of uninterrupted monthly contributions to the journal *Toa (East Asia)*, published by Kazankai) which analyses the current state of Chinese affairs. His essays, written from March 1983 and continuing up until his illness in February 2007, reflected his careful scrutiny of not only the Chinese, Taiwanese and Japanese press but also his painstaking perusal of major publications from around the world in order to gain an objective and empirically sound foundation for his commentaries on China's current politics and diplomacy. Every month he chose a specific theme for his article, each of which was greater in length and broader in scope than a typical academic article, creating a prodigious output of no less than 288 articles to his credit. Of the 23 books he authored during his career, ten were regular compilations of these serial articles. His work on the articles became something of an obsession to him, but it nonetheless represents an unprecedented achievement that anyone else is unlikely to match. These 24 years cover a period when China's reform and opening-up policy gradually began to gain momentum, and Professor Kojima's countless articles could be regarded as part

of the pool of historical research material on China in their own right. One can only regret the fact that these articles were never translated.

Thirdly, Professor Kojima was much involved with research on international relations in East Asia, especially Chinese foreign policy and Sino-Japanese relations, and his achievements on this front were also considerable. He founded his research on China's domestic conditions, specifically on locating sources of authority and understanding foreign policy in terms of the relationship between state and society. As such, he was not content to simply review China's international choices, but rather he preferred the more difficult challenge of setting foot inside China to gain a first-hand empirical basis for his research. He consistently advocated the necessity to view Japan's and China's relations in terms of a wider global context, rather than falling into the trap of conducting limited studies into the two countries' bilateral history, arguing that this broader perspective is a prerequisite for any debate among the East Asian community. In recent years, Professor Kojima complemented his research interests with a practical application of his commitment to Sino-Japanese co-operation on the environment by participating in annual tree-planting campaigns in Shenyang and Chengdu.

Kojima was a historian as well as a political scientist, always emphasizing the importance of empiricism and objectivism. However he is credited not only for his academic activities but also for his efforts to enlighten the public and policy-makers. He chaired countless governmental and think-tank research teams, his roles including president of the Japan Association for Asian Studies, member of the Japan–China Friendship Committee for the 21st Century, member of the Japan–China Joint History Studies Committee, membership in all China-related Official Development Assistance (ODA) committees at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, chair of the Cabinet Office's research team on China, and editor-in-chief of *Chugoku Soran (Compendium of China)*. After the downturn over the Yasukuni Shrine issue, as Japan–China relations began to improve during the Abe cabinet, Professor Kojima played a significant role in the Japan–China Joint History Studies Committee, taking charge of research on modern and contemporary history until his illness intervened. In all his public service assignments, he never failed to be an indispensable champion for maintaining sober and objective perceptions of and policies towards China, even during times when China's momentous emergence was upsetting public opinion in Japan.

At his funeral on 11 March 2008, Professor Kojima's first-born son mentioned in his farewell speech that all his memories of his father were of him turned towards his desk at work, and that he could hardly remember ever seeing his father at sleep. Professor Kojima literally devoted his life to research on China, his unequalled commitment evidenced by the fact that he continued reading research material even while his consciousness was fading. He was only one scholar, but in his unequalled capacity and willingness to produce the best research of his field, his gift to us was a prodigious contribution worthy of numerous researchers.

The death of Professor Kojima was a tremendous loss to Japan's community of China scholars, which now faces the challenge of producing generations that carry on his spirit. In the meanwhile, we find solace in the fact that Professor Kojima inspired a generation of newly emerging scholars here at Keio University, scholars from Japan, China, Taiwan and South Korea who will carry on his methodology, and who will, as his disciples, undoubtedly distinguish themselves as prominent China scholars in the years ahead.