

# Harold Shadick

*September 30, 1902 — December 21, 1993*

It has been said much more than once that Harold Shadick was a man of two cultures and two careers. Although he was born in London and died in Ithaca, he was in spirit Chinese. His first career took him to China, teaching Western history and literature at Yenching University, Peking; his second career as a Chinese scholar, teacher, and translator brought him to Cornell University.

Harold Shadick was educated at Westminster City School in London and studied philosophy at Wycliffe College, University of Toronto, where the Principal, Dr. O'Meara, took a personal interest in his development. So, too, did Dr. Hwang—also associated with the University of Toronto—who introduced Harold Shadick to the idea of working in China by identifying the educational needs of China as an appropriate challenge for Harold Shadick's talents.

In 1925, just fourteen years after the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty, Harold Shadick began teaching Western history and literature at Yenching University in Peking (Beijing). He also took every opportunity to study classical as well as colloquial Chinese, and made the acquaintance of many Chinese scholars and writers. Beijing was occupied by the Imperial Japanese Army in July 1937, after which Harold Shadick continued to teach at Yenching University. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Japanese military authorities entered the campus and closed the university, interrupting a lecture he was giving on Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" and ordering him to dismiss his students. Subsequently, Harold and his first wife, Helen Lamkert Shadick, were interned at the Weixian Concentration Camp in Shandong Province for the duration of World War II.

After the end of the war, he resumed teaching at Yenching University during 1945-46, before becoming a Visiting Professor at Cornell, where he was given a regular appointment as Professor of Chinese Literature in June 1946 to the then Department of Far Eastern Studies (renamed Department of Asian Studies in 1962). He taught Chinese language and literature and in 1952 published his translation of the novel, *The Travels of Lao Ts'an*. The Introduction to the Columbia University Press edition (1990) provides his recollection that he began the translation in 1934 after a train trip from Beijing to Tianjin during which he happened to meet Dr. Hu Shih '14, the scholar who first called critical attention to *The Travels of Lao Ts'an* and became the patron of its author, Liu Tieyun. Another of Harold Shadick's most notable works is the three-volume textbook, *A First Course in Literary Chinese* (Cornell University Press, 1968), which is still in use at Cornell and other universities. Harold's interest in Chinese literature led to the

formation of the Conference on Chinese Oral and Performing Literature (CHINOPERL), which meets annually. For eighteen years, until 1987, he served as editor of the journal, *CHINOPERL Papers*, on the study of all types of spoken or sung performance in Chinese.

When Harold Shadick joined the Cornell faculty in 1946 he worked with the chair of his department, Knight Biggerstaff, to plan a center for Chinese studies in upstate New York. China and Chinese language were then still regarded as exotic subjects, and no center of Chinese studies existed anywhere, with the exception of Harvard. In 1950, Harold Shadick founded the China Program and served as its director until 1966. During this time, with generous grants from the Ford Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation, he established Cornell as one of the major centers of Chinese studies in North America. Together with a succession of able curators, he made the Wason Collection one of the five best Chinese collections in America at that time, knowing well that to attract a distinguished faculty to an isolated location such as Ithaca, Cornell must provide an excellent Chinese library. Among the distinguished scholars he helped recruit as Cornell faculty were Liu Ta-chung and John Fei in Economics, William Skinner and Arthur Wolf in Anthropology, John Lewis in Government, and Nicholas Bodman in Linguistics. As a result, while Harold Shadick was Director of the China Program, Cornell became pre-eminent in the social sciences in subjects related to China. One of his most memorable achievements in teaching programs was his collaboration with the eminent linguist Y.R. Chao '14, with the support of the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS), to establish the Inter-University Program for Chinese Language Instruction in Taipei, first administered through the China Program at Cornell.

After his retirement in 1972, Harold Shadick continued to be involved actively in the China Program (today the East Asia Program) and CHINOPERL. In 1986, he revisited China for the first time since 1946 and reestablished contact with several of his numerous friends there, many former students among them. At the invitation of Peking University, he there delivered two lectures, one of which he presented as the conclusion to his lecture on "Romeo and Juliet," interrupted by the Japanese Imperial Army forty-five years earlier. Several years after the death of his first wife, Helen, who had also served Cornell teaching her native Russian language, Harold married Wu Hsin-min (Lydia), who had been his student at Yenching University in 1929-30 and later came to Cornell as his Teaching Assistant (1947-52). He is survived by his sister Winifred Woodgate.

*Knight Biggerstaff, Edward Gunn, Tsu-lin Mei*