Lu Xun

TAKEUCHI YOSHIMI

TRANSLATED BY JOSHUA A. FOGEL
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CONTENTS

Acknowledgments vii
Abbreviations ix
Preface: Takeuchi Yoshimi, China, and Lu Xun, *Joshua A. Fogel* xi

Introduction: Lu Xun, the Takeuchi *Ro Jin*, and Its Cross-Cultural Afterlife, *Jon Eugene von Kowallis* 1

Part I *Ro Jin:* Translation

Takeuchi's Own Introduction: On Death and Life 39
Chapter 1. Questions Concerning His Biography 49
Chapter 2. The Formation of His Thought 74
Chapter 3. Concerning His Works 97
Chapter 4. Politics and Literature 126
Conclusion: Lu Xun, Enlightenment Figure 158

Part II Appendices: Translation

Afterword to the Nippon Hyōronsha 日本評論社 Edition (1944), *Takeda Taijun* 163
Lu Xun as Thinker (1948): From the Appendix to the 1952 Sōgen Bunko Edition, *Takeuchi Yoshimi* 165
Afterword to the Sōgen Bunko Edition (1952), *Takeuchi Yoshimi* 170
Afterword to the Miraisha Edition (1961), *Takeuchi Yoshimi* 173

A Brief Chronology of Lu Xun's Life, *Takeuchi Yoshimi* 175
Annotated Bibliography for *Ro Jin* 179
Index 185

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ABBREVIATIONS

LXQJ (1991)	Lu Xun 鲁迅, *Lu Xun Quanji* 鲁迅全集 (Complete works of Lu Xun), 13 vols. (1981; reprint, Beijing: Renmin Wenxue Chubanshe, 1991).
LXSW (1980)	Lu Xun, *Lu Xun: Selected Works*, translated by Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang, 4 vols. (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1980).
Ro Jin (1961)	Takeuchi Yoshimi 竹内好, *Ro Jin* 魯迅 (Lu Xun), (Tokyo: Miraisha, 1961).
Zenshū	Takeuchi Yoshimi 竹内好, *Takeuchi Yoshimi Zenshū* (Complete works of Takeuchi Yoshimi), 16 vols. (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1980–1985).

Takeuchi Yoshimi, China, and Lu Xun

Joshua A. Fogel

> We must never distort the truth for the sake of an interesting story (説話の面白さによって眞實を枉げてはならぬ).
>
> —Takeuchi Yoshimi

In recent years, there has been a considerable upsurge of interest in the Western and Chinese academies in the life and work of Takeuchi Yoshimi 竹内好 (1910–1977). Unfortunately, it has been dominated by Japanologists and those either looking for a Takeuchi they can celebrate or isolating one they can desecrate. This has resulted in, at best, a superficial understanding of modern Chinese history, literature, and culture, the realms to which Takeuchi devoted his career; and in certain instances it has frequently led to imputing to him a variety of influences, mostly from the canon of Western political philosophy.[1] Our objective in this work is both more modest and aimed, we hope, at balancing the scholarly and the political record.

Takeuchi was one of the first, if not the first, foreign scholar to author a full-fledged study of the writings of Lu Xun 魯迅 (1881–1936), China's most prominent writer of the last century. This was not the only area in which Takeuchi specialized, but it is his most renowned one. In his introduction to this volume, my cotranslator, Jon Eugene von Kowallis, one of the world's leading scholars of Lu Xun's life and works, discusses Takeuchi's relationship to Lu Xun's essays and stories. My goal here is to say a few words about Takeuchi's place in wartime and postwar Japan and about Sinology more generally.

In 1932, while a student in the field of Chinese literature at the Imperial University in Tokyo, Takeuchi made his first trip to China—to Beijing, on this particular occasion—at a time when, by his own later admission, he had as yet no compelling interest in Chinese literature or its country of origin. The longer he stayed in China, however, the more the people, the culture, the scenery, and

1. See, for example, Richard Calichman, trans. and ed., "Preface" and "Introduction," *What Is Modernity? The Writings of Takeuchi Yoshimi* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), vii–xiii, 1–41; Sun Ge, "Reading Takeuchi Yoshimi and Reading History," in *The Challenge of Linear Time*, ed. Viren Murthy and Axel Schneider (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 113–131.

eventually the literature grew on him, and he soon found his calling.[2] Without any friends or acquaintances, he found himself wandering about Beijing, sightseeing on his own or with groups of students and, especially, visiting bookshops. It was at this point that he came across a copy of Sun Yat-sen's (1866–1925) famed work *Three Principles of the People*, and Takeuchi slowly but surely became a devotee of the man who became known to many Chinese as the "father of his country" (*guofu* 國父).

Back in Tokyo, Takeuchi met his lifelong friend Takeda Taijun 武田泰淳 (1912–1976), and together in 1934 they established the Chūgoku bungaku kenyūkai 中國文學研究會 (Society for the study of Chinese literature). The following year they started publishing *Chūgoku bungaku geppō* 中國文學月報 (Chinese literature monthly), which was shortly thereafter renamed *Chūgoku bungaku* 中國文學 (Chinese literature). Their aim was to launch a journal aimed at contemporary Chinese literature, not the approach of the older schools of Japanese Sinology that were fixated on the past. Like the society Takeuchi and Takeda established, the journal was probably the only prewar Japanese publication to use the Chinese toponym for "China" (in its Japanese reading: "Chūgoku" 中國). The preferred term in the prewar era of Japan was "Shina" 支那, about which much ink and many pixels have been expended (see below).

In the late 1930s, Takeuchi traveled again to China, where he would spend several years working to improve his spoken Chinese and gaining personal acquaintance with the society, people, and culture to which he was now devoting his life. His admiration for China and its culture, though, ran headlong now into the Sino-Japanese War that his own nation's military was waging on the Asian mainland. In the spring of 1943, he disbanded the Chinese literature group he had helped found a decade earlier and ceased publication of its journal. In December 1943 he was drafted by the Japanese government into the military, and he remained on the Chinese front until the war's end. It was in these years that he more fully familiarized himself with contemporary Chinese literature, especially the works of Lu Xun. Takeuchi would publish his first book, entitled simply *Ro Jin* 魯迅 (Lu Xun), in 1944, and he would return to this subject many times over the following three decades. That first volume has by now acquired iconic status—the book and its content are known in Japan simply as the "Takeuchi Ro Jin" 竹内魯迅—and has influenced the subsequent three generations of scholarship on the topic. It has also been reprinted several times and translated into Chinese and Korean.

During the war years (1937–1945), many Japanese of liberal or leftist inclinations found themselves in the same quandary as Takeuchi: They disagreed with the policies of their government and military but were unable to do anything

2. Takeuchi Yoshimi, "Son Bun kan no mondaiten" 孫文観の問題点 (Issues in [our] views of Sun Yat-sen), *Shisō* 思想 396 (June 1957), in Joshua A. Fogel and Fumiko Jōo, *Japanese for Sinologists: A Reading Primer with Glossaries and Translations* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2017), 382–390.

about it. Very few either attacked those policies or remained steadfastly silent. Indeed, many underwent an ideological transformation, or *tenkō* 轉向, and emerged having abandoned their earlier left-leaning or Marxist views in support of their government, instead. The choice, as they saw it, was *tenkō* or jail (or worse).[3] Liberals found solace in the perverse notion that, for all its ills, Japanese imperialism would serve the ends of compelling China to shed "feudalism." This view, rooted in Marx's own notion of Western imperialism in nineteenth-century China, was construed as meaning that only with such an external impact would China be forced out of its eternally repetitious "natural economy" and onto the proper road to capitalism and beyond. Mao Zedong 毛澤東 (1893–1976) would himself add nuance to this view, but it effectively remained on the books.

Takeuchi accepted this view at the time, but he later noted the fundamental flaws in its misunderstanding of things Chinese. In January 1942, in one of the last issues of *Chūgoku bungaku* published shortly after the start of the Pacific War, he proclaimed his support, and that of his erstwhile group, for the war effort.[4] Why he took such a position is consonant with his contemporaries; but why he chose to author a manifesto of support on behalf of his organization remains something of a mystery. By 1943 he reversed course once again and declined to take part in the state-sponsored organization of writers, refusing to be manipulated by the state in pursuing goals on the ideological front. It was just at this point that he began writing *Ro Jin*. The late scholar Maruyama Noboru 丸山昇 (1931–2006) argues that *Ro Jin* was Takeuchi's "expression of his revulsion for the mainstream of Japanese literature, which had been diverted completely to serve the purposes of the war."[5] How so? His attack on the view that Lu Xun's works should be read as demonstrations of Lu's nationalism and his denial of the claim that all literature is politics by other means were Takeuchi's heartfelt renunciations of the misuse of literature for political purposes.

In the postwar period, Takeuchi was noted for holding a number of positions that may be seen as out of the ordinary, or at least as less than popularly conventional. Accepting a teaching position at Tokyo Metropolitan University in the early 1950s, Takeuchi found himself strikingly opposed to the US-Japan Security Treaty (Anpō 安保), which was concluded at the end of that decade. Many on the left in Japan took this stance, but few actually took Takeuchi's next step: resigning from his position at the university, a public institution supported by and complicit in state policy, as he saw it, with which he so fervently disagreed. Although enticed, he refused to join the Japan Communist Party, and when it broke with the People's Republic of China (in favor of the Soviet

3. Maruyama Noboru, "Lu Xun in Japan," in *Lu Xun and His Legacy,* ed. Leo Ou-fan Lee (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 226–228.

4. Takeuchi Yoshimi, "Dai Tō-A sensō to warera no ketsui (sengen)" 大東亞戰爭と吾等の決意 (宣言) (The Greater East Asian War and our determination [a manifesto]), *Chūgoku bungaku* 80 (January 1942), reprinted in *Zenshū* 14:294–298

5. Maruyama, "Lu Xun in Japan," 229–230, 230 (quote).

Union following the Sino-Soviet rift), Takeuchi remained a supporter of China, Mao, and later the Cultural Revolution.

As can be readily seen in the text translated herein, Takeuchi was an ardent admirer of Sun Yat-sen, a view held throughout his life. Interestingly, as the decades unfolded after the war, the perception outside China of Sun's role in the Chinese revolution has sharply diminished. After all, Sun had just left Denver, Colorado, when the 1911 Revolution erupted, and he had not set foot in his homeland in the previous sixteen years. Nonetheless, Sun was to become the founding president of the Republic of China. Takeuchi retained his affection for Sun and for the inherent brilliance of his *Three Principles of the People*. Sun was Takeuchi's kind of revolutionary, possessing the qualities he also admired in Lu Xun.

One other debate that engaged Takeuchi, as noted above, was that over the appropriate place name for "China" in Japanese. While Takeuchi's journal used "Chūgoku" in its title, this was far from the standard Japanese usage, and Takeuchi himself often used the more common Japanese term "Shina." In the debate dating back to the early 1940s, Takeuchi offered by far the most insightful remarks for his time. How do we respond, he asked, to the claim by Chinese (and many Japanese acolytes) that the terms "Shina" and "Shina jin" 支那人 (Chinese people) are insulting? Whatever its premodern origins, which go back hundreds of years to Buddhist usage and to Chinese translations of Buddhist scripture, did the fact that, in contemporary usage, "Shina" was a designation of foreign origin (different from the toponym of Chinese choice) imply that China had been denied an equal place in the world? By the same token, how in the modern world of independent nations could other countries be expected to refer to China by a name that conjured up a bygone worldview based on clear lines of inequity with China as the center of the known world? One might raise just as much doubt about whether "Shina" carried negative connotations simply in its usage as one could with the Chinese use of the term "Zhongguo" 中國 (Chūgoku).

Takeuchi found this line of argument specious. "Shina" was the term to which he had become accustomed when writing in his native language; and, even if words do take on a life of their own, it had not a trace of denigration attached to it, he claimed. China and the Chinese people, as far as Takeuchi was concerned, could not be reduced to a couple of words. In addition, all these discussions were meaningless to the everyday, ordinary people Takeuchi had come to know in the years he had spent in China. How knowledgeable were those people who had suggested replacing "Shina" with "Chūgoku" about the actual feelings of the Chinese people with regard to the term "Shina?" How confident were they that the term "Chūgoku" could simply be inserted into the quotidian Japanese lexicon? Would merely changing the term "Shina" to "Chūgoku" ensure that any alleged abuse implicit in the former term ("Shina") would disappear? Was this not like humoring a child? Must we love the "Chinese people," he asked rhetorically. I may love certain Chinese, he answered his own rhetorical question, but it is not merely because they are "Chinese." "I

could not care less whether you say 'Shina,' 'Chūgoku,' or whether you spell out 'Zhongguo' in *katakana.* I just do not want to believe that this is simply a problem of language."[6]

Takeuchi writes herein of aspects of Lu Xun as author and a person that have been turned into legend. This phenomenon has transpired in the Anglophone world as well, perhaps both because Lu Xun is always reactively referred to as "China's greatest writer" of the twentieth century and because he is overwhelmingly read in translation. Again, it is our humble hope that this volume will play a small role in righting the ship.

On several occasions, Takeuchi mentions Masuda Wataru 増田渉 (1903–1977), his Japanese predecessor, as a commentator on Lu Xun. In the early 1930s, Masuda studied under and worked with Lu Xun, translating a number of Lu Xun's works, and helping him with his Japanese correspondence. In a bizarre and tragic twist of fate, while delivering the eulogy at Takeuchi's funeral in 1977, Masuda collapsed and died of a heart attack on the cemetery grounds.[7]

Jon von Kowallis and I have met in person, extremely briefly, on only two occasions. This project has been in large part a COVID-19 enterprise. The inaccessibility of travel and the great distance between our respective universities have made in-person meetings difficult. We both attended a virtual conference organized by Professor Xiaolu Ma 馬筱璐, at Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, and in email exchanges in the run-up to the conference Zoom session, Jon asked me if I would consider translating Takeuchi's book about the works of Lu Xun. I have long admired Takeuchi but had not yet read the book from cover to cover. I agreed to Jon's proposal with the understanding that he, who knows far more than I about Lu Xun, would critically read the chapters against the Japanese original and the two Chinese translations as I finished various drafts.

There was another problem. I did not own the book, and all local libraries were closed at the time. Jon then sent me by email attachment the entire text of the Miraisha 未來社 edition of Takeuchi's *Ro Jin* (published in Tokyo, in 1961), and we began the process that culminated in the text you now have before you. Jon's close reading of my draft translations was essential to this project. He corrected my understanding not just of the text but also of the basic meanings of

6. Takeuchi Yoshimi, "Shina to Chūgoku" 支那と中國 (Shina and Chūgoku), *Chūgoku bungaku* 中國文學 64 (August 1940), reprinted in Takeuchi Yoshimi, *Nihon to Chūgoku no aida* 日本と中国のあいだ (Between Japan and China) (Tokyo: Bungei shunjū, 1973), 178–183. See also Takeuchi Yoshimi, "Shina o kaku to iu koto" 支那を書くということ (On writing the term "Shina"), *Chūgoku bungaku* 80 (January 1942), reprinted in Takeuchi Yoshimi, *Nihon to Chūgoku no aida*, 222–226. I have dealt with this whole debate in Joshua A. Fogel, "New Thoughts on an Old Controversy: *Shina* as a Toponym for China," *Sino-Platonic Papers* 229 (July 2012), http://www.sino-platonic.org/complete/spp229_shina_china.pdf.

7. Joshua A. Fogel, "Introduction: Masuda Wataru and the Study of Modern China," in Masuda Wataru, *Japan and China: Mutual Representations in the Modern Era,* trans. Joshua A. Fogel (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2000), viii.

Takeuchi's highly nuanced readings of Lu Xun—to say nothing, of course, of the numerous fictional and nonfictional writings by Lu Xun referred to in this work—and he transformed my draft into a joint product. I did the same for Jon's renderings of Takeuchi's 1948 article, "Lu Xun as Thinker" (included in Part II of this volume), for Takeda Taijun's afterword and the two afterwords by Takeuchi himself, and for Jon's annotated bibliography for this volume.

There was a marked degree of dissatisfaction with life and work in the academy during the pandemic, and much of it was certainly justified. However, by accepting those temporary limitations rather than devoting energy to complaining about them, we found that we could execute and finish this project with maximum efficiency. We would like to thank Dr. Hashimoto Satoru of Johns Hopkins University, also a participant in the online Lu Xun conference, for some timely advice concerning one particularly sticky point of Japanese usage.

On a number of occasions, we cite translations of Lu Xun's texts by Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang from their volume *Lu Xun: Selected Works* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1980)—abbreviated as LXSW (1980)—and some by Jon and others that appeared in Lu Xun's *Jottings Under Lamplight*, edited by Eileen J. Cheng and Kirk A. Denton (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017). We provide the characters and dates (where available) for the names of individuals at the first instance at which they appear. Similarly, the characters and translations for titles of works or institutions are presented at the first instance at which they occur. Takeuchi provided twelve endnotes for the volume; throughout, we have marked those notes as his own; all other annotations are by the translators, Jon and myself.

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Jon Eugene von Kowallis (PhD, University of California, Berkeley) is professor of Chinese studies at the University of New South Wales, Sydney. He has published *The Lyrical Lu Xun: A Study of His Classical-Style Verse* and *The Subtle Revolution: Poets of the 'Old Schools' During Late Qing and Early Republican China.* Currently a Fellow of the China-US Scholars Program (Washington, DC) studying the activities of Taiwanese playwright and director Lai Shengchuan on mainland China, he has also translated early essays by Lu Xun (forthcoming in *Warriors of the Spirit: Lu Xun's "On the Power of Māra Poetry" and Other Classical-Style Essays*). President of the Australian Society for Asian Humanities, he was elected Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities.