

Wang Shuda (Chinese: 王述達; Traditional Chinese: 王述達; 2 August 1904 – 7 December 1993), art name ShanKai (善愷), is a member of Jiusan Society (九三学社, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jiusan_Society). He is a renowned dictionary editor, a language philologist, exegete, and an educator. He taught at the High School affiliated to Beijing Normal University, the Girls High School affiliated with Beijing Normal University, Beijing Normal University, Hebei Teacher's College (later become Hebei Normal University) and other institutes of education. He also worked at Chinese Dictionary Compilation Office and the Language Institute of the Chinese Academy of Science. He is one of the main editors and authors of many textbooks and dictionaries. He made major contributions to Chinese modernization (the vernacular Chinese) and the teachings of the Chinese Language. As a young man, Shuda pursued democracy and progressive thinking, cultivated many Chinese language scholars for the country. After his death, according to his wish, his life time's collections of rare books were donated to the Chinese Department at Hebei Normal University.

Chronology of his life

2nd August, 1904, Wang Shuda was born in Beijing , to a teacher's family

1922 Matriculated at Beijing Normal University (<https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E5%8C%97%E4%BA%AC%E5%B8%88%E8%8C%83%E5%A4%A7%E5%AD%A6>), Department of Chinese Language. His teachers include Qian Xuanton(钱玄同, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Qian_Xuanton)、Shu-ta Yang(杨树达, <https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E6%9D%A8%E6%A0%91%E8%BE%BE>)、Li Jinxi(黎锦熙, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Li_Jinxi)、Gao Buying(高步瀛, <https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E9%AB%98%E6%AD%A5%E7%80%9B>)、Lu Xun(周树人, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lu_Xun)

1928 Obtained his BA in Chinese and became a teacher at Suiyuan (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suiyuan>) No. 1 High School

1928.2-1929.6 Substitute teacher at the preparatory school for l'Université Franco-Chinoise (<https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E4%B8%AD%E6%B3%95%E5%A4%A7%E5%AD%A6>)

1928.9-1937.7 Teacher at the High School affiliated to Beijing Normal University

1929.1-1956.6 Associate editor and later editor at Chinese Dictionary Compiling Department(中国大辞典编纂处, <http://www.cbkx.com/2008-2/1103.shtml>)

1929.Fall-1941.Summer Teacher at Beijing No. 1 Girls High School (<https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E5%8C%97%E4%BA%AC%E4%B8%80%E5%85%AD%E4%B8%80%E4%B8%AD%E5%AD%B8>)

1935.Fall-1942.Summer Substitute teacher at the Girls High School affiliated to Beijing Normal University (<https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E5%8C%97%E4%BA%AC%E5%B8%88%E8%8C%83%E5%A4%A7%E5%AD%A6%E9%99%84%E5%B1%9E%E5%AE%9E%E9%AA%8C%E4%B8%AD%E5%AD%A6>)

1946.8-1948.12 Lecturer at Peking (Later Beijing) Normal University Chinese Department

1949.2-1950.6 Lecturer at Beijing Normal University Chinese Department

1948.2-1949.6 Substitute teacher at Beijing Normal School (北京市立师范学校,
<https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E5%8C%97%E4%BA%AC%E5%B8%88%E8%8C%83%E5%AD%A6%E6%A0%A1>)

1951.5 Joined Jiusan Society at the introduction of Jinxi Li(黎锦熙) and Dingyi Ye(叶丁易,
<https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E4%B8%81%E6%98%93/7277060?fromtitle=%E5%8F%B6%E4%B8%81%E6%98%93&fromid=5640608>)

1956.7-1962.11 Editor at the Language Institute of the Chinese Academy of Sciences

1962.9-1984 Associate Professor at Hebei Normal University (Originally Hebei Beijing Normal College 河北北京师范学院, <https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E6%B2%B3%E5%8C%97%E5%B8%88%E8%8C%83%E5%A4%A7%E5%AD%A6>) Chinese Department

Major contributions

Wang Shuda has devoted his whole life to his beloved Chinese language research and education. He authored, co-authored, and edited more than a dozen text books and dictionaries. His scholarship has occupied an important position in Chinese language education and research. Through his several decades of teaching, Wang taught many students who have carried on his legacy. According to his wishes, upon his death, his family donated the remaining of his lifelong collections of rare and ancient books to the Department of Chinese at Hebei Normal College (now Hebei Normal University). These treasures from the past will continue to inspire the future generations of Chinese scholars.

Collective works :

Mandarin Dictionary(国语辞典, <https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E5%9B%BD%E8%AF%AD%E8%BE%9E%E5%85%B8>) (8 volumes) Commercial Press (商务印书馆, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commercial_Press), 1948,in 1962 edition, the name is changed to "Chinese Dictionary"(《汉语词典》)

Updated New Chinese Sounds 《增注中华新韵》 chief editor Li Jinxi(黎锦熙) , editors Wang Shuda(王述达)、He Meicen(何梅岑)、Fu Jieshi(付介石)、Sun Chongyi(孙崇义)、Zhang Weiyu(张蔚瑜)、Zhang Xizhi(张迺芝) , Commercial Press July, 1950 edition

Common Mandarin Vocabularies, Updated with Annotation 《增订注解 国音常用字汇》 Chief editor Li Jinxi , Wang Yi(汪怡)、He Meicen(何梅岑)、Fu Jieshi(付介石)、Niu Jichang(牛继昌)、Gao Jingcheng(高景成)、Xu Renyu(徐仁钰)、Xu Shirong(徐世荣)、Sun Chongyi(孙崇义)、Wang Shuda(王述达)、Zhang Xizhi(张迺之)、Zhang Weiyu(张蔚瑜)、Li 李曾笃、诸昌祁 编校 Commercial Press, August, 1950 edition

Learning Language and Culture Dictionary(学文化字典,
<https://book.douban.com/subject/26611346/>) chief editor Li Jinxi, editors 王述达、何梅岑、高景成、孙崇义、徐仁钰、徐世荣、付介石编纂 , Commercial Press October, 1952 edition

Modern Chinese Dictionary (新华字典 , <https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E6%96%B0%E5%8D%8E%E5%AD%97%E5%85%B8/310045?fr=aladdin>) editor , 1953 edition

Standard phonetics Dictionary (同音字典, <https://book.douban.com/subject/25776990/>) chief editor Li Jinxi , 何梅岑、孙崇义、徐世荣、王述达、高景成、付岩编纂 , 商务印书馆 1956 年 5 月版

Modern Chinese Dictionary(现代汉语词典, <https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E7%8E%B0%E4%BB%A3%E6%B1%89%E8%AF%AD%E8%AF%8D%E5%85%B8>) Trial publishing (1956—1960) , main editor Wang Shuda

Chinese knowledge Dictionary (语文知识辞典,
<http://book.kongfz.com/165533/409320964/>) Chief editor Wang Shuda, Hebei Normal Institute Compiling Group , Hebei People's publishing house, 1984

Personal works :

Grammar and Pronunciation, 《语法与语音》 Zhang Honglai (张鸿来,
<https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E5%BC%A0%E9%B8%BF%E6%9D%A5/5507226?fr=aladdin>)、Lu Huaiqi(卢怀琦)、Wang Zhen(汪震)、Wang Shuda(王述达) , Hundreds City Publishing House(百城书局), August, 1933

Elementary Middle School Chinese Readings 《初级中学国文读本》 Wang Zhen(汪震)、Wang Shuda(王述达) et al , High School affiliated with Beijing Normal University Chinese Language Series, 1935

General Sinology 《国学常识》 High School affiliated with Beijing Normal University mimeograph, 1936

Careers and Legacy:

As a scholar, Wang is steeped in his knowledge on the origin and meaning of the Chinese characters. His research was venerated for its sensibility and rigor. Even during difficult times, he kept his life long love for reading and rare book collection. Many people who had been to his study marveled at the size of his collection. During the culture revolution, his house was stormed by the Red Guards. Most of his collections were taken away and

scattered in society. He was only able to recoup a small portion of his collections after the Culture Revolution. Even so, Wang kept his habit of reading, studying and collecting until his death.

As an educator, Wang always led by example. He taught his students and younger generations with boundless kindness, patience and passion. He shared his knowledge generously and inspired his students in the common pursuit of knowledge which left a life long impression among many of his students.

As the head of a family, due to illness and early death of his father, Wang shouldered the responsibility of raising a big extended family, including his younger brothers. Through multiple wars, first the Japanese invasion during WWII, later the civil war, he financed the education of his younger brothers Wang Shuyi (王述羲, <https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E7%8E%8B%E8%BF%B0%E7%BE%B2>) and Wang Zhimin (王志民,). At the same time, he supported their pursuit of progressive thinking and the truth. As a young man, Wang Shuda was a loyal reader of "La Jeunesse" (新青年, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Youth). He took the responsibility of the country as his own, and thought that only through science and technology can one make bigger contributions to his/her country. All six of his children studied science and technology and graduated from top universities in China.

Anecdote

1、From Forever Yu Shizhi (于是之, <https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E4%BA%8E%E6%98%AF%E4%B9%8B>) 《永远的于是之》

Yu Shizhi : “In middle school , I dreamed of becoming a scholar, and would focus my study on Chinese Phonology. Chinese Phonology is so deep and profound , how can children understand it, but for teachers to know how to make it not only understandable but interesting. This intrigued me. I would admire the teacher's knowledge and everything about them. I still see in my minds eye the study of my middle school teacher Wang Shankai. Books stacked up on all four sides, in the same styled glass doored bookshelves. The shelves were very tall, starting from the floor, reaching the ceiling. Teacher Wang taught me “Prelude to the meaning of words” (说文解字序) in this study -- “古者，庖牺氏之王天下也，‘王’，a verb here, pronounced with the fourth tone.....’ In this fashion , he broke down the difficult sentences into components, talked about the origin of Chinese characters, and told me that it is not very believable that CangJie single handedly invented words: How can one person create all the words, why couldn't other people create some too?Teacher Wang's study didn't seem to

be very brightly lit, but the arrangements, even the postures and positions of the two of us sitting there when he was teaching, I still remember well. How fascinating, the study and the knowledgeable owner of the study!"

2、From A national treasure who identifies treasures – Shi Shuqing 《鉴宝终身的国宝级大师--史树青》 (<http://www.baike.com/wiki/%E5%8F%B2%E6%A0%91%E9%9D%92>)

In 1935, at 14 years of age, Shi Shuqing was admitted to the famous High School affiliated to Beijing Normal University. As the best school in Peking (Beijing), it has the best equipment, the best students – everybody is a born leader. Best of all are the teachers, such as the ones teaching Chinese, Mr Sun Zhao, Mr. Li Lianpo, and Mr. Wang Shuda. Everyone of them are masters of their field and skilled educators.

3、Du Xiaoqin (杜晓勤, <https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E6%9D%9C%E6%99%93%E5%8B%A4>) 《我在燕园住过的那些地儿》 (陈平原主编《筒子楼的故事》) has some descriptions of Wang Shuda :

I once spent less than 10 yuan to buy three Xuan Paper (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xuan_paper) note books with Wang Shuda's signature on them. The note books are titled “ancient learning” (“国故”, <https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E5%9B%BD%E6%95%85%E5%AD%A6>), “word origin” (“说文”, <https://hanyu.baidu.com/zici/s?wd=%E8%AF%B4%E6%96%87&query=%E2%80%9C%E8%AF%B4%E6%96%87%E2%80%9D&srcid=28232&from=kg0&from=kg0>), and “Anthology of ancient Chinese Writings” (“国故概要”, https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E5%9B%BD%E6%95%85%E6%A6%82%E8%A6%81?forcehttps=1?fr=kg_hanyu). Among them, “Anthology of Ancient Chinese Writings” note book was marked “taught by Wu Jianzhai” on top of its first page. Wu Jianzhai is Wu Chengshi, art name Jianzhai, is one of the three disciples of the prominent Sinology scholar Zhang Taiyan (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zhang_Binglin). Wu is a renowned economist, ancient Chinese philologist, and educator. Together with Huang Kan (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huang_Kan), he is called “Southern Huang and Northern Wu”. Between 1924 and 1933, Wu was employed as professor and head of the Chinese Department at Beijing Normal University. He was dedicated to teaching and ancient Chinese studies. Through the years, he offered many classes including History of Chinese Classics (经学史, <https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E7%BB%8F%E5%AD%A6>), “Ancient Ceremonies”, “Anthology of ancient Chinese Writings”, “Word formation” (六书条例, <https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E5%85%AD%E4%B9%A6/7841?fr=aladdin>), and

“comparative method for reading ancient Chinese writings”. These three volumes have to be Wang Shuda's class notes written in brush strokes during his college years. All the note books are made of Xuan Paper. Wang's notes is very tidy and clear, the strokes is running smoothly and elegantly. Looking at the notes, one can imagine the depth of knowledge and the demeanor of Wu Chengshi when he was teaching, one can also feel the focus, the seriousness, and intelligence of Wang Shuda.

4、Zhang Yongquan recalls in My College 《我的大学》

(http://hebtu.cuepa.cn/show_more.php?doc_id=1312448) :

(During culture revolution) After many years of editing the Modern Chinese Dictionary (现代汉语词典, <https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E7%8E%B0%E4%BB%A3%E6%B1%89%E8%AF%AD%E8%AF%8D%E5%85%B8>), Mr. Wang Shuda was transferred from the Philosophical and Social Sciences Department of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences to the country side. However, his Ancient Chinese class was taught with utmost care , every word that contains real meaning, every form words, is explained meticulously.