



Conrad Schirokauer, teacher and scholar of East Asian history, died in Cleveland, Ohio on September 19, 2018 at the age of 89. Conrad was born on April 29, 1929, in Leipzig, Germany of Arno and Erna Schirokauer. When Conrad was six years old, his family left Germany and the rising Nazi regime for Italy, where they spent three good years before moving to Memphis, Tennessee in 1938. With few resources but abundant tenacity, the family found its way in a new country that welcomed them and became Conrad's life-long home. The family's time in Memphis was followed by multiple relocations until they eventually settled in Baltimore, Maryland. Soon after, Conrad left to attend Williston Academy. He completed middle and high school there, graduating as valedictorian in 1946.

Following high school, Conrad enrolled at Yale College, where he became fascinated with China and, in particular Chinese intellectual history. Against the advice of family and friends, he chose to pursue an academic career as a scholar of China, intent on exploring what was at the time a largely undeveloped field, and deeply committed to a belief in the value of learning about a culture and society different than one's own. After graduating from Yale in 1950, Conrad continued his intellectual pursuits as a graduate student at Stanford University. In 1955, his studies were interrupted by obligatory military service.

The military stationed Conrad in Paris. For his first Christmas back in Europe, he accepted an invitation to Cambridge, England, to visit the Striches, a German expatriate family whom Conrad's family had known well during their time in Italy. Conrad and Lore Strich (who

remembered each other from childhood) were married not long afterwards, in November of 1956.

Conrad and Lore enjoyed the first two years of married life in Paris, after which they moved to Palo Alto, California so Conrad could complete his dissertation on 12th century Chinese political thought at Stanford. There, Conrad and Lore welcomed the arrival of their first son, David, who was born in 1959. Oliver would follow in 1962. Conrad considered becoming a father “an unprecedented act of faith, and trust of life.”

Conrad’s first academic position was at Swarthmore College. In 1962, he joined the faculty of the City College of the City University of New York, retiring in 1991 as Professor of History. Of great importance to Conrad and his family were three years of academic leave, taken early in his career (1967-69, 1971-72), which were spent traveling in Asia and living in Kyoto, Japan. The time spent exploring new lands nurtured a passion for travel in Conrad and Lore that was a defining feature of the next fifty years of their life together.

Conrad was deeply committed to his role as an educator and over the course of his career, he authored not only scholarly articles but also multiple textbooks on East Asian history. He especially loved to teach and after retiring from City College, continued to do so at Columbia University as a Senior Scholar in the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, only stopping at the age of 89 when he fell ill.

Conrad passed away peacefully with his family at his side. He will be remembered for his kindness, concern for the well-being of others, gentle playfulness, and lively sense of humor and irony. Conrad is survived by his wife of 62 years, Lore, his son David and wife Dawn Adams, his son Oliver and partner Monica Gerrek, his grandchildren Leo, Somiya, and Sierra, and his brother-in-law John Goodell. He was preceded in death by his mother Erna, his father, Arno, his sister Annette, his granddaughter Kestra, and his sister-in-law Sabina Strich.

A memorial service is being planned for next spring. Memorial donations may be made to the Journal of Song-Yuan Studies (payable to the Society for Song, Yuan, and Conquest Dynasty Studies, with JSYS in the memo line, and sent to the Journal of Song-Yuan Studies, c/o Prof. Cong Ellen Zhang, Corcoran Department of History, University of Virginia, Nau Hall–South Lawn, Charlottesville, VA 22904) or to Columbia University’s Society of Senior Scholars (payable to Columbia University, with Society of Senior Scholars in the memo line, and sent to The Society of Senior Scholars, c/o The Heyman Center for the Humanities, Columbia University, 2960 Broadway, MC: 5700, New York, NY, 10027).