

# — Personality Profile —

By VIVIENNE KENRICK

Dr. Mineo Nakajima considers that nowadays a China boom exists. He said, "Many students and young people are interested in Chinese problems, and many want to study Chinese. In my boyhood, Chinese studies were not so popular. But China inspired me."

He speaks of about 30 years ago, a full decade before he gained his degree in Chinese studies from the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. He had come from his hometown of Matsumoto in the Japan Alps where his father was a pharmacist. Mineo Nakajima chose to be a scholar, and is glad of his choice because his life allows him "much freedom."

He must have been an outstanding scholar as in 1969 he was selected by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for a two-year stay in Hong Kong. He had received his master's degree in International Relations from the University of Tokyo, had been an assistant at the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, and was already a lecturer there. "Before the normalization of relations with the People's Republic of China we had no chance to study in mainland China," Dr. Nakajima pointed out. "As a special newspaper correspondent I had traveled in China in 1966, and my stories and photographs had appeared around the world. Then I was appointed by the ministry to be special assistant to the consulat general of Japan in Hong Kong. It was during the Cultural Revolution, and was China-watching time. For me it was a valuable experience to know



Dr. Mineo Nakajima

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Chinese society in Hong Kong."

Mineo Nakajima returned to be an associate professor at his university. His next overseas assignment came in 1977, when for a year he was visiting fellow at the Contemporary China Center, The Australian National University. "Australian society was quite different from Asian," Dr. Nakajima observed. "In 1970 as the United Kingdom entered the European Economic Community, Australia was seeking a new identity. Its concern with China became more intense, and so I was invited to the university at Canberra." By that time, Nakajima was married and had four children. The family went together to Australia, described by Nakajima as "the best country" for children.

A full professor at his own university, Nakajima went for a year to Paris. "France has a

long history of Sinology, and Paris is another center for Chinese studies," he said. Nakajima has now received so many grants for travel in other countries that he has been abroad a total of 33 times. One of his books has received the Suntory Foundation Prize for scholars. His doctoral thesis is soon to be published in English by the Columbia University Press.

His next publication project, he says, is to be "profound." He has collected all his essays on China, completed his political analyses, and in the next stage he will deal "not only with the political system and struggles, but also with Chinese society, its characteristics and culture — a major work."

When he was a boy in Matsumoto, Mineo Nakajima played the violin according to the famed Suzuki method. "My parents wanted me to play, and I was very fond of classical music. The Suzuki method is splendid in developing love of music. The essence is learning through listening," Dr. Nakajima said. He still loves to play his violin, and he teaches music to his own children, each of whom plays a different instrument. "One of my hopes is that, after a few years, we can have a family concert," he said.

On Monday, Dec. 14, Dr. Mineo Nakajima will speak to the Asiatic Society of Japan on "Japan, China and the Soviet Union: International Environment and Japan's Position." The public is invited to hear the talk, from 6 p.m. in OAG-House, off Aoyama-dori.