

Mantaro Hashimoto passed away in Tokyo on Sunday, June 7, 1987, from stomach cancer. He was born on November 26, 1932. He was 54.

Chinese linguistics has lost a leading scholar. His influence on the field will endure for many years to come. We have been deprived of an esteemed colleague and a dear friend. The tragedy is all the greater that he was taken so young.

More than anyone else in recent years, he has channeled our attention in two important and inter-related directions of research: the effect that geography has on language evolution, and the areal variation in Han speech reflecting prolonged contact with other language groups.

This research which he spear-headed had only just begun. He would have discovered so much more, if only ... Perhaps these lines from Du Fu capture best the remorse and the profound sense of loss we all feel:

出師未捷身先死
長使英雄淚滿襟