On April 19, the University of Washington China Studies Program held a reception to celebrate the inaugural granting of the Vincent Y.C. Shih Endowed Professorship in China Studies to Professor Madeleine Yue Dong. Professor Dong is the Chair of the China Studies Program. Her work focuses on social/cultural history, urban history, and gender history in twentieth-century China. Dong is the author of Republican Beijing: The City and Its Histories, 1911-1937 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

Professor Shih taught at the University of Washington from 1945 until his retirement in 1973. He was born in the coastal city of Fuzhou, China in 1902. He attended Yin Wa College (Anglo-Chinese College), where he majored in philosophy, followed by an M.A. in Chinese Philosophy from Yenching University in 1930. Shih taught history, literature and philosophy at various universities in China before moving to the United States and enrolling at the University of Southern California in 1936. He would go on to earn a PhD from USC in 1939.

After the end of World War II, Shih, who had been teaching in China, returned to the United States and joined the faculty of the University of Washington as an Assistant Professor. He became an Associate Professor in 1950 and Full Professor in 1956. Shih retired in 1973. Learn more here.

One of Shih's best known works was The Taiping Ideology: Its Sources, Interpretations and Influences published in 1956 by the University of Washington. He also contributed many articles to the journal Philosophy East and West. Shih passed away in the early 2000s.

Vincent Shih's son and daughter-in-law, Bill and Bernadette Shih, gave the generous endowment of the Vincent Y.C. Shih professorship. At the April 19 reception, Professor Dong thanked them for their generosity and also emphasized how Vincent Shih had been pivotal to turning the UW into a leading university for China Studies. “I believe that Professor Shih would have been pleased if he had learned how this university is touching, challenging and inspiring new generations of scholars and students as it had done..."
for him,” said Dong.