

"Preliminary thoughts on Tsuga Teishō and his Shimeizen : An Attempt to Travel Outward from Japanese Language"

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Introduction

Tsuga Teishō (1718-1794) is a Confucian doctor who lived in Osaka, studied in Kyoto in his youth, and later came back to Osaka to practice medicine. He is particularly distinguished for his profound knowledge of Chinese studies. His representative works are the three collections of short Yomihon stories: *Kokon Kidan Hanabusa zōshi* (1749), *Kokon Kidan Shigeshige yawa* (1766), and *Kokon Kidan Hitsuj gusa* (1786). *Hanabusa zōshi* in particular is regarded as pioneering work of the genre of short Yomihon stories such as Ueda Akinari's *Ugetsu monogatari*. All of them have the adaptations from not only Japanese, but also Chinese fictions including vernacular stories and plays, and show Teishō's extensive knowledge of vernacular Chinese. He also known as the person who revised the Kanji dictionary *Kangxi zidian*, originally published in China, and corrected the 900 errors contained in its original Chinese edition and attached his report entitled *Jiten Takusetsu* upon publishing the Japanese edition.

His literary world was also constructed on this base of knowledge of Chinese studies. In addition, we can see that his interests in Chinese literature are not limited to only Classics but include contemporary works as well.^a

Shimeizen, which was published in 1771, is an anthology of Japanese *No* and *Joruri* plays translated not into traditional *kanbun* (Classical Chinese) but into *baihua* (Vernacular Chinese). There were several other Japanese authors who wrote novels in vernacular Chinese; however, it is remarkable that Tsuga Teishō translated plays into the vernacular, and one of his translations almost exactly matched the original Chinese play's musical form. What allowed him to develop such a profound knowledge of Chinese language and Chinese plays? In the early eighteenth century, studying colloquial Chinese was popular amongst Japanese intellectuals. Opposing old fashioned scholars, they considered written Chinese as foreign language, even though there were plenty of Kanji used in common between China and Japan, and the anthology *Shimeizen* can also be seen as a product of this trend. Therefore, considering the work's style, we can see that Teishō realized the separation between Japanese and Chinese language, and made an attempt to close the gap between them.

This paper focuses on *Shimeizen* in an attempt to discover how its place as one of Teishō's Chinese works through giving consideration to his linguistic style.

1. Language and Style in Shimeizen: Classical Chinese and Vernacular Chinese in Japan

There are two styles of written language in Chinese: One is *wenyan* (Classical Chinese), and the other is *baihua* (Vernacular Chinese). *Wenyan* literally means the "literary language", and *baihua* was a semi-standardized Vernacular developed from Northern dialects. P. Hanan notes that "the one [*wenyan is*] the main vehicle of the cultural legacy, the other [*baihua is*] based on the spoken language and restricted to certain genres of low esteem."^b This is obvious from Feng Menglong's words in the introduction of his collections of short Vernacular stories *Yu shi ming yan* (a.k.a. *Stories Old and New* or *Gu jin xiao shuo*).

試今說話人當場描寫，可喜可愕，可歌可涕，可歌可舞，再欲捉刀，再欲下拜，再欲決脰，再欲捐金。怯者勇，淫者貞，薄者敦，頑鈍者汗下，雖日誦《孝經》、《論語》，其感人未必如是之捷且深也。噫，不通俗而能之乎？

(When the professional storyteller tells stories, the audience is delighted and shocked, made to admire, to weep, want to dance, want to take arms, want to kneel, want to cut off the enemy's head, want to drop money. The cowards become brave, the sensual become faithful, the hardhearted become honest, even the dullards feel ashamed. *Xiao jing* and *Lun yu* are not that effective at moving people emotionally even if they cross our lips every day. It is surely better that we use vernacular.)

Reading and writing skills in Classical Chinese had been essential for Japanese intellectuals for years, but the same skill in the vernacular was undesired. Additionally, while Classical Chinese fiction had been appreciated, Japanese readers were unable to enjoy Vernacular fiction such as *San guo yan yi* (*Romance of the Three Kingdoms*), *Shui hu zhuan* (*Water Margin*) and Feng Menglong's three forty-piece collections of old and new vernacular stories until *Towa* (colloquial Chinese) study became in vogue in the Tokugawa period.

Every Chinese play is written in Vernacular, and the same is true for *Shimeizen*.

2. *Tōwa*(Colloquial Chinese) in Japan and Ogyū Sorai's Strategy for Reading Chinese

Until the early eighteenth century, only *Tō tsūji* (interpreters of Chinese) and Zen monks had studied colloquial Chinese. However, increasing recognition of the study and understanding of Ming Dynasty laws lead many Japanese Confucians to start studying *Tōwa*. In those days, most Japanese people studied Chinese through a particular reading method called *kundoku*, which allowed Japanese to read Chinese texts by rearranging the character order so that it matched Japanese grammar (See Figure 1).

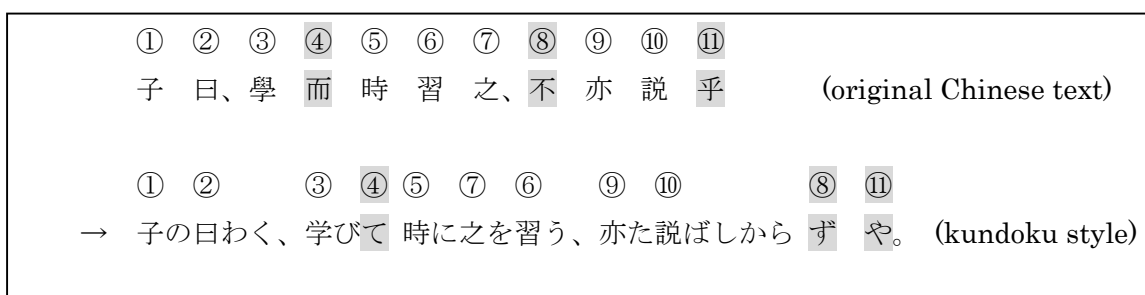


Figure 1

The *Tō tsūji* and Zen monks, on the other hand studied and directly understood *Tōwa* via Chinese pronunciation according to the original order of the characters.

In 1711, Okajima Kanzan, who was a *Tō tsūji* in Nagasaki, came to Edo and became a *Towa* teacher at Ogyū

Sorai's school. Sorai was a Confucian and diligently studied *Tōwa*. Later, in 1715, he contributed his knowledge of *Tōwa* and published a dictionary named *Yakubun Sentei*, which explicates Kanji characters that are homophone in Japanese. In the dictionary's introduction, Sorai pointed out the problems inherent to the *kundoku* method.

「此方學者。以方言讀書。號曰和訓。取諸訓詁之義。其實譯也而人不知其為譯矣。」

(Japanese scholars use Japanese language called *wakun* when they read Chinese books, and think of it as an exegesis, but in actuality it is a translation.)

「但此方自有此方言語。中華自有中華言語。體質本殊。由何脗合。是以和訓迴環之讀。雖若可通。實為牽強。」

(Because of the essential differences between the Japanese and Chinese language, the *kundoku* style is not able to deliver the original text's meaning correctly.)

It seems natural for us that the Japanese language differs from the Chinese one, but to his contemporaries, his strategy of reading Chinese writings according to their original word order was a challenging one. Besides, Sorai indicated that the words used in *kundoku* are aged and strange, and pointed out the necessities of using every-day language when translating Chinese words. Although he did not completely reject the *kundoku* method, he did insist on using easy words to understand as their context correctly.

In 1724, Okajima Kanzan went to Kyoto from Edo, and contributed to the spread of *Tōwa* knowledge throughout Kyoto and Osaka. Unlike Edo scholars, Kyoto and Osaka scholars had much interest in Chinese Vernacular fiction. Their translations and adaptations of Vernacular fiction greatly influenced Japanese literature. Although it is still not exactly known where Tsuga Teishō studied *Tōwa*, it is certain that he grew up in circumstances that permitted such study. His *Hanabusa zōshi*, which is considered the very first work of the *Yomihon* genre, also included some adaptations from Chinese Vernacular stories. At the same time, the fact that he wrote a preface to Ogyū Sorai's book *Narubeshi* reveals that Teishō was greatly affected by Sorai, too.

The next argument concerns *Shimeizen* as the product of *Tōwa* studies and Sorai's strategies for reading Chinese directly.

3. Tsuga Teishō and his Shimeizen

Shimeizen (literally meaning “Four plays of cicadas”) consists of four *Noh* and *Joruri* plays, which were translated into Chinese according to the pattern of Chinese traditional plays. The titles and original texts of each are as follows:

- *Hana wo oshimu no ki* *Yuya, Noh*
- *Ōgi no shiba no ki* *Yorimasa, Noh*

academic or elegant works, but through the use of Vernacular Chinese, Teishō demonstrated that the *kanbun* style also could express vulgarity.

Although the *kundoku* method reduced the difference between Classical and Vernacular Chinese substantially, the two styles had widely different effects originally; Classical Chinese, for instance, would not be able to depict the colorful words in *Joruri* plays. It could be said that it was Ogyū Sorai's strategy for studying Chinese as foreign language that allowed Teishō to understand the different effects of Classical and Vernacular.

In *Hana wo oshimu no ki* in particular, the tune note is used in the part of the *Noh* chant and came against the hard and fast rules of *nanxi*. On the other hand, in the interlude (*aikyogen*) he used the comical Vernacular, showing his knowledge of Chinese plays and Vernacular Chinese. Even though *Shimeizen* includes some awkward expressions because the author had never been to China and had few occasions in which to speak Chinese, it is clear that *Shimeizen* marked a significant milestone in *Tōwa* study and *kanbun-styled* literature in Japan.

4. Tsuga Teishō and His Writing Style

We can see the complexity of Teishō's attitude through the fact that he used Vernacular Chinese in his translation of Japanese plays.

Firstly, it is clear that he did not take *kanbun* as an extension of Japanese language, but looked it as Chinese, absolutely as a foreign language. Just as Japanese styles had great variety, ranging from elegance to vulgarity, Chinese language also had Classical and Vernacular, and each was used in different situations. Even Vernacular fiction was written in a series of styles that mixed of Classic and Vernacular language. Classical styles were used in Couplets and verse, while Vernacular was used in close-up narrative, especially dialogue. Earthy characters speak in the most vernacular style, and a change in social context may result in a similar change in language. Tsuga Teishō, who adapted Chinese Vernacular fiction in his collections of short stories such as *Hanabusa zōshi*, was acquainted with this difference of styles. We can see his attempt to express it in the Chinese language. In *Shimei zen*, particularly in *Hana wo oshimu no ki*, he uses different language styles in the *Noh* chant than he does in the interlude.

On the other hand, it might have been the denial of the *kanbun* style that had been developed into a unique notational system as one a variant of the Japanese language. He created a new Japanese writing style in *Hanabusa zōshi* by using plenty of Chinese vocabulary, including words that originated in the Vernacular, but he was reluctant to use Japanese expressions brought into Chinese or *kanbun*. He used as many original Chinese expressions to depict domestic objects as possible and used vocabulary that originated in Japanese only if he could not find a Chinese equivalent. It seems that his stance was that the Chinese language was as an authority that could not be Japanized.

Although some Zen monks and Japanese Confucians had written about earthy things before *Tōwa* came into fashion, it was not in Vernacular Chinese used in China, but in the most Japanized style of *kanbun* that utilized quite a number of Japanese words and phrases. For example, the *Ukiyo Zōshi* “*Shikidō Ōtsuzumi*” (1687) written by

Hōjō Dansui, had some Japanese expressions that would not be understood as Chinese such as “扱心気哉 さてもしんきや”

さんねんまえよりおもひ とでもなたたば これいつすんさきはやみ
自三年前念 迎名立矣 是一寸向闇”²⁸. Tsuga Teishō refused to use these Japanized expressions in his writing.

Conclusion

One of Teishō’s favorite motifs is that of the central characters leaving of their society,^h or they leaving for supernatural worlds (such as hell). Although these works include the adaptation of Chinese vernacular stories, only Feng Menglong’s two collections of short vernacular stories, *Yu shi ming yan* and *Jing shi tong yan*, which were mainly adapted by Teishō, contain 80 stories on various themes. The fact that he selected stories with the aforementioned theme suggests that he was most oriented toward that theme.

In these series of stories, the most noteworthy work is the sixth story of *Shige shige ya wa*, “*Sokei kanjin nishi wo morokoshi ni tazusaeru koto*”. This is the work of imagination based on a real character So Sokei (Song Suqing) and his trouble in Ningbo, China and the *Yokyoku Tōsen*.

A Chinese man named Sokei got on the wrong side of his relatives and abandoned his wife and two kids to leave for Japan. After his arrival, he became taken into confidence and made a fortune; later, he was appointed to go to China as emissary. His two Japanese-born children begged him to take them with him, and he consented. In his hometown in China, he found his once abandoned children were suffering from extreme poverty after they lost all their relatives. He decided to go back to China, made his all of four children settle in Ningbo, and departed to Japan, promising that he would return soon. However, when he next returned to China, the Japanese accompanying him got into serious trouble, resulting in his execution. In this story, Teishō made Sokei pour out his heart due to the dilemma. Sokei commented, “It’s all because I lived in two countries; now I really don’t know what my destiny will be tomorrow.” He once became free from his home country; after coming to Japan, he served at Muromachi Palace and rose to a position of wealth and honor. However, he became involved in Japanese customs, and was still required to leave his children in Japan as hostage when he got appointed to go to China. Moreover, the two Japanese who commit a heinous crime did not need to be subject to punishment because of they were foreign emissaries in China, yet Sokei was executed according to the laws of the Ming dynasty.

In this story, Teishō depicts the tragedy brought by a situation in which a man departed from the world to which he originally belonged in order to obtain temporary freedom, became bound to his new world, and even his original world could not set him free. This tragedy gently hints at his awareness of his style of writing.

Teishō, who was strongly affected by *Tōwa* and Ogyū Sorai’s reading methods, excluded Japanese original expressions from his *kanbun* or Chinese writings. It may show that he was keenly aware of normative Chinese. Although he used plenty of Chinese vocabulary in his collection of short *Yomihon* stories and created a new style of writing in Japanese, surprisingly enough, he would not use Japanese vocabulary or expressions in his Chinese (*kanbun*) writings. *Shikidō Ōtsuzumi* has many examples in which Chinese word order was ignored and phonetic equivalents were used arbitrarily. In short, these are written in Japanese language only, and Chinese characters are simply adopted ad-hoc. It seemed that the Chinese language was distorted by Japanese conventions. Teishō, on the contrary, did not write in a Japanized style of Chinese, instead delving deeply into the world of the Chinese

language by himself. He did not choose novels or stories for translating, which did not have any rigorous rules, but chose plays which had many restrictions of rhyme and the number of syllables. Writing in Chinese was an attempt to travel outward from his mother tongue, Japanese, but at the same time, unfortunately became a shackle that required observance of rigid and conventional rules of Chinese. Likewise, although he chose the Chinese as writing language, he could not be free from the restrictions of his mother tongue, his whole works is shadowed by Japanese.

Through studying Chinese as absolutely foreign language, and reading or adapting of the large amount of vernacular Chinese novels, Teishō was forced to recognize that he belonged to Japanese world. For him, departure for another world always means struggling to travel outward from Japanese language, at the same time, it was the activity with sweet pain that he might feel shackled between Japanese and Chinese language.

^a The first edition of *Liaozhai zhiyi* (*Strange Tales from a Lonely Studio*), classic short stories written by Pu Songling, was published in 1766, and Tokuda Takeshi points out that only 20 years later Teishō adapted one of these stories in his third collections of short Yomihon stories, "Hitsuji Gusa". ("Teishō to *Seikokawa Ryōsaishiyi--Hitsujigusa* dai sanpen oboegaki" 庭鐘と『西湖佳話』『聊齋志異』—『莠句冊』第三篇覚書—. In *Nihon kinsei shōsetsu to Chūgoku shōsetsu* 日本近世小説と中国小説. Tokyo, Seikyūdō, May, 1987.)

^b Hanan, Patrick. *The Chinese Vernacular Story*, Harvard University Press, 1981, p.15, l.31-33.

^c Kawakami Yosuke 川上陽介 “*Shimeizen*” shiron – Yōkyoku ‘Yuya’kara genmin gikyoku fū ‘*Hana wo oshimu no ki*’ he no honyaku” 『四鳴蟬』試論—謡曲「熊野」から元明戯曲風「惜花記」への翻訳. *Setsuwa ronshū* 説話論集 10: 327 -367 (2001) .

^d — “‘*Shimeizen*’kyokuritsu kō (sōron, kaku furon senshusai)” 『四鳴蟬』曲律考(総論、附各論【千秋歳】). *Kokugo kokubun* 国語国文 Vol.72, No.2: 398-425 (2003).

^e — “‘*Shimeizen*’no sakushihō nit suite—‘*Gyokushinki*’tono kankei” 『四鳴蟬』の作詞法について—『玉簪記』との関係. *Kyoto daigaku kokubungaku ronsō* 京都大学国文学論叢 13 : 1-16 (2005) .

^f 「初不知何詞曲。熟視反覆，方得其面目。試訓於旁，則如合符，不可讀者，相得旁通」

(*Shimeizen*, introduction)

^g ‘*Shikidō O-tsuzumi*’ 色道大鼓. In “Hōjō Dansui shū sōshi hen” 北條團水集 草紙篇第一卷, Tokyo, Koten bunko, Jun, 1980.

^h For example, in the second story of *Hanabusa-zōshi*, “*Baba motome me wo shizumete Higuchi ga muko to naru koto*” (an adaptation from the 27th story of *Yu shi ming yan* whose story adheres fundamentally to the original work), the hero is a poor *rōnin* who married the daughter of a rich beggar and is adopted by his wife's family. Due to his wife's support, he is able to earn a government post, however, he came to despise his wife's origin later. Ultimately, his hatred leads him to secretly kill his wife. In actuality, however, his wife was alive, having been saved by a samurai and was

adopted as his daughter. The story concludes with the wife seeing her husband again, this time as a samurai's daughter, and the two getting remarried. Although the husband had temporarily been relegated to the beggar class, in the end he was able to rejoin the warrior class. Additionally, in the eighth story of *Shigeshige ya wa*, "*Eguchi no yūjo hakujō wo ikidōrite shugyoku wo shizumeru koto*" (the adaptation from the 32nd story of *Jing shi tong yan*), the main character is the son of a samurai who sullies his name by patronizing a prostitute. The prostitute redeems herself and wants to be with him till the end, but the main character does not. He eventually sells her to a merchant and goes home by himself, resulting in the suicide of the despairing woman. In the original story, the man saw her death and became insane, and he lives the rest of his days without being cured. However, Teishō revised this ending, having the man go home and becomes the head of his house. Tokuda Takeshi discussed this change in his article entitled "Tsuga Teishō yūgi no hōhō— 'Hanabusa zōshi' 'Shigeshige yawa' to Tōdai shōsetsu Sangen" 都賀庭鐘 遊戯の方法—『英草紙』『繁野話』と唐代小説・三言一. In *Nihon kinsei shōsetsu to Chūgoku shōsetsu* 日本近世小説と中国小説. Tokyo, Seikyūdō, May, 1987.).

Glossary

Aikyōgen 間狂言

Asahi no yoroi no ki 曛鎧記

Baba motome me wo shizumete Higuchi ga muko to naru koto 馬場求馬妻を沈て樋口が婿となる話

baihua 白話

Eguchi no yūjo hakujō wo ikidōrite shugyoku wo shizumeru koto 江口の遊女薄情を憤りて珠玉を沈る話

Feng Menglong 馮夢龍

Hana wo Oshimu no Ki 惜花記

Jing shi tong yan 警世通言

Jiten Takusetsu 字典琢屑

kanbun 漢文

Kangxi zidian 康熙字典

Kokon Kidan Hanabusa zōshi 古今奇談英草紙

Kokon Kidan Shigeshige ya wa 古今奇談繁野話

Kokon Kidan Hitsuji gusa 古今奇談莠句冊

Kunten 訓点

Liaozhai zhiyi, (*Strange Tales from a Lonely Studio*) 聊齋志異

Lun yu 論語

nanxi (southern opera) 南戲

Narubeshi 徂徠先生可成談
Nebiki no Matsu no Ki 移松記
Noh chant 謡
Ōgi no Shiba no Ki 扇芝記
Ogyū Sorai 荻生徂徠
Okajima Kanzan 岡嶋冠山
Ōto-no-Miya asahi no yoroi no ki 大塔宮曦鎧
Pu Songling 蒲松齡
rōnin 浪人
Shikidō Ōtsuzumi 色道大鼓
Shimeizen 四鳴蟬
Sokei kanjin nishi wo morokoshi ni tazusaeru koto 素卿官人二子を唐土に携る話
So Sokei 宋素卿
Song Suqing 宋素卿
Stories Old and New 古今小説
Three forty-piece collections of old and new vernacular stories (Sanyan) 三言
Tōsen 唐船
Tō tsūji 唐通事
Tōwa 唐話
Tsuga Teishō 都賀庭鐘
Tune note 曲牌
Ueda Akinari 上田秋成
Ugetsu monogatari 雨月物語
Ukiyo Zōshi 浮世草子
wabun 和文
wakun 和訓
wenyan 文言
Xiao jing 孝經
Yakubun Sentei 訳文筌蹄
Yamasaki Yojihei nebiki no matsu no ki
Yokyoku 謡曲
Yomihon 読本
Yorimasa 頼政
Yu shi ming yan (Gu jin xiao shuo) 喻世明言 (古今小説)
Yuya 熊野

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