17. The Small Sword Society and the Novel Man-Shin kiji

Information concerning the uprising of the Small Sword Society seems to have reached Japan via Chinese ships that docked at the port of Nagasaki. The third volume of Kaei Meiji nenkan roku 嘉永明治年間録 [Annual Records for the Kaei through Meiji Periods] (compiled by Yoshino Maho 吉野真保 [1820-70], Tokyo: self-published, 1883) a carries such an account.

In the seventh intercalary month of the first year of the Ansei reign period (also Kaei 7, or 1854), we read the following entry: "Vessels from China have entered the port of Nagasaki, and they tell of a rebellious state of affairs in that country." The names of Hong Xiuxian 洪秀全 and Yang Xiuxing 杨秀清, two leaders of the Taiping revolution, are clearly cited in this report; and there are further points as well that cannot be found in the various reports of Kaei 6 (1853) recorded in Shinchō jōran fūsetsugaki 清朝擾亂風説書 [Reports on the Uprising in China]. Thus, in comparing the later report with the information conveyed in the earlier reports, the later one is considerable more concrete and, indeed, more objective. There are, however, points at which it accepted hearsay as fact, such as when it is noted: "The two bandits Hong and Yang have together produced a wooden figure which they call the Tiande 天德 [Heavenly Morality] Emperor. They greatly revere it, and troops in the field make their decisions about advancing or retreating on the basis of divine revelations received after praying to this wooden figure. In the final analysis, they do believe in sorcery." Aside from exceptions of this sort, Kaei Meiji nenkan roku is on the whole quite detailed and realistic in outlook.

Let me now quote extensively from it:
You have requested of me that I report on the recent situation in the rebellion presently going on in China. From the 30th year of the Daoguang reign [1850], it has become particularly severe with bandit groups of good-for-nothing hooligans massing in Guangxi and Guangdong. Two men by the names of Hong Xiuquan and Yang Xiuqing are the ringleaders; the numbers of their accomplices are rising, and they have many followers. They divide the work, each of them pursuing the rebellion with some 2000-5000 men. In addition, they have attacked government offices and plundered walled cities, used artillery and land mines, and are quite adept in the employment of military strategy. Crowds of people are coming together talking about these things.

All of these men have full heads of hair, and they wear pieces of red cloth around their heads. Thus, the government troops have taken to calling them Red Turban Bandits as well as Long-Haired Bandits.

During the second or third [lunar] month of last year, bandit strength was immense in three separate places in the Jiangnan region: Yangzhou, Zhenjiang, and Nanjing. With 40,000-50,000 men they seized these three cities, and the number of local officials there who died in battle was numerous. In due time, they trained and sent troops to the neighboring counties, while an imperial commissioner departed from the capital [for the trouble areas]. Around the tenth month of the year, Yangzhou was speedily recovered, and the bandit remnants escaped to Zhenjiang and Nanjing. Defending themselves staunchly, they were surrounded by the government’s troops. There was no passageway between the two cities for them, and thus cut off they withdrew. Nanjing is where [Emperor] Taizu of the Ming dynasty built his capital. Excellent as a strategic stronghold, it will probably not be defeated too quickly...

There is another group of bandits as well there [i.e., China] and they go by the name of the Small Sword Society. They originated in Fujian [province], and concealing themselves under the guise of ordinary common folk, they travel about the land to promote their activities. At a signal they come together at a designated place and go to plunder the wealth of the people. Members of the group know one another as each carries a small sword concealed on his person. Wherever they happen to meet, they check one another’s identity with these small swords. However, they do not have the desire to slaughter [the populations of] walled cities.
nor to occupy provincial towns. They merely steal valuables, and then immediately disperse all over.

From the Jiajing and Daoguang eras, these [bandit] groups were in these parts [of China], and I have learned that gradually they spread out later. Recently, many more joined, and in the eighth month of last year some 3000 [bandit troops] attacked Shanghai county. They intimidated the government forces and killed the county magistrate there...

Intercalary seventh month.

Shipowner Wang 王, Jiang Xingxin (yu) 江星禽 俞
Yang Shaotang (tang) 楊少堂 唐, representative of twelve.

At the very end of this report is an "enclosure" noting: "The areas affected by these rebellions are Guangxi, Guangdong, Jiangnan, Yangzhou, Zhenjiang, Nanjing, Fujian, Shanghai, Hunan, Hubei, Wuchang, Jiujiang, Manzhou [sic.], and Suzhou." The last sentence reads: "The foregoing is a Japanese translation of the observations of the Chinese who have recently come to Japan." Thus, we know it was a current report conveyed to Japan by the Chinese ship, submitted by the shipowner's representative to the office of the Nagasaki Administrator, and translated by the official Japanese interpreters.

Japanese novelizations based on material concerning the Small Sword Society were clearly based on this sort of report conveyed to Nagasaki from China. In particular, the news that Nanjing had been occupied by anti-government forces and that now the Shanghai county seat (separate from the foreign concession area in the city) was also occupied seems to have served up a major shock to the Japanese at the time. Although novels quickly took up this theme from the news, since the authors had no means at their disposal to learn of the actual, concrete goings-on, they turned the stories into military chronicles centering on the fighting, works of pure fiction.

On the inside of the cover of the Man-Shin kiji 漢清紀事 [Chronicle of the Manchus], (five string-bound volumes on Mino paper, preface by "Mumei Sannin" 無名散人 [lit., Anonymous Good-for-Nothing], undated), the title of the work is written in large characters down the center. To the right it reads "The Story of the Small Sword Society," and to the left it reads "printed by the Kinseikaku" 金聖閣. Because there is no colophon, cannot say with certainty what sort of bookshop the Kinseikaku was. It may have been a disguise taken from name of Jin Shenghan 金聖嘯, compiler of the [great Chinese novel] Shuihu zhuan 水滸傳 [Water Margin]. The protagonist of this Japanese novel bears the name of Hong Xiuquan 洪秀泉, something unique to this novel. At the time, the final
character of the name of leader of the Taipings, Hong Xiuquan, was written sometimes as 天 and sometimes as 留 (both pronounced quan in the second tone). Even in contemporary Chinese documents concerning the Taipings, we often see his name rendered in the non-standard manner with 天. This was particularly true of official documents, such as Wang Xianqian's Xianfeng Donghua lu [Records from within the Eastern Flowery Gate of the Xianfeng Period]. Perhaps, because he was considered a rebellious bandit by the Qing dynasty, people specifically sought to avoid using his real name.

In the Man-Shin kiji, Hong Xiuquan is portrayed as the leader of the Small Swords; this is, of course, inaccurate, as Liu Lichuan (劉麗川) was the actual leader of the Small Sword Society. By the same token, though, co-conspirator Yang Xiurong (楊秀榮) (who appears in the novel as the fictive younger brother of Hong Xiuquan's father) seems in fact to be a slight transformation of the name Yang Xiuqing (who was the real force behind the Taipings, second-in-command to Hong Xiuquan; he later fought with Hong for leadership of the Taiping movement and was killed).

All this notwithstanding, the novel is entirely fictional in content. The author explained his aim in his autobiographical preface:

In the middle of the tenth lunar month on a lonely rainy day, a man stopped by for a short while under the eaves of my thatched hut to avoid the rainfall. I called him inside and offered him some coarse tea (shibucha 涓茶). We spoke of many and sundry things, and he told me of the many rumors he had picked up from Chinese when he had visited Nagasaki.
I enjoyed his stories a great deal and was much entertained by him. Eventually, at the sound of the bell at sunrise, this fellow suddenly sought some rest, so I took him by the sleeve and invited him to stay with me, but he declined. When he was about to depart, he took from his package a single volume and gave it to me, saying that it was a book about the recent, strange stories from another land. When I later picked it up and began reading, I saw that it contained stories and adventures full of shocking events. Rather than enjoy reading it by myself alone, I thought I would make it available for all to read, though it is written entirely in Chinese characters, which I have put into hiragana.

This was, of course, a complete fabrication, and it is signed at the end: "Mumei Sannin." It bears no date.

Color portraits of the principal characters of the novel follow the autobiographical preface on successive pages, one to a page; an explanation is attached to each of these pictures in the following order: "Shōtōkai sōtaishō Kō Shūsen" [Hong Xiuquan, Commander-in-Chief of the Small Sword Society], "Shōtōkai daini no tōryō Yō Shūei" [Yang Xiurong, Number Two Leader of the Small Sword Society], "Shōtōkai no chōhon So I" [Su Yi, a Small Sword Society Ringleader], "Shoshū shishi, Ryōhaku no chishin Shu I, nochi ni Shōtōkai no gunshi to naru" [Zhu Wei, Sagacious Official from Lübo, Magistrate in Various Departments, Later Became a Strategist for the Small Sword Society], "Tōetsu ken no shu Tō (Tō) Jun, nochi ni Shōtōkai no gun ni kuwawaru" [Deng Shun, Lord of Tengyue County, Later Joined the Masses of the Small Sword Society], "Unryōsan no gōtō Chō Kaku, nochi ni Shōtōkai no gun ni kuwawaru" [Zhao Jue, Bold Bandit from Yunlong Mountain, Later Joined the Masses of the Small Sword Society]. There are double-page picture inserted at various points in each volume within the body of the text as well.

In the first section of volume one, entitled "The Bandit Origins of the Taipings and the Small Sword Society in the Great Qing Dynasty," and in the next section as well entitled "The Early History of Hong Xiuquan," the vestiges of the sort that have been tracked down about the Small Swords and the early years of Hong Xiuquan and passed down to us nowadays are completely absent. It is a work of pure fiction.

The content of the novel runs as follows. There was a chivalrous lad by the name of Hong Quanzhong in Yangzhou's Ganquan
county, but he was a good-for-nothing and later became a thief. He had an infant son by the name of Hong Xiuquan, and eventually the father was captured and executed. Hong Xiuquan was disdained and humiliated by his neighbors because his father's sinful deeds had culminated in capture and death. Thinking of this bitterly, he vowed to become the leader of a nation and take revenge on those who insulted him. At that time he met an elderly man by the name of Su Yi. The old man was also a man of great will, but because he was already well along in years, he sought for Xiuquan to follow in his footsteps and so taught him the sorcery into which he claimed to have been initiated by Southern Barbarians. He informed him that there were comrades known as the Small Sword Society and gave Xiuquan a small sword as the sign of membership in the group. Thus, when Xiuquan grasped the sorcery, he used it to punish evil men and to oppose government officials. Yang Xiurong and other mighty comrades also joined the Small Sword Society and on numerous occasions attacked the government's armed forces. Military strategist Zhu Wei generally led them in war. In the end he entrenched himself in the walled city of Shiping, Linnan county (?), Yunnan province. Military forces from Beijing attacked and overtook him there, and he is on the point of being defeated as the novel comes to a close.

Let us now take a brief look at the content of this work. The novel seems to have been written with something of a hint taken from the official report (fusetsugaki) which we cited at the start of this chapter—"vessels from China have entered the port of Nagasaki, and they tell of a rebellious state of affairs in that country"—or from comparable items. In this official report, groups rising in rebellion within China are nowhere mentioned to be anti-Qing political groupings calling for a revival of the Ming dynasty. It noted only a simple group of thieves, like the Small Sword Society, confronting government troops in battle. Nowhere do we see any mention of fighting for some noble or just cause, but just a battle to seize the realm. It would seem as well that the novel's mention of protagonist Hong Xiuquan's making use of sorcery took a hint from the same official report which notes: "In the final analysis, they do believe in sorcery."

When Hong Xiuquan's teacher, Su Yi, dies in the novel, Hong "whittled some wood himself and made a wooden image of his aged teacher." He prayed before it, and when he came back with his followers, they worshipped the wooden icon as well. The novel here reads that "they were bound by duty and swore an oath." The corresponding portion of the official report reads: "The two bandits Hong
and Yang have together produced a wooden figure... They greatly revere it, and troops in the field make their decisions about advancing or retreating on the basis of divine revelations received after praying to this wooden figure."

From such passages, it seems clear that the novel Man-Shin kijii was constructed on the model of the official report cited above. Like the Man-Shin kiji, there is a one stringbound volume work about the Taiping Rebellion bearing the same title Man-Shin kiji. The latter, written in Kanbun, is a transcribed chronicle by a Chinese. The writer came to Japan aboard Admiral Perry's warship, arriving in the first lunar month of Kaei 7 [1854]. The work circulated at first in manuscript, and later in the early years of the Ansei period was printed in a woodblock edition. In content, though, it is unconnected to the novel Man-Shin kiji. There is yet one further work with this same title. It covers the period of the emergence of the Taiping movement through its occupation of Nanjing in 1853 and the establishment of a capital there. It is a detailed chronological account which both follows the founding of the Taiping capital in Nanjing and continued Taiping fighting with Qing forces in various places through the seventh or eighth month of the same year. It appears to be a chronicle based on historical materials.

18. The Man-Shin kiji and the Etsuhi tairyaku

The last work also called Man-Shin kiji is not a novel but a chronicle tracing events, based upon stories of the day. From our present perspective, it contains historical material worthy of reference. In particular, the author collected a variety of manifestos and proclamations of the Taiping forces and of rebellious groups affiliated with them, material rarely found elsewhere. As a result, this work is frequently cited by Chinese scholars as well.

The book actually begins with China's defeat in the Opium War. It records the opening of the ports at Ningbo, Shanghai, Fuzhou, Xiamen, and Hong Kong and the establishment of Christian churches at various sites by the "barbarians," both according to stipulations of the peace treaty. However, the Guangdong area remains in a state of unease, with bandits running rampant in the region. At this time, Hong Xiuquan 洪秀泉 (using the same character for guan as the Man-Shin kiji discussed above) learns the principles of Christianity from a British pastor in Hong Kong and reads the Bible. The barbarians then send him to Guangxi to evangelize. Feng Yunsan 湯雲山 (later to become another leader of the Taipings) too becomes a Christian in Macao, and he returns to spread the faith in Guangxi. Some people
appeal to the local authorities when Hong and Feng begin deceiving the populace with Christianity, and officials try to arrest them. Hong and Feng rally the local people, resist the government’s troops, and ultimately rise in rebellion in the 28th year (?) of the Daoguang reign (1848). This anti-government group gradually grows immense, and the Qing court sends a punitive force against it, albeit unsuccessfully.

Hong Xiuquan and his followers allow their hair to grow (ceasing to wear it in a queue as demanded by the Manchu dynasty), change their style of dress (switching from Manchu to Ming styles), forbid plundering of the peasantry, and maintain strictly enforced laws as they march with reverent demeanor. They set their will on reviving the Ming dynasty, and they see the Manchus as the enemy. They move straight ahead invigorated and courageous, like Xiang Yu of Chu who destroyed his cauldrons and sank his boats (namely, determined to march ahead, even in the face of certain death, with no retreat). The plan they are using follows in certain ways the restoration of the Han dynasty under Emperor Guangwu.

As can be seen in the description in the preceding two paragraphs, the book tells of the Taipings’ strict military discipline and the bravery with which the Taiping troops marched forward. It also chronicles battles with Qing forces at various places as well as the patterns of strategies and attacks utilized, all with dates affixed.

For a time, the rebel army remains in Yongan in Guangxi province. Then, in Xianfeng 2 (Kaei 5 [or 1852]), they leave Yongan and surround the city Guilin, and momentarily thereafter they raise the siege and proceed into Hunan province. Along the way, they take a number of cities and towns and set siege to Changsha [capital of Hunan]. Midway, though, they lift this siege and move on to bring down Yuezhou near Lake Dongting. They next attack and take the city Hanyang in Hubei province. They invade Hankou and occupy Wuchang. This is followed by a flotilla of over 2000 ships sailing down the Yangzi River; Jiujiang, Anqing, and Wuhu all fall to the Taipings, before they descend on Nanjing which finally falls to them. Hong Xiuquan repairs the old Ming palace there, makes it his personal residence, and posts inside and out two couplets, which read as follows:

With our hands offered up to heaven, we shall prepare to revitalize the spirit of the great Ming.
With our simple hearts offered up to the country, we shall eradicate the alien dress of foreign terrain.
With 3000 courageous soldiers, we shall proceed immediately to cleanse the earth in Beijing to the north.
Ascending to the position of Heavenly King, I reopen the era of Yao and Shun.

The language of these verses seems to have greatly pleased Yoshida Shōin. He cited them just before the "Shinkoku Kanpō ran ki" iguiente [Record of the Uprising in China during the Xianfeng Reign], his translation of this Man-Shin kiji.1

In the very last section of this Man-Shin kiji, there is mention of the uprising of the Small Sword Society in Shanghai, but this segment of text on the Small Swords has the appearance of something tacked on in the form of a postscript. The main purpose of the book was to take in the entire spectrum of activities of the Taiping military. Yet, it ends with a chronicling of the battles fought on a variety of fronts through the seventh or eighth lunar month of the year that the Taipings entered the city of Nanjing in (March of) 1853, which they made their Heavenly Capital. Even if what is recounted here does not fully accord with the detailed studies being done today in China--numerous studies have appeared, there is a Taiping Historical Museum in Nanjing, and many document collections are being assembled--it conveyed for the first time to Japan a concrete, overall picture of the evolution of the Taiping revolution and was close to being historically accurate.

At about the same time as the Man-Shin kiji, another work came from China (by a route that remains unclear): Aofei dalue (J. Etsuhi tairyaku 粤匪大略, [Outlines of the Guangxi Bandits] (printed in Japan with Japanese reading punctuation for Kanbun; Nagasaki, Ryokuten sanbō, Ansei 1 [1854]). It records how in the year Daoguang 30 (1850):

The rebels Hong Xiuquan 全, Yang Xiuling, Xiao Chaoguǐ 蕭朝貴, Feng Yunshan, Wei Zheng 韋正, Hu Yiguang 胡以光 (huáng), Fan Liande 范連德, Luo Yawang 羅亞旺, and others came together in the village of Jintian 金田 in Xunzhou, Guiping county [Guangxi province] and formed the Society of God-Worshippers. Calling themselves the Kings of Heavenly Peace, they selected the middle of the tenth [lunar] month to rise in rebellion.

It thus notes that Hong Xiuquan, Yang Xiuling, and the others raised an army in Jintian village in the tenth month of Daoguang 30 and called themselves the Kings of Heavenly Peace. The Man-Shin kiji makes no mention of the fact that the rebellion began in Jintian village, nor does it record anything of the formation of the Society of God-Worshippers. In this regard, the Etsuhi tairyaku was more accurate.

It records the fighting back and forth at various sites chrono-
logically and concludes that "in the first month of the fourth year of the Xianfeng reign [1854], Imperial Commissioner Shengbao 聲保 was defeated at Linqing 靈清 in Shandong province. The bandits fled on to Gaotang 高唐 in Shandong, and that city eventually surrendered in the fifth lunar month." Thus, the text chronicles events through the fifth month of 1854.

In the introduction, the punctuator and reprinter of the Etsuhi tairyaku notes: "After making this investigation, I was able to learn these circumstances. I am aware that worthless volumes have already spread falsehood throughout the islands." This would seem to point to the "fabrications" of the fictionalized accounts then current. We have now seen how, on the basis of the two works, Man-Shin kiji and Etsuhi tairyaku, a concrete description of the state of affairs in the Taiping Rebellion became known in Japan during the Kaei and Ansei periods.

The Etsuhi tairyaku, or rather Aofei dali, was originally a Chinese work that made its way from China to Japan by ship. This is corroborated by the fact that the first half of this book is completely consistent with the chapters of a manuscript entitled Aoxi Guilin shoucheng ji 節西 桂林守城記 [Record of the Defense of Guilin in Western Guangxi], held in the Nanjing Library. It seems clear that it was not conveyed to Japan in the amalgamated form of a book known as Etsuhi tairyaku. On the basis of manuscripts printed in Japan, it was included in Taiping tianguo shiliao 太平天国史料 [Historical Documents on the Taiping Rebellion], edited by the Research Institute of the Faculty of Letters of Beijing University.

The Man-Shin kiji, or rather Man-Qing jishi, in one stringbound volume was transmitted to Japan in its original manuscript form by the author himself and not returned to China; later, it was in fact reimported back to China. It was the handwritten draft of a Guangdong native by the name of Luo Sen 罗森 (or Luo Xiangqiao 罗向喬) who, when Admiral Perry arrived in Uraga Bay as envoy of the United States in Kaei 7 [1854], boarded a vessel in Perry's fleet in Hong Kong, visited Japan, and on the return voyage went ashore once again in Hong Kong. He served as a "secretary" in matters concerning use of literary Chinese, preparing Kanbun documents to present to the Japanese government (it was claimed that they presented documents in three languages: English, Dutch, and Chinese), and carrying out brush conversations as a means of interpreting. After returning home, Luo Sen became known for his Riben riji 日本日記 [Japan Diary] (1854/11th month to 1855/1st month) which was carried in Xiaer guanzhen 異國貢珍 [Rarities from Near and Far], the monthly magazine published in Hong Kong. In addition, in the manuscript copy of a work entitled Kanagawa yuki 金川遊記 [Kanagawa Travelogue] (bearing the old seal
"Wakagi bunko" [Wakaki Collection], which I personally own, this same matter is laid out in the record of a discussion in brush between Luo Sen and a Japanese whose name is concealed.

Furthermore, I have in my library a manuscript copy of the *Riben riji* in one stringbound volume, and this work is included as well, based on a contemporaneous manuscript, in the first appendix of the "Bakumatsu gaikoku kankei monjo" [Documents Concerning Foreign Relations in the Late Edo Period], in the *Dai Nihon komonjo* [Ancient Documents of Japan] (Tokyo: Shiryou hensanjo [Historiographical Institute, Tokyo University], 1922).4

I touched on the *Xiaer guanzhen* earlier [see SJS, II.2, pp. 35, 39--JAF] and pointed out there that both Yoshida Shōin and the shogunate’s Administrator for Foreign Affairs, Iwase Tadanori [Higo no kami, 1818-61], had both seen it. The man responsible for foreign diplomacy in the shogunate’s Office of Coastal Defense, Kawaji Toshiakira [1801-68], noted the following which appears in the *Shimoda niki* [Shimoda Diary] when he left for Shimoda, charged with receiving a delegation from Russia in Ansei 1 [1854]: "I have copied out the work, *Xiaer guanzhen*, brought here by an American."5 The very fact that the man in charge of foreign diplomacy would himself have copied out a magazine in Chinese characters (edited by a British missionary) and published in Hong Kong lends evidence to the idea that *Xiaer guanzhen* was considered a valuable source of information from overseas.

Kawaji continued in the following manner:

This work is prepared by an Englishman in Hong Kong, China (Todo). Each stringbound volume sells for fifteen cash, and it comes out monthly. It is like a chronicle of news of the world. The Western newspapers (namely, the Dutch *fusetsugaki* [reports]) are not written in a Western [lit., horizontal] language and we can understand them only because they are written in Chinese characters. We have been able to see items here and there with a telescope from atop a ship’s mast, following the conditions of the articles of the revised treaty of Yokohama. (Though internal details are difficult to figure out), there is much more detail to be gleaned than Japanese have done to this point.

Because the *Xiaer guanzhen* was seen as such a valuable work, it warranted the attention of the diplomatic authorities and a portion of the informed public of the day. The *Riben riji*, which was carried in the *Xiaer guanzhen* (wherein the editor noted only that it was the "observations" [sojian sowen] of a "Chinese" [Tangren])...
and Luo Sen’s name did not appear—we know it to be his work from internal evidence), seems also to have been copied out longhand by officials and interested amateurs.

We read in the Riben riji: "There is a man by the name of Hirayama Kenjirō 賀山謙二郎 who is sincere and erudite. He asked me about the inception of the disorder and peace in China. I showed him the entries in my daily chronicle and a plan for public order." Hirayama Kenjirō was an official of the shogunate and one of those assigned to the welcoming party that greeted the delegation from the United States. There is also included in Riben riji a letter Hirayama is said to have sent Luo Sen:

It read: "Because of the reception yesterday, I still have not had time to read it closely. I would thus like to borrow it, take it home, and read through it. I will then return it later to the Yokohama Hall [where Luo Sen was living]." So, I gave it to him. He read it through and sent it back to me, and he responded to a letter from me:

"...I recently borrowed and read two stringbound volumes you lent me on the events in Nanjing and a plan for public order. I read them several times with great interest, and for the first time I understood the roots to public order in China. I also became aware of the honesty underpinning the learning of Luo Xiangqiao..."

We thus learn from this citation that Hirayama borrowed and probably copied out Luo Sen’s work on the disorder in China ("the events in Nanjing"). At first, the text was transcribed and passed along, only later being printed in a woodblock edition by someone. It was at this last stage that the title Man-Shin kiji was affixed to the work.

Earlier in this book [see SJS III.1, p. 45], I mentioned that Yoshida Shōin had translated this work in Ansei 2 [1855] and titled it Shinkoku Kanpō ran ki, though he noted: "I do not know the name of the author of this work, and it has no title." Shōin had learned about it from a manuscript that was circulating at the time. It was then printed in a woodblock edition, and it bore the title Man-Shin kiji for the first time when it appeared on page one of this edition. We learn this from the inserted note in small characters beneath the title of Yoshida’s work: "This work originally bore no title. People called it Man-Shin kiji, and so for now we shall follow that practice."

The brush conversation with Luo Sen which is to be found in the Kanagawa yūki by an anonymous author revealed the level of knowledge
about the Taiping Rebellion possessed by Japanese intellectuals at the time. Luo's Japanese counterpart repeatedly queried him about "the uprising in China." He asked Luo: "What is the name of the king of the Taipings and Small Sword Society?" Luo responded: "Hong Xiuquan is the king of the Taipings, not the Small Sword Society." He then asked Luo: "How is their momentum? Have they already taken Nanjing?" Luo replied: "By now they have already left Nanjing." He asked Luo: "Did the United States assist the Taiping king?" Luo answered: "It neither helped nor hindered." "Did Great Britain assist the Qing dynasty?" he asked. "Both did not offer help. Each barbarian sought only to protect itself." "So, then, to whom does the way of heaven belong?" asked the Japanese. Luo replied: "I cannot say as yet."

Luo Sen's talent as a poet and calligrapher were remarked upon by Japanese officials and Confucian scholars at the time. Their poems written at the time of the exchange of presents appear in the Riben riji, and they frequently asked him to adorn their folding fans with poetry. In the space of a single month, he wrote poems on over 500 fans, and they are recorded in the Riben riji.

His work on the "events in Nanjing," namely the Man-Shin kiji, was reimported much later back into China; it was included, on the basis of a manuscript bearing the name "Hong 洪 of the Tokyo Imperial Library," in part two of Zhongguo jinshi bishi 中国近世秘史 [Secret History of Modern China] by Menshitanhuge 撮蝦鏡虎窻 (Shanghai: Guangzhi shuju, 1911). In the process of compiling it, a fair number of corruptions entered the language of the text, and they even affected the content, including errors in personal names. Chinese scholars of the Taiping Rebellion have used this error-ridden text as a historical source and have accordingly committed errors of their own. I have done a rather detailed investigation of this matter in my study, "Man-Shin kiji to sono hissha, waga kuni ni tsutaerareta 'Taihei tengoku' ni tsuite" 朝日記花生 とその筆者,あがれ国に伝えられた太平天国について [The Man-Shin kiji and Its Author: How (News of) the Taiping Rebellion was Transmitted to Japan] (in Torii Hisayasu kyōju kakō kinen ronshū: Chūgoku no gengo to bungaku 島原久靖教授と筆記念論集: 中国の言語と文学 [Essays in Honor of Professor Torii Hisayasu on the Occasion of His 61st Birthday] (1973).

19. Gaihō taiheiki and Shinsetsu Min Shin kassen ki

I would like now to look at the content of two other fictional treatments of the Taiping Rebellion: Gaihō taiheiki 外邦太平記 [Record of Peace in Foreign Lands] and Shinsetsu Min Shin kassen ki 新設 민신관서기.
新說明清合戰記 [New Account of the War Between the Ming and the Qing]

At the beginning of the first volume of the Gaihō taiheiki, there is a preface in literary Chinese by "Banjoken shujin" 藤原兼平 (proprietor of the Banjoken) and dated "first day of autumn, Köin甲寅 [year, 1854]." The Kanbun used in the preface is very odd, and it concludes: "This work should be a warning and exhortation to women and children and an aid to the world. It will fortuitous for all who enjoy reading it." This is followed by doubled-paged, color-printed maps, entitled "Tōdo kōyo no zenzu" 境土皇興之全圖 [Complete Map of the Chinese Empire] and "Kyōshi sōzu" 京師總圖 [Complete Map of the Capital Area]. The next displays portraits of "Marshall Wu Zhenyou 呂陣友 of the Qing Dynasty," "Liu Hui 劉輝 of the Harem of the Xianfeng Emperor," "Ning Wuqu 懿武曲, Treacherous Minister of the Qing Dynasty," "Han Guang 恆光, Courageous Minister of the Late Ming Dynasty," and "Ding Jinhu 丁金虎, Brave Tartar General." Then, vermilion seals with ostentatious characters are included: "Da Qing shouming zhi bao" 大清受命之寶 [Treasure of the Great Qing Dynasty’s Reception of the Mandate], "Huangdi zunqin zhi bao" 皇帝尊親之寶 [Treasure of the Emperor’s Veneration of His Parents], and "Tianzi zhi bao" 天子之寶 [Treasure of the Son of Heaven]. What meaning all of these have with respect to the text is difficult to ascertain. In addition, there are two or three double-paged illustrations in each volume.

The book begins with sections entitled "On the Criticism of the War Councils in Beijing" and "On the Government Forces’ Setting Off for Nanjing," and there are chapters with such titles as "Li Boyu 李白玉 Hides within the Enemy Position by Means of Sorcery" and "Hong Wulong 洪武龍 Plans for the Defeat of the Government Forces." As I noted earlier [SJS, IV.2, pp. 45-47--JAF], "Li Boyu" and "Hong Wulong" were both deeply involved in developing the fierce fighting with the Qing army closing in on them. In the end, the text concludes at the point at which Liu Tianchong 柳天龍 (a general in the Nanjing army) warns Hong Wulong that a vast force from Beijing is surging in upon them. However, at the very end of this novel, the following postscript was added:

It is said the Wu Zhenyou [a Qing general] and Hong Wulong, later both brave and wise, would both have victories and defeats. At one time the Ming was on the verge of defeat at the hands of Zhenyou, and King Tiande 天德, with a number of his commanders dead on the field, was left fighting a defensive battle with foot soldiers alone. It ultimately ended in a great defeat for him, and Yuanhua 元輝, King Tiande, remained to endure by himself. With the help
of brave ministers in the last days of the Ming, he wiped away his shame and moved to reunify the Ming. The story of that event shall appear in the sequel [to this book].

As this citation makes clear, the author seems ultimately to have expected a reunification of the Ming (?) dynasty. Yet, I have heard of no sequel, and if it was in fact published, successful reunification under the Ming (?) was a lost cause.

In the first chapter of this book, entitled "On the Criticism of the War Councils in Beijing," we read:

There was a man among the people, a descendant of the Ming house, with the surname Zhu, given name Hua, styled Yuanhua. He was magnanimous and considerably dignified by nature. The institutions of the Qing dynasty at that time were unjust, and the people disobedient and bearing hatred to no small extent. Thereupon, Yuanhua and Li Boyu devised a plan, forced their way into Zhejiang, and defeated Zhao Yuanzong at the battle of Lake Poyang in Jiangxi. They immediately proceeded, and the force of the onslaught at the stone walls of Nanjing made them like splintering bamboo. Many generals became fearful and fled the fortress in haste. The Ming commanders behaved with military dignity as they entered a vacant fortress surrounded by stone walls. Thus, a large number surrendered en masse, just like an assemblage of ants. [Ming] forces already were said to number some 300,000. It was fifth [lunar] month of Xianfeng 3 [1853]. Yuanhua was enthroned with the reverent title of Emperor Tiande. He then changed the reign title, and it became the first year of the Tiande reign.

Thus, this work appears to have been penned some time after receiving reports of the Taipings' occupation of Nanjing. The entrance of the Taiping armed forces into the city of Nanjing occurred in Xianfeng 3 (Kaei 6 [or 1853]). It would seem that this novel was written the following year, because the dating "Kōin" appears in the preface. That this news from China would so rapidly come to Japan and solicit a reaction whereby it had become the stuff of fiction all within a year is astounding. Perhaps this is one of the manifestations of a sensitive national consciousness amid the convulsions of that time sparked by the arrival of Admiral Perry's vessels.

In this novel, though, the leader of the anti-Qing forces is not Hong Xiuquan, but a descendant of the Ming dynasty by the name of Zhu Yuanhua. We know as well that this Zhu Yuanhua's enthronement as Emperor Tiande was based on a report transmitted to Japan in the
previous year of 1853 (as can be seen in such sources as Shinchô jôran fûsetsugaki). Not only the Gaihô taiheiki, but the other novels mentioned earlier, were published in rapid succession, and this publication feat speaks to the shocking quality of the ripple effect set off by the reports capturing this news in Japan and the magnifying effect they had.

The Shinsetsu Min Shin kassen ki is also a work completely of conjecture, though "shinsetsu" in the title would seem to suggest some distinctive meaning. Although containing elements not to be found in other works of fiction, this novel is linked to the descendants of Zheng Chenggong [Koxinga] (who had a Japanese mother), leader of an army that fought against the Qing at the end of the Ming dynasty. Furthermore, unlike any of the other novels, this one places the Ming (?) capital not in Nanjing but in Nanchang.

The same pattern to be found in other novels can be seen here as well: the insertion at the beginning of a double-paged map of China in color and four color portraits of the principal characters in the book, and within the text of each volume as well are double-paged inserts here and there.

Inside the front cover to the right of the title, it reads: "Kaei 7, Koin, eighth lunar month, engraved for printing." To the left it reads: "Prohibited from sale or purchase." Beneath the title, the words "Yamatoyo ken" is probably an assumed name of the bookshop that printed it.

On the map of Qing China that appears at the very beginning of the text, the sites captured by the Ming army (?) are colored in
China is divided into two capitals and eighteen sheng (provinces). A sheng is comparable to the five central provinces and seven districts (goki shichidō) of Japan. The characters for each province are drawn within boxes [on the map]. A fu is the site of the walled city of a feudal lord. A [descendant] of the Ming house arose and made Nanchang-fu in Hunan province his temporary capital. [In the body of this work, it is noted that Hunan used also to be called Jiangxi.] The reign title selected was Tiande. Until this point the territory taken by this Ming was divided by colors [on the map], and gradually thereafter what fell under Ming control was incorporated in later [cartographical] editions. Great attention was paid to detail... At this time, in addition to the land held by the Ming, there are altogether 48 states (guo) and four islands. Distances are far vaster than in Japan.

On this map one finds the provinces of Guangdong, Guangxi, Hubei, and Hunan occupied; also, the cities of Anqing and Zhenjiang in Jiangnan province (?) are placed under occupation. However, Nanjing, which is placed in Jiangsu province, is drawn far to the north in still unconquered terrain.

There is an author's preface at the start of the body of the work. It begins:

This book was the plan of a certain man who sought me out to compile and write it rapidly. Hence, there was no time to embellish the composition, and being very busy I completed the draft with numerous miswritten characters left uncorrected... The change in title of the book from Minmatsu gunki to Shinsetsu Min Shin kassen ki was done at the insistence of the book buyer. The author laments that it is difficult to eke out a living freely. Be that as it may, in need of cash as I am, I had to cater to the current fashion. Yet, having heard from others of the declining state of affairs in the world, I recorded it in a rough and haphazard manner so as to call concerned people’s attention to the climate of the time...

What he was effectively saying here is that he was asked to compile this work in great haste, that the idea of changing the original title from Minmatsu gunki to Shinsetsu Min Shin kassen ki was that of the bookstore, and that his readers need bear in mind the trends of the times for in order to complete this draft he had no choice but to cater to "current fashion." It is known that at that
time bookstores competed to put out books of this sort that "informed" readers about trends in the world. At the very end of the passage cited above, we read: "Recorded again by compiler Suzunari 萩城" but no details about this "Suzunari" are forthcoming.

The text itself of this work begins with the defeat of the Chinese in the Opium War.

National prestige declined. She was disdained by foreign states and her own masses were disobedient... Civil and military officials alike engaged in amusements; they were negligent in military preparedness and did not govern the people well... The realm was in a state of disorder. Gradually governance lost its vigor, and mighty bandits arose in many places, burning down homes and slaying people. Though [the bandits] plundered wealth and violated women, local officials were far too weak to do anything about it. Though aware of these [bandits' activities], they did not pursue them. They paid no attention to the sorrows of the common folk beneath them, and in the sad situation of the ordinary people everyone--old and young, male and female, the wise and the not so wise--harbored resentment for their superiors.

The very first item discussed here is the contemporary social setting with its possibility of spawning a rebellion. Because of such a situation, a heroic female figure by the name of Dong Huaniang 東花娘 emerges, raises an army in Luxiang (?) county, Fujian, and becomes the leader of a Ming dynastic revival. She proceeds to travel to Hunan province to visit Zhu Wu 朱鳥, the last descendant (illegitimate offspring of last Ming pretender) of the Ming house who is just then engaged in a peasant uprising, and then she returns to Fujian. After numerous battles with the armies of the Qing dynasty, she succeeds in returning Zhu Wu to the Ming throne. Two men who came to her assistance and in the cause of reviving the Ming frequently engaged Qing forces as well as ambitious British forces who were helping the Qing were General Gan Zhao 甘照 and his brave retainer Zheng Tianlin 鄭天麟. She later moves her base of operations from Fujian to Nanchang in Jiangxi province, builds a walled city there, and makes it the national capital of the Ming. Inaugurating the Tiande 天德 reign, Zhu Wu accedes to the throne and enfeoffs his meritorious subjects. To this place armed forces of the Qing (with British troops as well) lay siege, and just at this point the novel comes to an end.

At the very end of the work, there is an author's postscript which reads much like the preface: "The author notes: I have compiled
in this draft stories precisely as they were conveyed to me, and thus there are no few errors of pagination and omission... I haven't the time to enumerate the large number of mistakes. The reason is that I was in such a great hurry."

Unlike the other novels of this sort, the Shinsetsu Min Shin kassen ki created a story line that is tied up with the descendants of Zheng Chenggong. It begins in its opening lines with the appearance of Dong Huaniang and is in effect a tale of the origins of "Caozhong" 棺塚 (the tomb of Cao) which was erected by local people to commemorate Zheng Chenggong's mother who committed suicide. Dong Huaniang's mother, Fangshi 方氏, is violated by a "general" (a note in the original mentions the similarity of this post to that of the ancient Japanese military commissioner) in Fujian because of her beauty. She escapes and throws herself into a mountain stream. Her body subsequently washes up on shore at the place with the "Caozhong" stele, but "Caozhong" was the stone monument erected by the local villagers who had earlier buried the corpse of Zheng Chenggong's mother which had come ashore, following her suicide. Fangshi floats ashore, and when the prayer is being intoned at "Caozhong" the stone pillar falls to the ground. The story arose that Fangshi had been pregnant just at that time, and the child born to her was Dong Huaniang. We thus find first among the portraits at the beginning of the text "Leader of the Revival of the Great Ming, Dong Huaniang," followed by "Brave, Meritorious Subject in the Revival of the Great Ming, the Koxinga of Today, Zheng Tianlin" and "Commander in Chief of the Revival of the Great Ming, Gan Zhao, the Master of Qilong 起龍." Though Dong Huaniang was a completely fictitious character, in the novel Zheng Tianlin is regarded as a descendant of Zheng Chenggong, and Gan Zhao is taken to be a descendant of Gan Hui 甘輝, who was a general under Zheng Chenggong. Zheng Chenggong and his general Gan Hui were two men who, after the death by strangulation in Beijing (in 1644) of the last Ming emperor Zhongzhen during the rebellion of Li Zicheng 李自成, defended the legitimacy of the Ming dynastic house in south China and resisted Manchu forces to the bitter end. The author of the Shinsetsu Min Shin kassen ki used their descendants as figures in his work, but when they hear that Dong Huaniang has raised an army to revive the Ming, the author has Zheng and Gan hurry to Fujian from Taiwan to come to her assistance.

Zheng Chenggong opposed the invading Manchu armies and on many occasions fought against them. Although he took the city of Nanjing, he was defeated, and in the end he escaped to Taiwan. Making that island his base, he continued his resistance from there until his
death. (His father, Zheng Zhilong 鄭芝龍, had switched sides midway and joined the Manchus). His mother was Japanese (nee Tagawa 田川), and he had occasion to request military support from the Tokugawa shogunate. His name seems to have become known early on in Japan as well as China. In particular, he was dramatized as Watonai 萬內, the protagonist in Kokusen'ya kassen 国性爺合戦 [The Battles of Koxinga] by Chikamatsu Monzaemon 近松門左衛門 (1653–1724), produced on the stage in Osaka at the Takemoto 竹本 Theater in the fifth year of the Shōtoku 正徳, reign [1715]. (Gan Hui too appeared in the play as the husband of Kinshōjo 錦祥女, Zheng’s half-sister by a different mother). It was a phenomenally popular play, enjoying a long run of over three years and eliciting heartfelt applause. He became a widely known hero with whom many felt on intimate terms. Perhaps herein lies the background to his use in the Shinsetsu Min Shin kassen ki.

Though Gan Hui appears as a courageous general under the command of Zheng Chenggong in volume eleven of the Mingji nanlue 明季南略 [Southern Strategy at the End of the Ming] (with an autobiographical preface dated Kangxi 10 [1671]) by Ji Luqi 計六奇, he also appears as a strategic commander in a work by the Qing period scholar Xu Nai 徐鼐, Xiaotian jinian fukao 小腆紀年繁政 [Chronicled Investigation of Small Prosperity] (20 volumes, preface dated Xianfeng 11 [1861]), which provides material for a study of the history of the Southern Ming--namely a history of anti-Qing resistance that continued to protect the descendant of the house of Ming following the rout from Beijing and escape into southern China. In this last work, his name is written with the Chinese characters 傅燦. When Zheng Chenggong attacks Nanjing, this text describes how Gan Hui met his heroic end: "His horse stumbled and he was captured. Our Gan was to be beheaded, but his martial will could not, it was said, be diverted. Sword in hand, he continued relentless to heap abuse [on the enemy] and he ultimately met his fate." 7

We know from historical materials of the period that Gan Hui lost in his battle with Qing forces, was captured, imprisoned, and died after shattering his own skull. Roughly this same story is conveyed in the Min Shin to ki 明清関記 [Account of the War between the Ming and the Qing] (ten volumes, with a preface dated Kanbun 幹文 10 [1670], compiled by Maezono Sōbu 前園宗武, a resident of Nagasaki), an early text in Japan that told of the anti-Manchu struggles at the end of the Ming. Well after this work, a novel entitled Min Shin gundan Kokusen’ya chūgi den 明清軍談國性爺志義伝 [Account of the Loyalty of Koxinga in the Tales of War between Ming and Qing] (nineteen volumes, neither author’s nor [possibly] translator’s name given) was published in Kyōhō 享保 10 (1725). In it,
Gan Hui appears with the Chinese characters 亜輝, and he convinces Zheng Chenggong to drive the Dutch army out of Taiwan and make that island his base of operations. Then, he himself proceeds to Taiwan, engages the Dutch in battle, and returns in compliance with Zheng's command. However, as the text continues, he is defeated as a result of the betrayal to the Qing forces of Zheng's uncle (while serving as governor-general of Simingzhou 思明州, the ancient name for Xiamen in Fujian); he comes to the aid of Zheng's wife (née Lin 林) and their children, and flees into the sea. The Shinsetsu Min Shin kassen ki seems to have taken a hint from this work.

One further work, the Zheng Chenggong zhuan 鄭成功傳 (J. Tei Seikō den) [Biography of Zheng Chenggong] by Zheng Juzhong 鄭居仲 (two volumes, with a preface [in the Japanese edition] dated Meiwa明和 8 [1771]), printed and with Japanese reading punctuation by Kimura Kenkadō 木村兼堂, may have been a source of inspiration to Shinsetsu Min Shin kassen ki inasmuch as both raise to center stage Zheng Tianlin, the descendant of Zheng Chenggong, and Gan Zhao, the descendant of Gan Hui, and have them leading the anti-Qing military forces. One possible reason for this connection is that the name of Gan Hui appears repeatedly—to an extent not found in other historical materials—in the Japanese reprinting of the Zheng Chenggong zhuan.9

The author of the Shinsetsu Min Shin kassen ki seems to have been a rather well read person. He cites such other works as Qing su jiwen 清佐紀聞 [Account of Qing Customs] and Jingchu suishiji 荊楚歲時記 [Almanac of Chu], and he inserts explanatory notes for toponyms and names of bureaucratic posts.

Notes

a. This work in seventeen traditional volumes was reprinted by Gannandō shoten (Tokyo) in 1968.

b. This is a reference to Shiji 史記 7: "Xiang Yu benjì" 項羽本紀 [The Basic Annals of Xiang Yu]: "Hsiang Yu led his entire forces across the river. Once across, he sank all his boats, smashed the cooking pots and vessels, and set fire to his huts, taking three days' rations, to make clear to his soldiers that they must fight to the death, for he had no intention of returning." Records of the Grand Historian: Chapters from the Shih Chi of Ssu-ma Ch'ien, trans. Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), p. 77. For an extremely useful, annotated edition of much of the Shiji, see Tanaka Kenji 田中謙二 and Ikkai Tomoyoshi 一海知義, trans. and

1. In Yoshida Kurazo, ed., Shōin sensei icho 松陰 先生遺著 [The Posthumous Works of Yoshida Shōin] (Tokyo: Min'yūsha, 1909), part 2; and in Yoshida Shōin zenshū 吉田松陰全集 [Collected Works of Yoshida Shōin], ed. Yamaguchi ken kyōkukai (Tokyo: Daiwa shobō, 1976), volume 2, pp. 93-121. The latter of these couplets did in fact appear at the beginning of a section of documents on the Triads in the Chinese work, Taiping tianguo shiliao 太平天国史料 [Historical Documents on the Taiping Rebellion] (Beijing reprint: Zhonghua shuju, 1959); in the last form, the expression of "proceeding immediately to cleanse" has been changed to "proceeding immediately ahead."


4. The text notes that they could not "now obtain an original edition" of the Xiaer guanzhen.

5. In Appendix One, "Bakumatsu gaikoku kankei monjo," in Dai Nihon komonjo.


e. According to Kawabata Genji 河鰭源治, this work was entitled Jindai Zhongguo bishi 近代中國秘史 [Secret History of Modern China] and published in 1904; it was a collection of documents concerning the revival of the Han people. See Kawabata, "Kindai Chūgoku hishi" 近代中國秘史, in Ajia rekishi jiten 亚洲歷史事典 [Historical Encyclopedia of Asia] (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1960), volume 3, p. 21b.
6. For example, the name "Wan Da Hong" 万大洪 in a placard of a Triad group appears changed in Zhongguo jinshi mishi as "Wan Sui Hong" 万歲洪, and "Wan Sui Hong" refers to Heavenly King Hong Xiuquan of the Taipings.

7. Before this work appeared, the Taiwan waiji 台灣外記 [External Chronicle of Taiwan] by Jiang Risheng 江日昇 (30 volumes, with a preface dated Kangxi 43 [1704] by Chen Qi 陳祈) was a novel that took the form of a historical biography; it cited the Xiaotian jinian fukao as a reference. In Jiang’s work, Gan Hui’s name appears as 甘輝 (the two characters 甘 and 輝 are effectively the same), and the points where he is reviling the last Qing commander whom he encounters and is then killed are practically identical prose passages in the two works. In the Taiwan waiji, though, Gan Hui is captured and dies at Chongming 蘆明 after the defeat at Nanjing.

f. This work can be found in the collection of Harvard-Yenching Library, where the author is given as Ukai Sekisai 樂氏精斎, and publications information: Edo: Nakamura Shinshichi 中村進七, 1725.

g. Zheng Juzhong (Yizou 魏篤), jinshi of 1700, published Zheng Chenggong zhuan in 1702; a copy can be found in the collection of the Harvard-Yenching Library. A Japanese edition (dated Ansei 3 [1856]), published in Osaka, can also be found in this same collection.