

***Kanbun*, Histories of Japanese Literature, and Japanologists**

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In terms of its size, often its quality, and certainly its importance both at the time it was written and cumulatively in the cultural tradition, *kanbun* 漢文 is arguably the biggest and most important area of Japanese literary study that has been ignored in recent times, and the one least properly represented as part of the canon.

I would like to see a distinction maintained in English when referring to *kanbun*. When speaking of *kanbun* works by Japanese, I suggest that the language they use, one based on the classical language of China, be called “Sino-Japanese.” And only when referring to Chinese traditional texts written by Chinese would we say that they are written in “Chinese.” I repeat: the term “Sino-Japanese” for *kanbun* written by Japanese, the term “Chinese” for *kanbun* texts written by Chinese. It is misleading to conflate the two. There are exceptions to this, but we will not deal with them here.

It is about texts written in Sino-Japanese by Japanese that I will focus my initial remarks. Of course, the Sino-Japanese written by Japanese, like the Latin written by late-medieval, Renaissance, and even later practitioners, often shows the influence of the writer’s vernacular: hence, the insistence on its being called Sino-Japanese. As a corollary to this, it seems wrong-headed that some would judge Sino-Japanese *kanbun* compositions on the basis of whether or not they meet the same criteria as those composed by Chinese. That is precisely what Konishi Jin’ichi 小西甚一 rather frequently does;¹ and Donald Keene also occasionally cites such estimations.²

By the same token, it is misleading at best for anyone to call *kanbun* a foreign language in premodern Japan. Again, let us look at the tradition of classical studies in the West. In James Boswell’s *The Life of Samuel Johnson*, it is nothing short of staggering to see not only how much Latin and Greek Johnson and his classmates had crammed into their heads by the age of ten, but also how much composition work they did in those languages. Johnson and his schoolmates were probably more at home in Latin composition than most young Americans are today writing English--or, for that matter, than most young Japanese are writing in their language. And let us keep one fact in mind: if classical Chinese was a foreign language for Japanese, it was also a foreign one for

¹ Konishi Jin’ichi, *A History of Japanese Literature* (see n. 6 below): Vol. 2, pp. 8, 51-52, 54, 166, 186; Vol. 3, pp. 5-6, 12, 13, 14, 17, 23, 181; see also one of the references in n. 2 below.

² Donald Keene, *Seeds in the Heart* (see n. 7 below), pp. 215 n. 98, 1065 (citing a Konishi Jin’ichi article), 1069 (cf. 1085 n. 24), 1077-78.

Chinese (albeit not to the same degree), certainly from the Sung dynasty on, and arguably as early as the Six Dynasties or earlier.

The fact that Japanese were able to write diaries, treatises, prefaces, etc., *at all* in Sino-Japanese reflects considerable familiarity with the idiom. Of course, there are better and worse examples of *kanbun* composition by Japanese. But there are better and worse examples of *kanbun* composition by Chinese, some semi-literate, others far from polished. Certainly, one should not look to the earlier-mentioned criterion, that of whether or not a *kanbun* composition by a Japanese would pass muster as a composition by a Chinese, as an index of its merit. Rather, Sino-Japanese compositions must be judged by a different set of standards. Devising such criteria is one of the tasks before us.³

Skill in reading and writing Sino-Japanese became an integral part of the training and education of most educated Japanese. The other idiom that Japanese wrote in, *kana*, will here be called “Japanese” (in quotation marks), because *both* it and Sino-Japanese make up Japanese (*without* quotation marks) literature.

Imagine a Japanese literature without Sino-Japanese--a Japanese literature--

without the *Kojiki* 古事記, the *Nihon shoki* 日本書記, and the

Kaifūsō 懷風藻;

without the prose of Kūkai 空海 or the *Honchō monzui* 本朝文粹;

without the tales of the *Nihon ryōiki* 日本靈異記, the *Gōdanshō*

江談抄, and the *Shintōshū* 神道集;

without the *Shōmonki* 將門記;

without the diaries of Ennin 圓仁, Fujiwara no Michinaga 藤原道

長, Fujiwara Teika 藤原定家, or Mori Ōgai 森鷗外;

without important prefaces to the *Kokinshū* 古今集, the *Shin*

kokinshū 新古今集, and the *Kanginshū* 閑吟集;

without Buddhist writing like the *Ōjō yōshū* 往生要集;

without Tokugawa comic writings such as *Neboke sensei bunshū*

寢惚先生文集;

without much of the poetry of Sugawara no Michizane 菅原道真,

Rai San'yō 賴山陽, and Natsume Sōseki 夏目漱石--not to

mention the Gozan 五山 poets!

What, too, of writings in the Japanese cultural tradition that are sometimes taken to be quintessentially Japanese, which are in fact either translated from, or likely largely based on, Sino-Japanese *kanbun*, starting with the “Seventeen-Article Constitution” attributed to Shōtoku Taishi 聖德太子? In this category one finds the *Taketori monogatari* 竹取物語, the *Hōjōki* 方丈記, and the *Soga monogatari* 曾我物語. This

³ In this regard, see Judith N. Rabinovitch, “An Introduction to *Hentai Kambun* (Variant Chinese), A Hybrid Sino-Japanese Used by the Male Elite in Premodern Japan,” *Journal of Chinese Linguistics* 24:1 (Jan. 1996), pp. 98-127. Note also the following entries in the *Kodansha Encyclopedia of Japan* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1983; 10 vols.): “Chinese Literature and Japanese Literature” (by Imamura Yoshio), vol. 1, pp. 292-96; “Poetry and Prose in Chinese” (by Satō Tamotsu), vol. 6, pp. 193-97; “Kambun” (by Robert L. Backus), vol. 4, pp. 123-24; and “Hentai Kambun” (by Judith N. Rabinovitch), vol. 3, pp. 126-27.

is to say nothing of works based on Chinese *kanbun* texts, such as sizable portions of the *Konjaku monogatari* 今昔物語.⁴

How can one understand anything of the development of prose style in Japan without a close familiarity with classical Chinese, and with earlier "Japanese" and Sino-Japanese prose? For instance, how can one describe the admixture of Chinese compounds in the great medieval tale literature, if one does not know both earlier Heian tales in "Japanese" and earlier *kanbun*, of the Chinese as well as Sino-Japanese varieties? What of the influence of Sino-Japanese *kanbun* diaries and records on the *Jikkinshô* 十訓抄? And regarding Chinese *kanbun*, what of the influence of Chinese poetic themes on Fujiwara Teika, of Sung poetry on the Kyôgoku 京極 poets, of Ming and Ch'ing fiction on Ueda Akinari 上田秋成, and of Po Chü-i 白居易 on everyone? Do people just repeat other scholars' opinions about this, or do they develop an intimate familiarity of their own with these presumed models/sources/influences?

In this regard, I would warn people not to uncritically accept other scholars' estimations. Konishi Jin'ichi, for example, although certainly far better acquainted with both Chinese literature and Sino-Japanese *kanbun* than most, can be frustrating--creatively suggestive in many of his generalizations, but very much in need of qualification (or better specificity) in others. In my copies of the three volumes of his literary history, there are dozens of penciled in question marks about points he makes either about aspects of Chinese literature, comparisons he makes between it and Japanese literature, or about his reasoning in reference to both.⁵

Yet, the standard histories of Japanese literature in English--the volumes by Konishi Jin'ichi,⁶ Donald Keene,⁷ and Katô Shûichi⁸ 加藤周一--are truly admirable in

⁴ Donald Keene, *Seeds in the Heart* (see n 7 below): pp. 435 and 467 n 9 (re the *Taketori monogatari*), citing Kanô Morohira 加納諸平 (1806-1857) and Takeda Yûkichi 武田祐吉; pp. 347-48 and 762-63 (re the *Hôjôki*), citing the *Chitei no ki* 池亭記 (Record of the Pond Pavilion) by Yoshishige no Yasutane 慶滋保胤; pp. 888 and 912 n. 70 (re the *Soga monogatari*), citing Takahashi Nobuyuki (for fuller reference, see p. 911 n. 66); and pp. 573-74 and 596 n. 29 (re the *Konjaku monogatari*), citing Ôsone Shôsuke et al.

⁵ Similarly, his comments on Six Dynasties poetry should not be accepted uncritically: Konishi Jin'ichi, "The Genesis of the *Kokinshû* Style," Helen C. McCullough, trans., *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 38.1 (June 1978), pp. 61-170.

⁶ Konishi Jin'ichi, *A History of Japanese Literature: Volume One, The Archaic and Ancient Ages*, Aileen Gatten and Nicholas Teele, trans., Earl Miner, ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984); Volume Two, *The Early Middle Ages*, Aileen Gatten, trans., Earl Miner, ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986); Volume Three, *The High Middle Ages*, Aileen Gatten and Mark Harbison, trans., Earl Miner, ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

⁷ Donald Keene, *Seeds in the Heart: Japanese Literature from Earliest Times to the Late Sixteenth Century* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1993); *World within Walls: Japanese Literature of the Pre-Modern Era, 1600-1867* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976); and *Dawn to the West: Japanese Fiction in the Modern Era* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1984), 2 Vols.: [Vol. 1] *Fiction* and [Vol. 2] *Poetry, Drama, Criticism*.

that they treat *kanbun* as being an integral part of the literary tradition of Japan. There are areas where one might disagree with their treatment--certainly, with the way each describes Sino-Japanese as being a foreign language⁹--but their scope is appropriately broad.

Apart from such literary histories, what translations or studies of Sino-Japanese works do we have in Western languages? There is Francine Hérail's translation of the *Midô kanpaku ki* 御堂關白記,¹⁰ Helen McCullough's of the *Mutsu waki* 陸奥話記,¹¹ and Judith Rabinovitch's of the *Shōmonki*.¹² We have both the Chamberlain and Philippi

⁸ Katō Shūichi, *A History of Japanese Literature: Volume One, The First Thousand Years*, David Chibbett, trans. (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1979; rpt. Tokyo: Kodansha International Ltd., 1981); Volume Two, *The Years of Isolation*, Don Sanderson, trans. (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1983; rpt. Tokyo: Kodansha International Ltd., 1983); Volume Three, *The Modern Years*, Don Sanderson, trans. (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1983; rpt. Tokyo: Kodansha International Ltd., 1983).

⁹ Konishi Jin'ichi, *A History of Japanese Literature*, Vol. 1, p. 4; vol. 3, p. 23. Donald Keene, *Seeds in the Heart*, pp. 189, 581, 1083 (cited below in this note); Katō Shūichi, *A History of Japanese Literature*, Vol. 1, pp. 4, 17, and 32. Burton Watson also slips into this locution, *Japanese Literature in Chinese* (see n 18 below), Vol. 1, p. 6.

Note the circularity in reasoning in the following citations from Donald Keene, *Seeds in the Heart*. Concerning the diary of Ennin: "Unfortunately, Ennin's ability, especially his skill at writing difficult classical Chinese, has kept most Japanese from reading the diary in which he narrated his travels." (p. 361) About Sugawara no Michizane: "Michizane ranks as a major Japanese poet, though his preference for Chinese as a medium of expression had the unforeseeable consequence of estranging him from future generations of readers whose education did not extend to the subtleties of Chinese prosody." (pp. 205-6) About Fujiwara Teika's *Meigetsuki* 明月記 (Chronicle of the Bright Moon), a diary covering the years 1180 to 1235: "[T]his adverse combination of language [*kanbun*] and content [politics] no doubt explains why such an important work has been so little studied." (p. 828-29) About Gozan authors: "Their poetry, because written in a foreign language, has become in the last century increasingly difficult for Japanese to understand, and has accordingly remained on the periphery of studies of Japanese literature." (p. 1083)

Given so many treasures, perhaps Japanese and others should learn *kanbun*--certainly those who claim expertise in Japanese literature.

¹⁰ *Notes journalières de Fujiwara no Michinaga, ministre à la cour de Heian (995-1018)* (Geneva & Paris: Librairie Droz, 1987).

¹¹ Helen Craig McCullough, "A Tale of Mutsu," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 25 (1964-65), pp. 178-211.

¹² Judith Rabinovitch, *Shōmonki: The Story of Masakado's Rebellion* (Tokyo: Monumenta Nipponica, Sophia University, 1986). Note also her "Wasp Waists and Monkey Tails: A Study and Translation of Hamanari's *Uta no Shiki* (The Code of Poetry, 772), Also Known as *Kakyō Hyōshiki* (A Formulary for Verse Based on the Canons of Poetry)," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 51.2 (Dec. 1991), pp. 471-560.

versions of the *Kojiki*,¹³ Aston's of the *Nihon shoki*,¹⁴ renderings of Ennin's diary and the *Ôjô yôshû* by two of the Reischauers,¹⁵ the Michiko Y. Aoki and Kyoko Motomochi Nakamura renditions (respectively) of the *Fudoki* 風土記 and the *Nihon ryôiki*,¹⁶ as well as a translation of the *Wa-Kan rôei shû* 和漢朗詠集 by J. Thomas Rimer and Jonathan Chaves.¹⁷ Burton Watson, of course, has not only published the two volumes of his *Japanese Literature in Chinese*,¹⁸ but also the work entitled *Kanshi: The Poetry of Ishikawa Jôzan and Other Edo-Period Poets*.¹⁹ Responsible for the *kanshi* 漢詩 translations in his jointly-authored anthology, *From the Country of Eight Islands*,²⁰ Watson has also published translations of the Sino-Japanese verse of Gensei 元政, Ryôkan 良寛, and Natsume Sôseki.²¹ Robert Borgen treated several *kanshi* by Sugawara

¹³ Basil Hall Chamberlain, *The Kojiki: Records of Ancient Matters* (2nd ed., Kobe: J.L. Thomson, 1932; rpt. Rutland, Vt. & Tokyo, Japan: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1982); Donald L. Philippi, *Kojiki* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1969).

¹⁴ W.G. Aston, *Nihongi: Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times to A.D. 697* (London: Kegan Paul, 1896; rpt. Rutland, Vt. & Tokyo, Japan: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1972).

¹⁵ Edwin O. Reischauer, *Ennin's Diary: The Record of a Pilgrimage to China in Search of the Law* (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1955); cf. *idem*, *Ennin's Travels in T'ang China* (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1955). A. K. Reischauer, "Genshin's *Ôjôyôshû*: Collected Essays in Birth into Paradise," *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, 2nd series, 7 (Dec. 1930), pp. 16-97 (partial translation); note also the partial translation by Allan A. Andrews, *The Teachings Essential for Rebirth: A Study of Genshin's Ôjôyôshû* (Tokyo: Monumenta Nipponica, Sophia University, 1973).

¹⁶ Michiko Y. Aoki, *Records of Wind and Earth: A Translation of Fudoki, with Introduction and Commentaries* (Ann Arbor: The Association for Asian Studies, 1997); Kyoko Motomochi Nakamura, *Miraculous Stories from the Japanese Buddhist Tradition: The Nihon ryôiki of the Monk Kyôkai* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973).

¹⁷ J. Thomas Rimer and Jonathan Chaves, *Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing: The Wakan rôei shû* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).

¹⁸ Burton Watson, *Japanese Literature in Chinese: Volume 1, Poetry and Prose in Chinese by Japanese Writers of the Early Period* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975); Volume 2, *Poetry and Prose in Chinese by Japanese Writers of the Later Period* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976).

¹⁹ (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1990).

²⁰ Hiroaki Sato and Burton Watson, *From the Country of Eight Islands: An Anthology of Japanese Poetry* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1981).

²¹ Burton Watson, *Grass Hill: Poems and Prose by the Japanese Monk Gensei* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983); *Ryôkan: Zen Monk-Poet of Japan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977); and "Sixteen Poems by Natsume Sôseki," in *Essays on Natsume Sôseki's Works*, Japanese National Commission for Unesco, comp. (Tokyo: Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, 1972), pp. 119-24.

no Michizane in his study of that figure.²² There are book-length translations of Gozan poetry by Marian Ury,²³ David Pollack,²⁴ Sonja Arntzen,²⁵ and others.²⁶ Recently appearing are the volume by Timothy H. Bradstock and Judith N. Rabinovitz, *An Anthology of Kanshi (Chinese Verse) by Japanese Poets of the Edo Period (1603-1868)*,²⁷ and Hiroaki Sato's treatment of the *kanshi* of the late-Tokugawa woman poet, Ema Saikô 江馬細香.²⁸ Finally, there are the studies of Japanese interaction with and transformation of Chinese models by David Pollack,²⁹ Ward Geddes,³⁰ and myself.³¹

For additional studies of Ryôkan, see John Stevens, *One Bowl, One Robe. The Zen Poetry of Ryôkan* (New York & Tokyo: Weatherhill, 1977); Nobuyuki Yuasa, *The Zen Poems of Ryôkan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981); and John Stevens, *Three Zen Masters*, n. 26 below.

²² Robert Borgen, *Sugawara no Michizane and the Early Heian Court* (Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1986).

²³ Marian Ury, *Poems of the Five Mountains: An Introduction to the Literature of the Zen Monasteries* (Tokyo: Mushinsha, 1977; 2nd, rev. ed., Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 1992).

²⁴ David Pollack, *Zen Poems of the Five Mountains* (New York: The Crossland Publishing Co., Decatur, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1985).

²⁵ Sonja Arntzen: *Ikkyû and the Crazy Cloud Anthology: A Zen Poet of Medieval Japan* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1986).

²⁶ John Stevens, *Three Zen Masters: Ikkyû, Hakuin, Ryôkan* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1993); for additional studies on these three figures, see the bibliography, pp. 159-61. W.S. Merwin and Sôiku Shigematsu, *Sun at Midnight: Poems and Sermons by Musô Soseki* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1989).

²⁷ (Lewiston, N.Y.: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1997).

²⁸ Hiroaki Sato, *Breeze Through Bamboo: Selected Kanshi of Ema Saikô* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).

²⁹ David Pollack, *The Fracture of Meaning: Japan's Synthesis of China from the Eighth through the Eighteenth Centuries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

³⁰ Ward Geddes, *Kara monogatari: Tales of China* (Tempe: Center for Asian Studies, Arizona State University, 1984).

³¹ John Timothy Wixted, "The *Kokinshû* Prefaces: Another Perspective" *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 43.1 (June 1983), pp. 215-238. Abridged version: "Chinese Influences on the *Kokinshû* Prefaces," in *Kokinshû: A Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern*, Laurel Rasplica Rodd, with the collaboration of Mary Catherine Henkenius, trans. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984; rpt. Boston: Cheng and Tsui Company, 1996), pp. 387-400. The same abridged version: "Influencias Chinas en los Prefacios de *Kokinshû*," Amalia Sato, trans., *Tokonoma: Traducción y Literatura* (Buenos Aires) 2 (Spring 1994), pp. 23-35.

Notwithstanding such contributions, most students of Japanese, whether Japanese or non-Japanese, do not begin to have the grounding in classical Chinese that would enable them to understand *kanbun* texts well. In the U.S., the required training in Chinese of graduate students in Japanese is, at most, two years of the modern language and one year of the classical--which, of course, is scarcely a start. What is the upshot of this? A vicious circle: people shy away from what they do not know, stay permanently ignorant of it, and its non-importance of course is often thereby confirmed, especially because of natural reluctance to draw attention to one's weaknesses.

When citing Chinese sources, Japanologists generally rely on the Japanese editions of the works they are studying, which vary considerably as to quality. It is like looking through a glass darkly--and a secondhand glass, at that--one sometimes made further opaque by inadequate familiarity with Chinese cultural history. Without a strong grounding in classical Chinese, one is forever hobbled in being able to study Japanese literature. That is true for virtually anything up to the twentieth century, and arguably for much that is more recent.

Of course, what everyone in Japanese literary studies needs is several years' study of Chinese, including at least two years of classical Chinese, and then special readings in Sino-Japanese, as well as real training in Chinese literary and cultural history. Instead, most Westerners get a fraction of that and most native-speaker Japanese are exposed to a smattering of *kanbun*, both of the Chinese and Sino-Japanese varieties, in the standard secondary-school curriculum. Not much attention is given *kanbun* in the Japanese literature curriculum in Japanese universities.

Research institutions in Japanese studies, wherever they may be, should consider having a position in *kanbun* studies: to help reflect the real breadth of Japanese literature, to insure that graduate students get proper training, and to serve as a resource for others at the institution.³²

The slighting of *kanbun* goes hand in glove with two phenomena. The one has already been alluded to, the general need of most Japanologists to be able to read classical Chinese and Sino-Japanese better. The other has to do with what might be called a "narrowing" in the definition of what is considered Japanese literature or culture. Certainly, the scope of Japanese literature, as regards *kanbun*, is far narrower than it was in Mori Ōgai's day.

In the wake of World War II, with the promotion of Japanese cultural studies outside of Japan, there seems to have been an emphasis on topics that are unquestionably "Japanese." That this coincides in Japan both with a turning away from China and continental Asia and with a reduction in the learning of Chinese-based *kanji*, makes nineteenth-century literature in "Japanese" difficult of access, to say nothing of the way it makes things written in *kanbun* seem a foreign language. The net effect is a kind of "Japanism" that, along with *Nihonjin-ron* 日本人論 discussions and the like, is really

³² In this respect, it is encouraging to see the inauguration of an annual summer workshop in *kanbun* at Cornell University.

heir to the worst Japanese racism of the pre-war.³³ To put it bluntly, we have a kind of ethnically pure "Japanism" in Japanese studies.

This is manifested in different ways. Until recently, the Japan Foundation in the U.S., for example (unlike its European counterpart), for decades seldom funded anything that smacked much of China. And my own experience with two books having considerable bearing on Japan (but with Sinology-related titles) also illustrates the narrowness of Japanese studies.

In a volume by Yoshikawa Kôjirô 吉川 幸次郎 that I translated, *Five Hundred Years of Chinese Poetry, 1150-1650: The Chin, Yuan, and Ming Dynasties*,³⁴ the author draws comparisons between late-Edo *waka* and developments in post-Sung Chinese poetry, fills in the background to the use of Ming models by Ogyû Sorai 荻生徂徠 and his followers, and writes as a superb prose stylist of Japanese. Yet, the book was never reviewed by a Japanese-studies journal such as *Monumenta Nipponica*, *The Journal of Japanese Studies*, or the *Journal of the Association of Teachers of Japanese*.³⁵

In a volume that I compiled, *Japanese Scholars of China: A Bibliographical Handbook*,³⁶ there are entries for more than 1,500 twentieth-century Japanese scholars of China, many of whom deal primarily or secondarily with Japan.³⁷ Yet this handbook, a guide to arguably the greatest academic tradition in Japan, was not reviewed by any of the above-mentioned Japanese-studies journals.

The experience I had when submitting the Yoshikawa Kôjirô volume for the "Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission Prize for the Translation of Japanese Literature" provides a further example of the narrowness of what is considered Japanese literature. The submission was returned, with a letter saying that the volume "is an interesting work and an important contribution to Chinese literary studies," but that it did not qualify as a work "of literature in translation."³⁸ Never mind that the book's finest feature--more than its scholarship--is its prose,³⁹ there may be no better expository Japanese writing this

³³ Cf. John Timothy Wixted, "Reverse Orientalism," *Sino-Japanese Studies* 2.1 (Dec. 1989), pp. 17-27; reprinted in *Hiroshima Signpost* (January 1992), pp. 30-35.

³⁴ (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).

³⁵ In fact, the book-review editor of the *Journal of the Association of Teachers of Japanese*, Marian Ury, told me personally: "No one is interested in that sort of thing."

³⁶ (Lewiston, N.Y.: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1992).

³⁷ The work includes bibliographical information, for example, about Yonezawa Yoshiho 米澤嘉圃 in art history, Mori Katsumi 森克己 in history, Hanayama Shinshô 花山信勝 in Buddhism, and various scholars in literature--all made accessible under a main subject-heading for "Japan" in the subject index, with various sub-headings for "Japanese Literature," "Japanese History," etc.

³⁸ Letter to "John Wixted," November 30, 1990, from "Victoria Lyon-Bester, Program Director, Prize Administrator, Donald Keene Center of Japanese Studies, Columbia University."

³⁹ It is to their credit that Howard Hibbett and Gen Itasaka included an essay by Yoshikawa Kôjirô

century. The intent--as made clear with the submission--was for the translation to be judged in terms of how well it created an analogue in English to the outstanding prose of the original.

By the Commission's standards, a classic of English writing like Thomas Macaulay's *History of England* would not qualify as English literature. And Edward Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* would be simply a contribution to Roman history.⁴⁰ Compare this attitude with that of the editors of the wonderful "Library of America" series. Classic works in it include not only what one would expect--Hawthorne, Melville, Wharton, Whitman, and the like--but also others of both cultural and literary importance: Francis Parkman's eight-volume history, *England and France in North America*; and the *Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant*, whose prose Edmund Wilson so highly praised in his study of Civil War writing, *Patriotic Gore*.⁴¹ The chapter by John M. Ellis, "The Definition of Literature" (in *The Theory of Literary Criticism: A Logical Analysis*),⁴² is apropos in this regard, for its cogent discussion of what constitutes literature.

It is unfortunate that many Japanese today are so narrow in the way they think of Japanese culture, Japanese literature, etc.--far narrower than Mori Ôgai and his generation were. It is even more disappointing to see many Westerners adopting the same stance. What needs to be changed is the attitude, the mind-set, that lies behind it.

The scope of Japanese studies needs to be widened. The narrow, parochial view of Japan must be countered. As part of the task, *kanbun* should be given greater attention. As long as the *kanbun* traditions of Sino-Japanese and Chinese are ignored, understanding of Japanese literature--and Japanese culture--will remain both distorted and impoverished.

in their textbook to illustrate Japanese prose style: *Modern Japanese: A Basic Reader* (2nd ed., Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967), 2 vols., Lesson 50.

⁴⁰ The same kind of contradiction is explicit in the following statement by Donald Keene regarding Miyoshi no Kiyoyuki 三善清行: "His composition 'Iken Hôji Jûnikyô (Opinions in a Sealed Document in Twelve Articles) has been praised [by Kawaguchi Hisao] as the finest example of Heian *kambun*. The Twelve Articles are recommendations to the government concerning prayers to aid agriculture, the dangers of extravagance, the necessity of increasing the food allowance to students at the university, and so on. Not all the articles are important, and *the work as a whole lacks literary significance* [emphasis added], but *the document is admired* [by Kawaguchi] *for its mastery of balanced prose, its clarity of expression, and its objective manner of presenting historical facts* [emphasis added]." *Seeds in the Heart*, p. 206.

⁴¹ Edmund Wilson, *Patriotic Gore: Studies in the Literature of the American Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), pp. 131-73, esp. p. 143.

⁴² (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974, pp. 24-53).