

An Alien Vernacular: Okajima Kanzan's Popularization of the Chinese Vernacular Novel in Eighteenth-Century Japan

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Chinese literature and philosophy were almost exclusively known in Japan through texts composed in literary Chinese, a written language that defined the highest register of intellectual discourse within China and imported into Japan as the paramount register of language for the treatment of serious topics. Yet from the middle of the seventeenth century on, literary texts written in semi-vernacular or vernacular Chinese language slowly filtered into Japan through the port of Nagasaki, attracting the attention of a wide range of intellectuals. One of the most important figures in the popularization of Chinese vernacular fiction in Japan was the translator and interpreter Okajima Kanzan 岡島冠山 (1674-1728). Through his glossaries and annotations, Chinese vernacular fiction became accessible to a wide range of Japanese readers. Kanzan's efforts pushed Chinese vernacular fiction into the realm of significant, if not serious, literature and made it visible within the intellectual discourse of the period. These new texts were written in a language closer to spoken Chinese, and consequently, although easier for the Chinese reader, were more difficult for the Japanese intellectual. Despite the initial difficulties involved in reading such texts, they became immensely popular from the middle of the eighteenth century with the result that Chinese vernacular fiction was a major source of inspiration for Japanese fiction.

Although marginal curiosities at first, Chinese vernacular novels such as *Shuihu zhuan* 水滸傳 (Tale of the Water Margin) and *Xiyouji* 西游記 (Journey to the West) were brought to the attention of a wide intellectual audience and infused with that all-important aura of significance when the Confucian scholar Ogyû Sorai 荻生徂徠 (1666-1728) suggested that an understanding of the Chinese vernacular language was essential to the comprehension of the Chinese cultural tradition. Sorai suggested that a strong command of the spoken Chinese language would make the Chinese classics more accessible to the Japanese reader because he would be able to overcome the barriers to comprehension erected by the Japanese system of syntactic transformation then employed in the reading of literary Chinese known as *kundoku* 訓讀.

The central moment in Sorai's promotion of Chinese vernacular language came with his publication of a dictionary for the Chinese language, *Yakubun sentei* 譯文筌蹄 (A Tool for Translation) in 1714. In addition to a systematic description of Chinese particles in which the Chinese language was treated explicitly as a foreign language, *Yakubun sentei* included a substantial discussion of vernacular Chinese language. Sorai's emphasis on the need to understand Chinese as a foreign language, and to do so through the apprehension of vernacular Chinese language had a specific purpose. As a strategy to compensate for his loss of influence within the Shogunate after his patron Yanagizawa Yoshiyasu 柳澤吉保 (1658-1714) fell from power, Sorai appealed to the large

constituent of educated samurai and commoners outside of the government who wished to educate themselves. His was a bid to take advantage of the rapidly expanding publishing industry to establish his textual authority throughout the country at a moment when the channels of political power were closed to him. The strategy of general appeal to the private scholar, combined with Sorai's prodigious academic writing, was immensely successful: through the publication and circulation of his scholarly works, as well as his primers and dictionaries of Chinese, Sorai became the most influential thinker of his age—without controlling a Confucian academy.

Sorai's insistence on the necessity of learning the Chinese vernacular language, or *Tōwa* 唐話, as part of Confucian scholarship had a particular appeal to his readers. He suggested that by learning the actual Chinese language anyone, regardless of background, could obtain a privileged understanding of Chinese culture beyond that offered by the established Confucian academies. These readers, increasingly from the Kansai area, bought up copies of *Yakubun sentei*, as well as many other dictionaries of vernacular Chinese, primers, and annotated collections of Chinese vernacular stories that followed it. They formed part of the revolution in publishing within Japan that made these texts more readily available than ever before. The growing readership for fiction in Japan nourished domestic publishing and gobbled up the new flood of books imported from China.¹

Sorai was not a fluent speaker of vernacular Chinese, and there were clear limits in his command Chinese outside the limits of the classical idiom. No matter what he may have said about the importance of understanding the living Chinese language, he was inevitably forced to rely on the talents of others with extensive training in spoken Chinese. The main instructor at the group that met to read texts in the original Chinese and discuss them, known as the Translation Society, or *Yakusha* 譯社, was the Nagasaki translator Okajima Kanzan. Kanzan had dazzled everyone with his command of Chinese at the 1711 reception of the Korean delegation at Edo Castle, a rare occasion when such a command of Chinese was in fact of immediate practical use and the reputation of the country was on the line.

What is remarkable about the intellectual world of Japan in the early eighteenth century is that Kanzan gained the attention and respect of such a distinguished Confucian scholar as Ogyū Sorai even though he had little training in the Chinese classical tradition and no social status in the hierarchy of Tokugawa Japan. Kanzan's youth had been spent in the practical study of the Chinese language for interpretation at the port of Nagasaki, and had not included extensive work on the Chinese classics. Although Sorai's star pupil Hattori Nankaku 服部南郭 (1683-1759), as an advocate of classicism, did look down on Kanzan for his general lack of erudition,² in general Kanzan was viewed as a master of spoken Chinese, an essential field in the study of China as defined by Sorai's Ken'en academy.

Kanzan had served for two years as a translator to the Lord of Chōshū, Mōri

¹ For a description of the expanding publishing industry in Japan during the late seventeenth century and its maturation and later regulation by the government in the early eighteenth century, see Konda Yōzō 今田洋三, *Edo no honyasan* 江戸の本屋さん (Edo Bookshops) (Tokyo: Nihon hōsō, 1977), pp. 41-77.

² Yanagisawa Kien 柳澤淇園 makes reference to Hattori Nankaku's comments in his miscellany *Hitorine* 獨寢. See Takashima Toshio 高島俊男, *Suikoden to Nihonjin* 水滸伝と日本人 (The *Shuihu zhuan* and the Japanese) (Tokyo: Daishūkan shoten, 1991), p. 53.

Yoshinari 毛利吉就, beginning in 1692. Previously he had served as an apprentice translator in Chinese, or *Karakeiko tsūji* 唐稽古通事, the very lowest rank of official, in Nagasaki. Sometime during his service there he had occasion to study with the visiting Chinese scholar Wang Shuchang 王庶常 and the famed Japanese scholar and translator Ueno Gentei 上野玄貞 (1661-1713).

Ueno Gentei, often referred to as Kokushisei 國思靖 in contemporary records, was a scholar nurtured by the contact with Chinese language as it was spoken and Chinese culture as it was practiced afforded by the residence of Chinese merchants and officials on Japanese territory in Nagasaki—an exception to the general exclusion of foreign nationals from Japan. Gentei developed a mastery of both the details of spoken Chinese and contemporary China as well as the larger cultural tradition. Gentei had studied Confucianism with Jiang Meishan 蔣眉山 an emigré from the Ming who had fled to Nagasaki. He also studied medicine with a Chinese monk and subsequently made a name in Nagasaki as a doctor. In addition, his command of spoken Chinese, including the dialects of Canton and Hangzhou, made him the most sought after translator and teacher in Nagasaki. In his later years he built a home he called the “Room of Three Pleasures” (*sanrakushitsu* 三樂室) in the Maruyama district of Nagasaki where he maintained a salon of distinguished intellectuals. Gentei represented a new group of intellectuals conversant with China, but not that side of Chinese culture that was presented in the academies. He had a practical knowledge of China derived from years of interaction with Chinese bureaucrats and merchants, and not content to be a mere translator, he established himself as a cultural figure in the Nagasaki world.³

Little is known about Kanzan’s family background, although since he learned Chinese from someone other than his father, Kanzan was most likely not from a translator family. He returned to Nagasaki after Mōri Yoshinari’s death and continued to work as a translator specializing in Chinese affairs, or *Nankin naitsūji* 南京内通事. The serious financial hardship resulting from his pitiful salary led him to give up his interpreting and set off for Kyoto to find his fortune in 1701. Reportedly he found his job as a translator degrading and wished to study Zhu Xi 朱熹 Neo-Confucianism.⁴

In Kyoto he made the acquaintance of the publisher Hayashi Gitan 林義端 (also known as Hayashi Kyūhee 林九兵衛, d. 1711), who commissioned Kanzan to translate the late-Ming historical novel *Huang-Ming yingliezhuan* 皇明英列傳 (earliest extant edition, 1591) into Japanese.⁵ *Huang-Ming yingliezhuan* describes the exploits and conquests of the founder of the Ming dynasty, Zhu Yuanzhuang 朱元璋. Kanzan’s translation, entitled *Tsūzoku kō-Min eiretsuden* 通俗皇明英列傳 (Tales of Heroes from the August Ming in the Common Language),⁶ was printed in 1705. In his preface to the *Tsūzoku kō-Min eiretsuden*, Hayashi Gitan relates that when asked for employment by

³ Ishizaki Matazō 石崎又藏, *Kinsei Nihon ni okeru Shina zokugo bungaku shi* 近世日本における支那俗語文學史 (A History of Vernacular Chinese Fiction in Early Modern Japan) (Tokyo: Kōbundō shobō, 1940), pp. 62-63.

⁴ Ishizaki, p. 73.

⁵ *Huangming yingliezhuan*, also known as *Yunhe qizong* 雲合奇蹤, is an anonymous novel dated 1591. See *Zhongguo tongsu xiaoshuo zongmu tiyao* 中国通俗小说总目提要 (General Summary to Chinese Vernacular Fiction) (Beijing: Zhongguo wenlian, 1990), p. 53.

⁶ Alternate title: *Tsūzoku Gen Min gundan* 通俗元明軍談.

Kanzan, he asked him to translate *Huang-Ming yingliezhuan* and *Shuihu zhuan* in response to popular demand. The *Huang-Ming yingliezhuan* was the first novel concerning the battles and intrigues surrounding the establishment of Ming dynasty to be translated into Japanese. As such it must have seemed infinitely fresh and fascinating to Japanese readers whose reading had previously been limited to the Japanese classical tradition. The Japanese subtitle, *Tsûzoku Gen Min gundan* 通俗元明軍談 (Military Romance of Heroes from the Yuan and Ming Dynasties) was intended to give it appeal to the larger reading public for Chinese history.⁷

Kanzan's translation is basically faithful to the original, although it is not without omissions and mistranslations. Such a translation was clearly aimed at a general reading audience drawn to contemporary Chinese events out of curiosity. As such the audience for *Tsûzoku kô-Min eiretsuden* no doubt overlapped with that for *jôruri* puppet theatre that flocked to see Chikamatsu Monzaemon's play about the Ming battles against the Manchus entitled *Kokusenya kassen* when it opened in 1715. This play depicting the fantastic battles of a loyal Ming official against the Manchus employs various Chinese expressions given in proper Chinese pronunciation. The use of such Chinese terms in proper pronunciation reflected a general interest in Chinese language during the early eighteenth century, a fascination that spilled over into the reading of vernacular fiction.

Along with such recent imports from China as *Huang-Ming yingliezhuan*, *Shuihu zhuan* achieved considerable renown among Japanese intellectuals with some knowledge of vernacular Chinese from the late seventeenth century, but had not been translated or published in an accessible format in Japan. Hayashi Gitan employed Kanzan to annotate in *kundoku* a Japanese edition of *Shuihu zhuan* of which he published the first installment in 1728, the year of Kanzan's death. This annotated edition, known as *Chûgi Suikoden* 忠義水滸傳 (Loyal and Righteous Tales of the Water Margin), is a Japanese reprint of the *Shuihu zhuan*⁸ published in Kyoto that features the original Chinese text with *kaeriten* 返り点 (syntactic markers) and *okurigana* 送り仮名 (declensional *kana*) added in order to make it accessible to Japanese readers without a knowledge of spoken Chinese. It is not a translation, but rather an annotated *wakokubon* 和刻本 (text in Chinese printed in Japan). The inclusion of such annotations as *kaeriten* implies that there was a readership in the Kyoto area for vernacular works of Chinese literature as just that, literature, who did not have a strong interest in mastering spoken Chinese language.

Chûgi Suikoden may not be entirely the work of Kanzan.⁹ The first installment published by Hayashi Gitan in 1728 contains only the first ten chapters and was most likely produced by Kanzan, at least in part. But the second installment, which included the next ten chapters, was subsequently released by Hayashi Gitan and Hayashi Gonbee 林權兵衛, also of the Hayashi family, in 1757—long after Kanzan's death. The project was subsequently interrupted. Judging from the slow progress, we can assume that the Hayashi family did not consider the annotated version a priority. What deserves notice, however, is the extremely high quality of the text and annotations of *Chûgi Suikoden*, far better than the two collections of *huaben* Chinese vernacular short stories, *Shôsetsu*

⁷ Ishizaki, p. 81. Quotation from Shinozaki Tôkai's 篠崎東海 essay *Wagakuben* 和學辯.

⁸ *Chûgi Suikoden* is based on the 100-chapter edition with the fuller text (*Wenfan baihuiben* 文繁百回本) edition of *Shuihuzhuan*. See *Suikoden to Nihonjin*, p. 65.

⁹ *Suikoden to Nihonjin*, pp. 49-71.

seigen 小説精言 and *Shôsetsu kigen*, that Oka Hakku 岡白駒 annotated and Sawada Issai 澤田一齋 published in 1743 and 1751, respectively.

Shuihu zhuan had already become an important topic of study among the new generation of independent scholars emerging in Kyoto by the time Hayashi Gitan published the second installment of the translation, a rather imperfect rendering in 1757, entitled *Tsûzoku chûgi Suikoden* 通俗忠義水滸傳.¹⁰ The last installment of this full translation was not complete until 1790. It remains a mystery why *Shuihu zhuan*, the most talked about work of vernacular Chinese fiction in the first part of the seventeenth century, was not available in complete translation even after other Chinese novels of considerably less fame had been in circulation for some time. By 1790 there were several original Japanese novels in circulation based loosely on the themes of *Shuihu zhuan* but no direct translation.

Hayashi Gitan was the proprietor of the Bunkaidô 文會堂, a successful publishing house, and also the author of several *ukiyozôshi* 浮世草子 (realistic novels) narratives himself. Gitan was both a student in Itô Jinsai's 伊藤仁齋 Confucian academy, Kogidô 古義堂, and a strong supporter of popular fiction in the early eighteenth century. He published Asai Ryô's 淺井了意 (1610-1691) collection of stories of the strange *Inuhariko* 犬張子, in 1692, the year after Ryô's death. *Inuhariko* consists of tales of the supernatural culled from the early Ming collection *Jiandeng xinhua* 剪燈新話 and situated in a Japanese context. Ryô gave his renderings of the original Chinese classical tales a didactic emphasis. The head of the Kogidô in the early eighteenth century, Itô Tôgai 伊藤東涯 (1670-1736), praised Gitan's Bunkaidô as an organization not primarily concerned with profit, but rather with the spread of learning among the people, as evidenced by other works it published.¹¹

Gitan published two *ukiyozôshi* stories, *Tamakushige* 玉櫛笥 in 1695 and *Tamahahaki* 玉箒子 in 1696, both of which he based loosely on Ryô's tales. Since Gitan already had an interest in Chinese tales of the supernatural from the late seventeenth century, he was likely receptive to Kanzan's promotion of Chinese vernacular fiction. He was an example of a Japanese intellectual with a serious commitment to both popular fiction and Confucian learning. Sorai may have made an argument for why vernacular Chinese studies were of help in the Confucian project, but the interest in this alternative tradition of Chinese culture was already there.

Kanzan left Kyoto for Edo in 1706, returned briefly to Ôsaka, and then took up study at the Shogun's Confucian academy in Edo, under the guidance of the dean Hayashi Hôkô 林鳳岡 (1644-1732) in 1711. After he distinguished himself at the exchange with Korean emissaries that year, Ogyû Sorai hired Kanzan as an instructor of Chinese language at his Ken'en academy in Edo. Kanzan was responsible for the language classes in spoken Chinese that all the Ken'en students attended. He taught alongside another

¹⁰ *Suikoden to Nihonjin* gives a description of the textual inconsistencies of the translation (pp. 85-92). As neither the *wakokubon* version nor the translation mentions the annotator, we can only assume that it is based on Kanzan's work. Suyama Nantô 陶山南濤 identifies Kanzan as the annotator of this edition, in his *Chûgi Suikoden kai* (see *Suikoden to Nihonjin*, p. 59). The second installment and the translation were published almost thirty years after Kanzan's death, and are most likely by another hand.

¹¹ See the entry for Hayashi Gitan in the *Nihon bungaku daijiten*. Itô Tôgai makes this remark in a short essay entitled *Bunkaitô ki* 文會堂記.

fluent speaker of Chinese, the Ôbaku priest of Chinese descent Daichô 大潮 (1697-1768) who was then the abbot at the Ryûjin 龍津 Temple. Daichô also studied spoken Chinese under the tutelage of Ueda Gentei.¹²

One distinguishing feature of premodern Japan is the close interactions between the specialized crafts and the carriers of the intellectual tradition. From an earlier period, men such as the painter and craftsman Hon'ami Kôetsu 本阿彌光悦 (1558-1637) could remain essentially artisans but still acquire considerable fame with the educated elite of their time. To be a craftsman was not damning to the degree that it often was in Korea or China; it was possible for a specialist such as Kanzan who was not properly educated within the Confucian tradition to make the acquaintance of the most important intellectuals of his era and have an impact on their development. His closeness to Sorai points to the flexibility of the Japanese social order. His knowledge of spoken Chinese, a field of learning previously considered trivial, was valued among Sorai's followers to a greater degree than was possible in Korea where specialized knowledge of specific crafts was frowned upon and the scholar was expected to devote his full attention to the study of the classical tradition. The famous passage from the Analects that came to define the separation of intellectuals from the applied crafts, "the gentleman is not a specialist" (*junzi bu qi* 君子不器) carried much less weight in Japan than it did elsewhere.¹³

Kanzan interacted at first with the members of Sorai's Ken'en Academy in Edo from 1711 to 1724 and later with Itô Tôgai and his students at the Kogidô in Kyoto until his death in 1728. He put together a series of dictionaries for the study of vernacular Chinese in addition to such literary activities as translating the Japanese classic *Taiheiki* 太平記 into vernacular Chinese and annotating *Shuihu zhuan* in the *kundoku* fashion. He worked tirelessly to promote the study of vernacular Chinese.

Among Kanzan's achievements, the systematic primer for vernacular Chinese, *Tôwa zan'yô* 唐話纂要 (Essentials of Vernacular Chinese), stands out as a major landmark in the reception of Chinese vernacular language. *Tôwa zan'yô* presents a wide range of idiomatic vernacular Chinese expressions complete with their proper Chinese pronunciations and Japanese explanations. In addition, *Tôwa zan'yô* moves beyond the bounds of a primer for Chinese by also including two lengthy narratives written by Kanzan as models of Chinese vernacular language. Although both tales are ostensibly presented as examples of Chinese vernacular language, they gain their strength from their literary qualities, and were clearly meant to appeal to the reader's sensibility, rather than some practical need for spoken Chinese vocabulary.

The two stories appended to *Tôwa zan'yô* likely inspired other Japanese to try their hand at using vernacular Chinese in their creative literary compositions. One of many works in vernacular Chinese inspired by this text is Matsumuro Shôkô's 松室松峽 *Heian karyûroku* 平安花柳録, a record of the pleasure quarters of Kyoto from the 1720s. Shôkô and others found vernacular Chinese language offered a novel schema for presenting the familiar world around them.

Kanzan published *Tôwa zan'yô* for the first time in 1716 and revised and expanded

¹² Ishizaki, pp. 73-93.

¹³ See Tsuji Nobuo's 辻惟雄 article "Nihon bunjinga no seiritsu" 日本文人画の成立 (The formation of Japanese literati painting) in *Edo kôki no hikaku bunka kenkyû* 江戸後期の比較文化研究 (Comparative Cultural Studies of the Late Edo Period), ed. Minamoto Ryôen 源了円 (Tokyo: Perikan, 1990), pp. 238-370.

it two years later with the addition of these two lengthy narratives. Like many of Kanzan's dictionaries, *Tôwa zan'yô* was published simultaneously in Kyoto and Edo. It was the first systematically organized lexicon of vernacular Chinese usage published and circulated widely in Japan. The six fascicles of *Tôwa zan'yô* are organized in the following manner. The first *kan* was devoted to two-character and three-character expressions in Chinese with the proper Chinese pronunciations, *Tôon* 唐音,¹⁴ transcribed to the left in *furigana* and a vernacular Japanese translation written below. The second and third fascicles consist of expressions consisting of three or more characters, including many set Chinese idiomatic expressions, or *chengyu* 成語, not previously known to Japanese within the *kanbun* tradition. The fourth fascicle gives fragments of dialogue in spoken Chinese. The fifth fascicle is a small glossary on practical subjects: kinship terms, tools, animals, fish, and shellfish. The point of the primer was to introduce those aspects of the Chinese language which, because of their direct ties to the concrete aspects of contemporary Chinese life, had not made their way into literary Chinese as it was practiced in Japan.

The sixth fascicle, added in the 1718 edition of *Tôwa zan'yô*, consists of the two original narratives mentioned above, written in vernacular Chinese and based in general plot structure on the *huaben* short stories of the late Ming. In the transcription of these two narratives both the Chinese pronunciations for each character and indications of the Chinese tones are supplied. The stories are followed by a Japanese translation which is essentially a *yomikudashi* 読み下し (syntactic rendering into Chinese according to the set rules of conversion within *kanbun* reading) version of the Chinese, as opposed to an idiomatic translation into contemporary Japanese such as is found in the Fukushima Masanori 福島正則 (1561-1624) tale appended to Sorai's *Yakubun sentei*.

These two *huaben*-style stories are prefaced as *Wa-Kan kidan* 和漢奇談 (Fantastic Tales of China and Japan), and titled individually "Sun Ba Saves Someone and Comes into Good Fortune" (*Sun Ba jiuren defu* 孫八救人得福) and "Derong Does a Good Deed and Gets His Rewards" (*Derong xingshan youbao* 德容行善有報). Although placed within a language primer, these two original works show a sophisticated literary sensibility. For this reason, they suggest that the entire project of studying vernacular Chinese had less to do with actual speech and more to do with exploring the possibilities inherent in a new register of language.

A closer examination of "Derong xingshan youbao"¹⁵ gives a sense of the literary sensibility latent in this primer, particularly as manifested in this allegory of the very act of translation within the plot of the story. Set in the Jôkyô 貞享 period (1684-88), what would have been the recent past for the reader, "Derong xingshan youbao" relates the visit to Nagasaki of Li Derong, a Chinese man of wealth and status from Yangzhou. Derong had heard of the beautiful landscape of Nagasaki while in China, and wishing to see it first-hand, visits Japan as a merchant. He takes up residence at the home of a Japanese man Hara Ichirô 原一郎. After his arrival, Derong has occasion to see many of the courtesans

¹⁴ The rather imperfect rendering of Chinese pronunciation into *hiragana*, a syllabary that does not allow much room for articulation, in *Tôwa zan'yô* is assumed to be based on the Nanjing dialect.

¹⁵ *Tôwa zan'yô* in *Tôwa jisho ruijû* 唐話辭書類聚 (Dictionary of Chinese in Classified Categories), ed. Nagasawa Kikuya 長沢規矩也 (Tokyo: Koten kenkyûkai, 1972), volume 7, p. 294.

of Nagasaki, but complains that their appearance is artificial and their conduct not worthy of mention. Imagining that there are no true beauties to be found in Japan, Derong never returns again to the pleasure quarters of Nagasaki. He questions his Japanese friend Ichirô as to why, in spite of the fine climate of Japan, no beauties are to be found. Ichirô suggests that the problem is merely that Derong has not seen them yet.

A few days later a friend of Ichirô's, Hisasuke 久助, arrives at Ichirô's home and speaks to Derong of a young beauty who wishes to sell herself as a concubine in order to save her parents from poverty. When Derong does not make an immediate response indicating either interest or the lack of it, Ichirô remarks that Derong appears not to believe anything he is told. Ichirô complains that "even when I speak truthfully, Master Li does not believe it" (p. 266). Hisasuke laments that this extraordinary woman will end up the property of someone less worthy.

At this point Derong explains that the problem is not that he is uninterested, but simply that he must see the beauty in person before making a decision. An interview is arranged and Derong is taken to the home of the woman in due course. The woman's father invites Derong into the home and serves him wine according to the proper rules of etiquette. His home is simple and bare. All that remains in the impoverished home are the armor and swords of the father, a poor but proud samurai. Derong is startled by the strong contrast between the refined character and careful manners of this man and the vulgar habits of the Nagasaki merchants he had met previously. The samurai gives his name as Yasuda Naiki 安田内記 and explains that he moved to his present location in Nagasaki twenty years earlier following the orders of his superior. Although he had some savings at first, he used them up completely supporting himself in this unfamiliar region. Recently his wife had fallen sick and as there was no medicine to give her, his eldest daughter Otoyô お豊 had made up her mind to sell herself as a concubine in return for the money required to treat her mother. Impressed by her determination to sacrifice herself for her mother, Yasuda Naiki is moved by her devotion and consequently does not try to dissuade her from her purpose.

Derong is also moved by Otoyô's noble sentiments. He first inquires as to why Naiki does not sell his weapons. Naiki explains that the sword is the essence of the samurai,¹⁶ proceeding to define the essence of his nature as a warrior. Derong is further moved by the loyalty and devotion of Naiki to his lord. He begins to use honorifics in addressing Naiki. He also notes that Otoyô is an exceptional beauty.¹⁷

When Derong takes a closer look at Otoyô he discovers that she is the spitting image of his own sister Yulan 玉蘭 in China. His desire for her turns to sadness and he droops his head—a gesture mistaken by Hisasuke and Ichirô as an indication of a lack of interest. Derong tells Naiki that his sister Yulan would look exactly like Otoyô if only her clothing were changed.

Derong then praises Otoyô for her filial act and takes her as a sworn sister. He gives her 300 *liang* of silver, which she humbly accepts. Naiki promises to repay the kindness. Derong also gives her enough provisions as a dowry to ensure that she can marry a distinguished family. Derong's benevolent act makes him famous throughout

¹⁶ *Wufu xingming* 武夫性命.

¹⁷ *Zhenguose* 眞國色. This particular formulation hints at Otoyô's role as metonymy for Japanese culture.

Nagasaki.

When Derong has finished his business in Nagasaki and prepares to return to China, the families of the newlyweds throw a reception for him at a temple. Derong showers the family with even more money in order to assure that Naiki enjoys a comfortable old age. The next day the family comes out to the harbor to see Derong off on one boat of a fleet bound for Shanghai.

When the boats reach the open sea, however, a powerful gale wells up around them, engulfing two of the boats in the flotilla and leaving only the boat occupied by Derong completely untouched. The members of the crew raise their voices praying for their lives to Mazu, Chinese goddess of the sea. At this point, feeling that death is imminent, Derong changes into a dry set of clothes and sits with perfect composure in the cabin thinking of his parents at home.

Suddenly Mazu herself takes possession of the incense boy and begins to talk through him. She relates that the Heavenly Father was so moved by the noble actions of Derong in Nagasaki that he has decided to spare this one boat from the storm and allow it to return safely. The incense boy topples over unconscious as Mazu leaves his body.

The crew praises Derong for saving them and his actions become as famous in China as they had been in Japan. When Derong's parents hear of the disaster that nearly befell him on the high seas, they forbid him to travel to Japan again. He makes contact thereafter with his adopted family in Japan via letters. His direct contact with Japan comes to a close.

In addition to being a compelling and lively tale in readable vernacular Chinese, "Derong Does a Good Deed and Gets His Rewards" can be read as an elaborate allegory on equivalency between the Chinese and the Japanese languages in which the two linguistic bodies are presented as absolutely separate but mutually isomorphic. Derong is a Chinese merchant transplanted to Japan; he is in, but not of, Japanese culture and language. He seeks out in the prostitutes of Nagasaki a physical beauty equivalent to that which he knew among the women of China, but he cannot find one. All the women he sees are "falsely made up and artificially dressed. They are not worth speaking of."¹⁸

The opening of the tale presents the initial challenge of finding an equivalent in Japan to the beauties of China. Such a move reflects the larger question that underlies *Tôwa zan'yô*: how to form equivalents between the idioms of Chinese and Japanese. The prostitute, with her overtly artificial behavior and contrived usage of language, became a favorite metonymy for literary play involving language during the Tokugawa period. Moreover, it was in part the careful analysis of Chinese vernacular language found within the movement to learn vernacular Chinese that supplied the schemata employed by later intellectuals in their descriptions of the distinctive speech patterns of the pleasure quarters. As an internalized other within society, the pleasure quarters formed a happy parallel with the Chinese literary tradition as it existed within Japanese culture.

When Hisasuke arrives to tell Derong of a Japanese beauty who wishes to sell herself into concubinage in order to save her family, Derong is moved by her virtue and sets off to pay her a visit. The two themes introduced in this story are the universality of beauty (*mei* 美) and the universality of proper behavior (*li* 禮). Beauty represents the physical reality that is common to both countries but represented differently through the respective languages and customs. Proper behavior represents the moral reality that unites

¹⁸ "Weizhuang jiashi weizu chi" 偽粧假飾未足齒.

China and Japan despite their cultural differences: the basic social patternings of propriety that undergird all social interactions regardless of local variations. It is the universality of beauty and moral action that draws Derong to Otoyō while the particularity of culture keeps her at a distance from him.

Otoyō's father Yasuda Naiki represents the noble samurai, a class which has no equivalent in China and for which Derong can find no ready explanation in his own society. Yet Derong comes to understand the high sentiments of the elderly man and shifts his use of language (in Chinese we assume) in accordance. The Japanese social order finds acceptance in a Chinese national's eyes because the underlying values are the same. The *Tōwa zan'yō* thematizes the universality that it takes as a starting point: China is different and must be understood as different, but it is commensurable in that the values each culture embodies are the same. The Chinese tradition is not accepted *a priori* as part of the Japanese cultural whole in "Derong Does a Good Deed and Gets His Rewards." Cultural similarities are discovered only after profound cultural difference, reinforced by the constant misunderstandings of gestures and articulations that dot the tale, are clearly recognized.

When Naiki's oldest daughter Otoyō offers herself as a concubine in return for money, Derong visits in the hope of finding the true beauty he has not seen in Japan. On closer examination, Derong confirms that Otoyō is in fact an "exceptional beauty" but at the same time he realizes that she is "the spitting image"¹⁹ of his own younger sister Yulan. The possibility of a union between Derong and Otoyō is ruled out at this point and replaced by a mirroring between China and Japan. Otoyō is the perfect equivalent to Derong's sister in China—and exactly the same age. Rather than marrying her, Derong takes her as his sworn sister and helps her to marry another Japanese. A perfect parallel world is established that maintains a perfect distance between the Chinese family of Derong and the Japanese family of Naiki. Such a parallelism mirrors exactly the act of translation and representation that lies behind this tale. The origin of the story in Kanzan's study of translation is recapitulated within the story's plot.

The remark that Otoyō would look exactly like Yulan if only her clothing were changed echoes other analogies in Ogyū Sorai's writing in which he claims that he and his followers have so mastered Chinese culture that only their Japanese outfits distinguish them from true Chinese. The two women are equivalents, but they are separated by the details of the cultural tradition of each.

Derong's benevolent act makes him famous throughout Nagasaki, as his encounter with Mazu on the high seas will make him famous throughout China. Thus, the events contained generate parallel stories about Derong that are propagated in both Japan and China by those who hear of his actions. The Chinese original and Japanese translation supplied could be viewed as representing those two divergent traditions.

The treacherous ocean that lies between Japan and China recalls Ogyū Sorai's preface to *Yakubun sentei* in which an expanse of water represents the linguistic distance between the Chinese and Japanese languages. On the stormy sea, the Chinese god Mazu (a deity who does not exist in Japan) recognizes the universality of Derong's righteous actions in Japan within the Chinese moral realm. Moral action is universal within the tale, but it must be constantly translated and mediated to conform to local conditions.

Derong is forbidden by his parents to travel to Japan again, however, so that in the

¹⁹ "Fangfu wanran yiyang wuer" 髻髻宛然一樣無二。

end the relationship between the two cultures reverts to a written format: the letter. Close ties and exact parallels form between the Chinese and Japanese sides of the story, but there is no point of contact. No sexual union takes place between Derong and Otoyo, and after they part all exchanges are reduced to the written word.

The language of "Derong Does a Good Deed and Gets His Rewards" includes many Chinese colloquialisms that would have been difficult to understand for a reader without some familiarity with spoken Chinese, but its language is far more stilted and unwieldy than that employed in a Chinese *huaben* short story, or in spoken Chinese for that matter. First, whatever his skills as a translator may have been, Kanzan was not much of a stylist. Such phrases as "suffer having someone else take her"²⁰ in this tale are so awkward as to make them rather useless as practice for spoken Chinese, although they certainly do not pass for proper literary Chinese. One might go so far as to conclude that in this story the interest for the reader lies more in the introduction of an alien language than of a proper example of vernacular Chinese for use in conversation. In Kanzan's work the study of vernacular Chinese is drifting into the realm of the literary in that he is bringing in phrases for their oddness, not their utility.

The afterword to the *Tôwa zan'yô* by Shirakashi Chûgai 白樗仲凱²¹ includes a short statement on the relationship of commonplace culture (or vernacular language), *zoku* 俗, and elevated culture (literary language), *ga* 雅,²² worthy of note. He states simply, "the vulgar with a single transformation can lead to the refined, the refined with a single transformation can lead to the way."²³ In this early theoretical text on the study of spoken Chinese, Chûgai presents an argument for the necessity of understanding commonplace culture as a step in a ladder leading to the way. The vulgar and refined are part of a continuum, and as such depend on each other.

Okajima Kanzan played a pivotal role as a professional translator with a strong command of spoken Chinese who nonetheless had close ties to Ogyû Sorai, the most important Confucian scholar of the age. As a result of Kanzan's publications, a large number of intellectuals in Japan had the opportunity to develop a strong command of vernacular Chinese language and became the reading audience for the Chinese vernacular works that flowed into Japan at the time. Although Chinese vernacular fiction had been read before Kanzan's translations and annotations, it acquired a new popularity and more importantly, a new significance, after him. Such works as *Tôwa zan'yô* gave a new significance and seriousness to the reading of vernacular Chinese narrative.

²⁰ "Bei taren you zhi yi" 被他人有之矣。

²¹ Identified also as Kakiuchi Zen'an 垣内全庵。

²² In this afterword, as in many similar works of literary criticism, it is impossible to know whether *zoku* and *ga* refer to language in specific or culture in general.

²³ "Su yibian ze keyi zhi yu ya, ya yibian ze kezhi yu dao" 俗一變則可以至於雅，雅一變則可至於道。