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Abstract: Few works of Japanese literature are better-known than Chikamatsu Monazaemon's 近松門左衛門 (1653-1724) *Kokusen'ya kassen* 国性爺合戦 (*The Battles of Coxinga*, 1715) and Takeda Izumo's 竹田出雲 (1691-1756) *Kana dehon Chūshingura* 仮名手本忠臣蔵 (*A Treasury of Loyal Retainers*, 1748). Both works center on the heroic exploits of Japanese (or half-Japanese) warriors, and the plays' celebration of honor, duty, and self-sacrifice have made them ideal vehicles for various discourses of nationhood, identity, and literary representation in the Meiji and post-Meiji eras. This essay focuses on two little-known Chinese-language translations of the play by the Japanese translator Shū Bunjiemon 周文次右衛門 (d. 1825). Shū was an official translator at the Nagasaki customhouse and a sixth-generation descendant of Chinese immigrants from Quanzhou. Shū drafted a partial translation of *Kokusen'ya kassen* and a full translation of *Chūshingura* that recast the Japanese-language plays in the style of late imperial Chinese prose fiction works such as *Sanguo zhi yanyi* 三國志演義 (*Romance of the Three Kingdoms*) and *Shuihu zhuan* 水滸傳 (*The Water Margin*). Both translations remained in manuscript form, and the lack of a preface or any paratextual commentary by Shū makes speculation about their intended purpose difficult. In my study, I argue that the internal features of the *Chūshingura* translation suggest that Shū desired to circulate the text among Chinese readers—an entirely plausible scenario considering both Shū's profession as a translator and documented interest in Japanese-language texts among Chinese travelers to Nagasaki. In 1815, Shū's translation of *Chūshingura* was republished with a clearly spurious introduction by a "Chinese" author who claimed to have discovered Shū's text in a market and retranslated it to share it with his Chinese countrymen. Although the "Chinese" retranslator's account is nothing more than authorial fancy, the quixotic project evinces an interest in the comparative dimensions of cross-cultural textual circulation that prefigures later discussions of literary representation. In discussing Shū's corpus and the later retranslations, I connect the works to a largely overlooked history of cultural and literary encounter and bidirectional exchange in Shū's native Nagasaki—a history occluded by inaccurate conceptions of Japan as a "closed country" (*sakoku* 鎖国) during the Edo period (1603-1868).

Keywords: Shū Bunjiemon 周文次右衛門, Chikamatsu Monzaemon 近松門左衛門, *Chūshingura engi* 忠臣蔵演義, *Kokusen'ya kassen* 国性爺合戦, Nagasaki, Edo-period Sino-Japanese literary relations, translation

The Chinese Afterlives of Coxinga and the Forty-Seven *Rōnin* of Akō: Japanese Puppet Theatre and Cultural Encounter in Edo-Period Nagasaki

William C. Hedberg

Among works of premodern Japanese fiction and drama focusing on travel and cultural exchange, Chikamatsu Monzaemon's 近松門左衛門 (1653-1724) *jōruri* 浄瑠璃 puppet play *Kokusen'ya kassen* 国性爺合戦 (The Battles of Coxinga, 1715) enjoys rare international recognition. In the English-speaking world, the play is a well-known classic requiring little introduction thanks to Donald Keene's masterful translation of 1951 and the play's subsequent place of pride on undergraduate Eastern Civ and introductory Japanese literature syllabi across the U.S.[1] Along with a handful of other works—*The Tale of Genji* 源氏物語, *The Story of the Heike* 平家物語, and the poetry of Matsuo Bashō 松尾芭蕉, for example—*Kokusen'ya kassen* has taken a position at the head of the Japanese delegation to the complex and discourse-driven abode of "world literature." In terms of interrogating the complex processes that underlie the formation of national canons, *Kokusen'ya kassen* is particularly well positioned. Certainly, the play complicates the idea of an identity isometric with national or proto-national ties. The central character Watōnai 和藤内, whose very name is homophonous with the phrase "betwixt Japan (*Wa* 和/倭) and China (*Tō* 唐)," seems reluctant to be tied down to a single version of his background, and he skates between the worlds of his Chinese father and Japanese mother with remarkable adroitness. Watōnai's own complex subjectivity is narrated against a backdrop of continual comparison between China and Japan. The ease with which the effete Ming court is toppled by "Tartar" 韃靼 armies in the first act of the play seems predicated on the view that the Middle Kingdom has declined as a military power and physical presence in East Asia. Japan's relative ascendancy is first put on display when Watōnai arrives on the shores of China and defeats a marauding tiger—handily subduing the beast in a show of strength that would impress even his Chinese tiger-slaying counterpart Wu Song 武松. Chinese armies put up even less of a fight than Chinese tigers, and Chikamatsu adds a note of levity to their defeat by transforming the humorous sounds of make-believe Chinese into a *leitmotif* throughout the play. At the end of the second act, when Watōnai renames the newly subjugated Chinese warriors with the names of countries comprising the known world, it is clear that Japan is asserting itself as a major power on the world stage.

In other instances, this Japanese cultural imperiousness is reversed. Watōnai's earthy and humorous Japanese bride Komutsu 小むつ frets in the company of the exiled

[1] *The Battles of Coxinga* is included in Donald Keene, *Four Major Plays of Chikamatsu* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

Ming princess Sendan 栴檀 (Zhantan)—worried that the princess's aloof beauty is precisely what her own half-Chinese husband desires. For every Tartar villain and double-crossing Chinese minister like Ri Tōten 李蹈天 (Li Daotian), there exists a corresponding paragon of traditional virtue. The Chinese general Go Sankei 呉三桂 (Wu Sangui), for instance, has been transformed into a Ming loyalist in Chikamatsu's creative reinterpretation of late imperial Chinese history. Most importantly, when history is reversed and the Ming emperor ensconced on the throne through the intervention of Watōnai's armies, it seems that events have returned to a particularly Sinocentric normal—an impression heightened by Watōnai's earlier humility when he was enfeoffed and granted the Ming royal name. Whatever conclusion one might draw about China and Japan's respective "scores" by the end of the play, it is undeniable that the Watōnai of *Kokusen'ya kassen* exhibits a fluid internationalism remarkable among other popular works of Edo-period fiction and drama.

When the play is viewed against the backdrop of 18th-century epistemological trends, Chikamatsu's interest in cultural boundaries seems less surprising. While Chikamatsu's play enjoyed enormous popularity across all tiers of Japanese society, the play's themes paralleled a blossoming interest among elite intellectual circles.[2] The first performance of the play in 1715 occurred during an enormous influx of Chinese-language texts into Japan, and the linguistic incommensurability Chikamatsu exploited to crude humorous effect in his puppet play was the subject of serious philological inquiry by his near-exact contemporaries Ogyū Sorai 荻生徂徠 (1666-1728) and Itō Tōgai 伊藤東涯 (1670-1736). Had Chikamatsu waited five years before writing his play, he could have substituted the garbled make-believe Chinese spoken by Ri Tōten's henchmen with accurate "vernacular (*zokugo* 俗語)" phrases culled from the increasingly available reference works devoted to "contemporary Chinese" (*Tōwagaku* 唐話学): a number of

[2] As Masuda Wataru 増田渉 (1903-1977) demonstrates in his essay "Zheng Chenggong and Guoxingye (Kokusen'ya, Koxinga)," Zheng Chenggong's connection to Japan was a source of fascination for all layers of Japanese society throughout the Edo-period. Although I am discussing popular fiction and drama in this essay, it is important to note the many scholastic treatments of the Zheng family written and compiled during the era—particularly in the 19th century. Such works include the Mito-commissioned *Taiwan Teishi kiji* 台湾鄭氏記事 (Chronicle of the Zheng Family of Taiwan, 1828) of Kawaguchi Chōju 川口長孺 (1773-1835) and Asakawa Zen'an's 朝川善庵 (1781-1849) *Tei shōgun Seikō den* 鄭将軍成功伝 (Biography of General Zheng Chenggong, 1850). See Masuda Wataru, *Japan and China: Mutual Representations in the Modern Era*, Joshua A. Fogel, trans. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), pp. 184-195 for analyses of these and other Edo-period representations of Zheng Chenggong. The Chinese translation of *Kokusen'ya kassen* discussed below is addressed on p. 188.

which were prepared by the Nagasaki translator (and Sorai's Chinese language instructor) Okajima Kanzan 岡島冠山 (1674-1728).[3]

While it is unlikely that this kind of accuracy was a priority for Chikamatsu, later Japanese writers were quick to explore the defamiliarizing, exotic, or comedic aspects of culture clash with greater sophistication. Seventy years after the puppet Watōnai crushed Tartar invaders for the first time in Osaka's Takemoto-za 竹本座 theatre, he was resurrected in a far different capacity in a "book of fashion (*sharebon* 洒落本)" entitled *Watō chinkai* 和唐珍解 (A Rare Encounter between Japan and China, 1785).[4] In place of the fierce warrior created by Chikamatsu, the *sharebon* Watōnai is a rakish *bon vivant* as at home in the floating world as his puppet predecessor was on the battlefield. However, the new, fashionable Watōnai is still quite capable of serving as a go-between in two very different worlds. He has moved from the relative backwaters of Hirado 平戸 (his home in Chikamatsu's play) to the far more cosmopolitan Nagasaki 長崎, where he acts as a guide in the Maruyama 丸山 pleasure quarters. His companion is none other than Ri Tōten—the aforementioned arch-villain of *Kokusen'ya kassen* who dies at Watōnai's hand at the conclusion of Chikamatsu's play. The "rarity" (*chin* 珍) alluded to in the title of the work refers to the multiple languages in which the text is written. While the Nagasaki courtesans address Watōnai and Ri Tōten in a racy Japanese vernacular that would have been familiar to their counterparts in Kyoto or Edo, Ri Tōten's trip to the floating world is limited by the fact that he speaks only colloquial Chinese—translated for the Japanese reader's convenience in *kana* to the left of the Chinese text. As Ri makes bumbling attempts to seduce the Japanese women around him, Watōnai's translation skills are put to the test once more as Li's guarantor and intercessor. As can easily be imagined, the humor of the work emerges from the misunderstandings that arise through the collision of linguistic worlds, and the way in which Watōnai's liminal position "betwixt Japan and China" acquires new meaning as Ri fumbles his way through the pleasure quarters.

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[3] The terms *Tōwa* 唐話 and *zokugo* 俗語 were often used interchangeably and referred variously to vernacular, colloquial, or spoken Chinese. In the 1710s and 1720s, the Nagasaki-born Okajima Kanzan published a series of reference works devoted to more contemporary registers of Chinese. These works not only defined unfamiliar terms in Japanese-language glosses, but provided phonetic approximations of how the term was pronounced in Chinese (*Tō'on* 唐音). Many of these reference works have been conveniently collected in Nagasawa Kikuya 長沢規矩也, ed., *Tōwa jisho ruishū* 唐話辞書類集 (Collection of Edo-Period Contemporary Chinese Dictionaries) (Tokyo: Kyūko shoin, 1969-1977).

[4] *Watō chinkai* 和唐珍解 is preserved in the thirteenth volume of *Sharebon taisei* 洒落本大成, Mizuno Minoru 水野実 et al., eds. (Tokyo: Chūō kōronsha, 1978-1988). The Chinese utterances in the text are double-glossed: the gloss to the right of the characters is written in *katakana* and provides the contemporary Chinese pronunciation (*Tō'on*), while the left-hand *hiragana* gloss translates what is being said.

The fact that *Watō chinkai* is set in the port city of Nagasaki makes it an excellent introduction to a final and perhaps even more "rare" treatment of the *Kokusen'ya* saga: a vernacular Chinese translation of the third act of the play by an obscure Nagasaki translator named Shū Bunjiemon 周文次右衛門 (d. 1825). An official translator at the Nagasaki customhouse, Shū is credited with two surviving Chinese-language works: the Chikamatsu translation and a far longer and more ambitious translation of Takeda Izumo's 竹田出雲 (1691-1756) equally famous *Kana dehon Chūshingura* 仮名手本忠臣蔵 (A Treasury of Loyal Retainers, 1748). Although the *Kokusen'ya kassen* translation was never completed and Shū's translation of *Chūshingura* remained in manuscript form, the latter inspired a retranslation (*chōyaku* 重譯) in which a clearly fictional "Chinese" author claimed to have edited and published the work with the hope of sharing the story with his Chinese countrymen.

In this article, I will use Shū's works and the later retranslations as springboards for considering Sino-Japanese literary contact in Nagasaki. As one of the five major ports and sole licensed point-of-entry for trade goods from Holland and China until the 19th century, Nagasaki's importance as a site of cultural exchange has long been recognized in both Japanese and Western scholarship. In discussions of Dutch studies (*Rangaku* 蘭学) during the Edo period, Nagasaki has correctly been identified as a wellspring of materials relating to Euro-Japanese contact and a point of pilgrimage for any aspiring student of European medicine, physics, botany, etc. Comparatively less documented, however, is the impact of the Chinese presence at Nagasaki. While the intellectual stimulation Dutch merchants and their waves provided for generations of writers, artists, and other intellectual elite has been well-discussed, the equal fascination these men displayed for all things Chinese is far less noted.

Discussions of Sino-Japanese relations at Nagasaki have until recently tended to represent the city as a passive receptor of goods and information from Europe and East Asia—a holdover, perhaps, from otherwise qualified conceptions of Japan as a "closed country" (*sakoku* 鎖国) throughout the Edo period. I will examine the texts by Shū Bunjiemon and the retranslations they inspired as attempts at re-examining Japan's cultural relationship to China. Particularly in the retranslations of *Chūshingura*, in which the "Chinese" author comments favorably on the features of the narrative, Japanese literature, and Japanese culture as a whole, we see a noteworthy, if humorous, attempt at reversing a relationship that positioned Japan as the earnest and receptive student of all things Chinese. Despite the texts' crude Chinese and clearly playful underlying intentions, these translations must be read in the context of a largely under-studied history of cultural and literary border-crossing between Qing-period China and Edo-period Japan.

History, Imagination and Literary Encounter

The roots of officially sanctioned Sino-Japanese contact at Nagasaki stretch back as far as the founding of the shogunate itself. In 1603, the city commissioner (*bugyō* 奉行) Ogasawara Ichian 小笠原一庵 appointed a Ming émigré named Feng Liu 馮六 to act as an interpreter and general go-between for the Chinese community in Nagasaki. The early nineteenth-century illustrated gazetteer *Nagasaki meishō zue* 長崎名勝図絵 (An Illustrated Guide to Nagasaki) suggests that Feng's duties were linguistic and diplomatic—acting as both interpreter and mediator for the Chinese present in Nagasaki.[5] Upon Feng's death in 1624, his son (born of a Japanese mother) was deemed unable to take over translator duties, and Feng's post was inherited by his younger brother, who adopted the name Hayashi Nagauemon 林長右衛門. Increased demand for translators and mediators in Nagasaki led to the creation of a second post, which was filled by a translator named Nakayama Tarōbee 中山太郎兵衛 in 1627. As duties for translators increased, the government responded by augmenting and further bureaucratizing the Chinese translator posts. In 1640, the creation of "junior interpreter" (*kotsūji* 小通事) positions created a space for new talent and retroactively elevated the already employed to the rank of "senior interpreters" (*daitsūji* 大通事). The resource pool was deepened further with the creation of "trainee" (*keikotsūji* 稽古通事) posts in 1653. These three strata would remain constant for the remainder of the translation house's history, and the curriculum for trainees can be at least partially reconstructed on the basis of surviving texts.[6] Although Edo and Kyoto were the acknowledged centers of Confucian study throughout the Edo period, Nagasaki appears to have been associated with a level of Other-ly authenticity that could not be rivaled by other cosmopolitan areas in Japan.

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[5] The *Nagasaki meishō zue* 長崎名勝図絵 will be discussed in more detail later. The text is a guide to the geographic and cultural features of Nagasaki that makes use of historical narrative, anecdotal material, illustrations, and poetry. The text has been reproduced in volume fifteen of the series *Nihon meisho fūzoku zue* 日本名所風俗図絵 (Collected Japanese Illustrated Gazetteers), Ikeda Yasaburō 池田弥三郎, et al. eds. (Tokyo: Kadokawa shoten, 1979-1988). The best source of information about the translators at Nagasaki is Miyata Yasushi 宮田安, *Tō tsūji kakei ronkō* 唐通事家系論考 (Nagasaki Chinese Translator Lineages) (Nagasaki: Nagasaki bunkensha, 1979). Much of Miyata's research has been usefully summarized in Louis Jacques William Berger, "The Overseas Chinese in Seventeenth-Century Nagasaki" (Ph.D. Dissertation: Harvard, 2003), pp. 63-66.

[6] One such text is *Yakka hitsubi* 譯家必備 (Necessary Preparation for Hereditary Translators)—a Chinese-language primer text that introduces vocabulary and sentence patterns necessary for translation through a fictional account of "Young Master Hayashi (Lin) 林"—the son of one of the senior interpreters at Nagasaki. The text follows Hayashi as he introduces himself to the interpreters, learns how to take records, watches ships being unloaded, witnesses interrogations of the Chinese captains, etc. The text is preserved in the twentieth volume of Nagasawa Kikuya 長沢規矩也, ed., *Tōwa jisho ruishū* 唐話辞書類集 (Tokyo: Kyūko shoin, 1976).

Nagasaki was a place where one could interact with real travelers from China, and a period of study in the city became a necessary credential for students of *Tōwagaku* 唐話学: the name given to the study of vernacular, colloquial, or spoken Chinese. The prefaces to the aforementioned reference works by the translator Okajima Kanzan, for instance, emphasized the Nagasaki native's links to the city and invariably mentioned the fact that Kanzan rubbed shoulders with foreign sailors during the course of his education.[7]

The presence and availability of these "real Chinese" in Nagasaki fluctuated drastically throughout East Asia's tumultuous seventeenth century. The influx of Ming loyalist émigrés entering Japan after the Manchu invasions and the consolidation of Qing hegemony generated enormous interest in contemporary developments on the mainland and left a permanent imprint on Japanese literary, religious, and historiographical culture. Zhu Shunshui 朱舜水 (1600-1682)—famous to both Sinologists and Japanologists for his relationship with the Mito daimyo Tokugawa Mitsukuni 徳川光圀 (1628-1700) and involvement in the production of the *Dai Nihon shi* 大日本史 (Comprehensive History of Japan)—is perennially mentioned in any history of Sino-Japanese relations during the Edo period. What is less frequently noted is that Zhu made six trips to Japan prior to settling there permanently in 1659: a remarkable example of the permeability of international borders even during Japan's "era of seclusion."[8] Another important source of cultural stimulation and information about contemporary developments on the continent was the steady stream of Buddhist clergy, many of whom traveled to Japan at official request.[9]

Although the cultural transformations effected by groups of refugee scholars and émigré clergy have been well-discussed in contemporary scholarship, a third important group has largely been overlooked: the merchant sailors who served as a conduit for texts, goods, and information through the Nagasaki customhouse—sailors who connected

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[7] In the preface to Kanzan's *Tōwa san'yō* 唐話纂要 (Collected Essentials of Spoken Chinese, 1716), for instance, the scholar Shirakashi Chūgai 白樫仲凱 noted: "Okajima Kanzan's family has made their home in Nagasaki for generations, and as a youth, [Kanzan] made contact with foreign guests and mastered their language" 玉成岡島君世家長崎,少交華客習熟其語. Reproduced in Nagasawa, *Tōwa jisho ruishū*, vol. 6, p. 291.

[8] Julia Ching provides a succinct account of Zhu's life and travels in Japan in "Chu Shun-shui, 1600-82: A Chinese Confucian Scholar in Tokugawa Japan," *Monumenta Nipponica* 30.2 (1975): pp. 177-191.

[9] The importance of the Ōbaku 黄檗 Zen sect on the religion and culture of the Edo period is well-documented. See Helen Baroni, *Obaku Zen: The Emergence of the Third Sect of Buddhism in Tokugawa Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000) and Ōtsuki Mikio 大槻幹郎, et al., *Ōbaku bunka jinmei jiten* 黄檗文化人名辞典 (Dictionary of Proper Names in Ōbaku Zen) (Kyoto: Shibunkaku shuppan, 1998).

Japan to immense international maritime systems comprising Japan, China, the Ryukyus, and Southeast Asia. The number and accessibility of Chinese sailors at Nagasaki were dependent upon a number of international factors and subject to changes in policy enforced by the Chinese government(s), shogunal edict, and the local officials at Nagasaki. During the period in which the Japanese customhouse was assuming its permanent structure in the seventeenth century, the number of Chinese ships in Nagasaki harbor fluctuated in response to the transfer of the mandate from the Ming to the Qing. The depredations inflicted upon the Manchus by Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功 (1624-1662), his son Zheng Jing 鄭經 (1643-1681), and grandson Zheng Keshuang 鄭克塽 (d. 1707) were made financially feasible largely through the Zheng family's trading network—a network that included Kyushu at its easternmost tip.[10] It was largely in order to cut the Zhengs off from their maritime power bases that the Qing enacted the 1661 *qianjie* 遷界 ("move the frontier") edict: proscribing Chinese from traveling abroad or trading with the Zheng family, and requiring residents of coastal areas to move inland in an attempt at further isolating Zheng's regime.

With the Qing conquest of Taiwan, suppression of the Three Feudatories Revolt, and surrender of Zheng Keshuang in 1683, Qing hegemony was consolidated comfortably enough for the Kangxi emperor to rescind the *qianjie* edict and promulgate a *zhanhai* 展海 ("expanse to the seas") policy in its place. Although only twenty-four Chinese ships had entered Nagasaki harbor in 1684, eighty-five made their way to Japan the following year. The number continued to grow dramatically and peaked three years later with one hundred and ninety-three ships in 1688. When one considers that each ship held approximately fifty sailors, the unease this growth engendered is easily understood. The dramatic explosion in the Chinese presence at Nagasaki contributed to the creation of a watershed institution in 1689: the "China House" (*Tōjin yashiki* 唐人屋敷) to which the activities of generation after generation of Chinese sailors would be circumscribed until the nineteenth century. While Chinese sailors traveling to Japan prior to 1689 were allowed to move freely about the city and lodge in designated areas within the city wards, the creation of the *Tōjin yashiki* fostered a far different atmosphere by relegating Chinese visitors to a specified set of compounds and forbidding unaccompanied wandering throughout the city—a set of circumstances perhaps only slightly less draconian than that experienced by the Dutch, who had been limited to the fan-shaped belt of land at Deshima 出島 since 1641.

The sudden relegation of the Chinese to a state of confinement appears to have amplified an already considerable mystique. In the penultimate chapter of the wildly popular novel *Kōshoku ichidai otoko* 好色一代男 (*Life of an Amorous Man*, 1682), Ihara

[10] Ōba Osamu's 大庭脩 *Edo jidai ni okeru Chūgoku juyō no kenkyū* 江戸時代における中国受容の研究 (The Edo-Period Reception of China) (Kyoto: Dōhōsha, 1984) has been my primary source for information about Sino-Japanese trade during the 17th century.

Saikaku 井原西鶴 (1642-1693) sent his playboy protagonist Yonosuke 世之介 to the Maruyama pleasure quarters of Nagasaki, where he commented upon Chinese sexual prowess with a hint of cosmopolitan jealousy:

> Looking off at the entrance at Sakura-machi, Yonosuke began to feel excited. Without taking a single moment of rest at his lodging quarters, he made his way straight to Maruyama to have a look at the pleasure quarters. Maruyama turned out to be even more splendid than he had heard—each establishment had eight, nine, and even ten women on display. The Chinese were kept separate, for they were passionate lovers and loathed it when others even looked at their women. Day and night they gulped down aphrodisiacs and lined their pillows next to their lovers without tiring. It was something that the Japanese could not hope to imitate.
>
> 入口の桜町を見わたせば,はやおもしろうなつて来て,宿に足をもためず,すぐに丸山にゆきて見るに女郎屋の有様,聞及びしよりはまさりて,一軒に八九十人も見せ懸姿,唐人はへだたりて,女郎替りけるとかや,恋慕ふかく,中々人の見る事も惜み,昼夜共に其薬を呑ては,飽かず,枕をかさね侍る,日本人のならぬ事は是也.[11]

Saikaku's narrative is accompanied by a remarkable illustration in which Japanese pleasure-seekers mingle freely with the Chinese. The Chinese wear conical black hats, carry bamboo poles, and leer pointedly at the women on display with phallic forefingers outstretched. In seven years, the establishment of the China House would render this type of international contact impossible, and the Chinese and the empire for which they acted as representatives would be as exotic as the Isle of Women for which Yonosuke set sail in the final chapter of the text.

Representations in fiction aside, Nagasaki was a privileged pilgrimage destination for Japan's elite intellectuals: a group that included luminaries such as Shiba Kōkan 司馬江漢 (1747-1818), Takebe Ayatari 建部綾足 (1719-1774), Hiraga Gennai 平賀源内 (1728-1779), and Ōtsuki Gentaku 大槻玄沢 (1757-1827) among others. Although many of these individuals were more interested in the epistemological avenues opened by contact with the Dutch, others seemed equally attracted by the Chinese presence. Some travelers left Nagasaki even more impressed with the Chinese than the Europeans they encountered. Furukawa Koshōken 古川古松軒 (1726-1807)—the minister best known for his involvement with the Russian presence at the other end of Japan—traveled to Nagasaki in 1783 and wrote an account entitled *Random Jottings on a Journey to the West* (*Saiyū zakki* 西遊雑記). He described Nagasaki in considerable detail and appeared fully satisfied by his encounters with the Chinese:

11 Maeda Kingorō 前田金五郎, ed., *Kōshoku ichidai otoko zenchūshaku* 好色一代男全注釈 (Annotated "Life of an Amorous Man") (Tokyo: Kadokawa shoten, 1980-1981), p. 455.

I went to observe the China House at Jūzenji on official business. There was nothing base or common about the bearing of the Chinese I saw there, and indeed no matter whom I observed, they seemed to me to be more refined than the Japanese. They shaved their heads except for the crown, which they plaited into three cords and allowed to dangle down. They wore sedge hats or kerchiefs, and their clothing differed from person to person—whether this was due to differences in rank, or whether this was their daily attire, I cannot say. At that time, twelve boats from China had entered the harbor, and there was quite a commotion in the China House. They would turn to the Japanese visitor [Koshōken himself] and say something like "*chin pun kan*"—which was quite amusing.[12] Several underlings came to the gate to see the Japanese visitor who had come to observe them. They made jokes, gestured, and moved their bodies to ask if I would like to see a woman—at which point, all of their confederates laughed. I laughed as well. I received official permission and made my way inside the compound, where there were indeed what seemed to be courtesans sitting before the threshold. . . Later, I went to Umegasaki in order to observe the Chinese ships. It happened that just at that time, there was a ship being built, and there were thirty or so Chinese carpenters gathered there, looking busy. Desiring to see the tools that they were using, I made my way to their side, at which point a young apprentice fifteen or sixteen years of age came up to me purposefully and snatched the fan that I was holding—a fan that had been inscribed by [the artist and Confucian scholar] Rai Shunsui. He held it up while saying something and made off with it, while the rest of the workers laughed and pointed, apparently gesturing at him to return the fan. I myself was doubled over with laughter, and the boy escaped onto the boat. I let things be—I have heard that if anyone allows their guard to drop, they will be subject to this kind of snatching!

故ありて,十禅寺の唐人舘に行見しに,人物賤しからず,何れを見ても,日本よりは上品に思はれしなり,頭髪をばそりて,百會の所を丸く剃残し,その髪を三ツ組にして,後にたれ,そのうへに笠または頭巾を被る,衣服は一様ならず,貴賤によりて,かはる事にや,平服なりし故にや,予詳にせず,此節唐船十二艘入津し,唐人大ぜいにて,舘中にきにきし,日本人へ対し,何かチンプンカンの言語おかしく,門までは下官の唐人数人出て,見物に行し日本人をとらへて,戯言し婦人をみては,さまざまの身ぶり手まねきして,よろこび,友同士笑う,日本人も笑ふ事にて,見物面白かりし,御ゆるしありて,舘中へ入る,売女にても門前に有る,腰かけに待居 . . . 梅が崎へ唐船を見に行しに,折ふし船作る事ありて,大工唐人卅人ばかり集りて,いそがしげに見ゆ,唐土の大工道具を見んと,傍に寄りしに,十五六と見えし小大工唐人,予が側へ用事有げに来り,予が持し頼春水の書せし扇を奪ひて,何かいひつ々おしいただき逃さる,外の唐人大ひに笑ひ,逃る小唐人にゆびざし追かけて,取りかへせといふ身ぶり手まねをせしかとも,予も甚だおかしく,打笑ふうちに,船に逃乗りしゆえ,其ままになし置ぬ,予にかぎらず,油断して居れば,必ず取らるる事といふ.[13]

Koshōken's rapid alternation between respectful and patronizing description is an intriguing characteristic of his account—symptomatic, perhaps, of an inability to make a connection between China as an exalted source of culture and the riotous residents of

12 The phrase "*chin pun kan*" was often used to refer to indecipherable Chinese.

13 Furukawa Koshōken 古川古松軒, *Saiyū zakki* 西遊雑記 in *Kibi bunko* 吉備文庫 (Okayama Archive), vol. 5 (Okayama: San'yō shinbunsha), 1980, pp. 142-44.

contemporary China before him. While his initial description of the Chinese merchant-sailors indicates that he is favorably impressed by their "elegance," he appears unable to restrain himself from laughing at the sound of their indecipherable language, or their less-refined decision to relieve him of his fan—an instance of cross-cultural exchange that could not have been anything but profoundly irritating.

It is absolutely clear that Nagasaki was the place for a Japanese literatus to get his hands on the newest imported texts from China. In addition, it seems that there were at least a handful of Chinese visitors who were equally interested in Japanese literary and cultural production. On this topic, it is to be expected perhaps, that the view from the *Tōjin yashiki* is substantially less clear. While the marvelous accounts of Japan left behind by European Dutch East India Company (VOC) employees such as Engelbert Kaempfer (1651-1716) and Isaac Titsingh (1745-1812) were enabled largely by the requirement that the Dutch legation travel to Edo for an audience with the shogun, the Chinese sailors had no such opportunity to traverse the Tōkaidō 東海道 and chronicle the sights. Life in the Chinese quarters seems to have tended toward drudgery and monotony—enlivened only by visits from courtesans and the occasional supervised trip to the local temple.

To the best of my knowledge, the only Chinese-authored work describing the situation at Nagasaki at any length is a mid-eighteenth century vignette entitled *Xiuhai bian* (A Record of the Sea in My Sleeve 袖海編)—a text composed by a Qiantang 錢塘 native named Wang Peng 汪鵬. Despite the fact that Wang made a number of trips between China and Japan (at least seven between 1772 and 1780 alone), he is better represented in the textual record with respect to his accomplishments in scholarship and painting.[14] Wang's access to texts no longer accessible in China clinched his reputation as a scholastic go-between, and he was responsible for transporting a number of Japanese classical commentaries and texts that had been lost in China.[15]

Wang's *Xiuhai bian* is a short, impressionistic set of notes.[16] There is no discernible ordering principle at work, and the informal quality of the text makes it a

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[14] The details of Wang's life have been presented succinctly in Ōba Osamu's contribution to Joshua Fogel, ed., *Sagacious Monks and Bloodthirsty Warriors: Chinese Views of Japan in the Ming-Qing Period* (Norwalk: East Bridge, 2002), pp. 119-23. Wang's work has been translated into Japanese by Sanetō Keishū 実藤恵秀 in *Gaikokujin no mita Nihon* 外国人の見た日本 (Japan as Seen by Foreigners), vol. 1 (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1961). The translation alters the original text considerably by grouping Wang's somewhat disorganized notes into chapters based on common themes.

[15] For a description of these texts, see Laura Hess, "Qing Reactions to the Reimportation of Confucian Canonical Works from Tokugawa Japan," in *Sagacious Monks and Bloodthirsty Warriors*, pp. 126-57.

[16] Wang Peng 汪鵬, *Xiuhai bian* 袖海編 in *Congshu jicheng xubian* 叢書集成續編 (Assembled Collectanea, 2nd Series), vol. 65 (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1994), pp. 889-97.

pleasurable amble through a set of memories. The title of the text is derived from a poem by Su Dongpo 蘇東坡 (1037-1101) in which the poet wrote: "I take this rock on my return / And it is as though the Eastern Ocean is in my sleeve" 我携此石歸,袖中有東海 (*wo xie cishi gui*, *xiuzhong you donghai*).[17] Wang Peng's invocation of Su's poem suggests that he found Japan—even his extremely cramped corner of it—worth taking with him on his return to China, and he appears to have enjoyed his time in Nagasaki. Despite his confinement, he used his time in the Nagasaki China House to make inquiries about Japan as a whole—ending one discussion of customs in Nagasaki with the declaration "things are this way in all of Japan" (*tongguo jieran* 通国皆然).[18] When business was concluded and the time for feasting and courtesans was not yet at hand, Wang and the others appeared to have had a considerable amount of free time on their hands. It is only natural that a man of Wang's scholarly predilections would be interested in the cultural state of Japan, and in *Xiuhai bian*, we find the following entry on Japanese bibliophilia:

> For many years now, we have been bringing books from China to Japan, and now there is a considerable body of Chinese texts here. The Japanese connoisseurs do not begrudge even the highest prices and buy them in bulk to wrap nicely and store away in a volume that would make an ox break out in sweat and the house-eaves groan. Even so, many of the Japanese are unable to read them—for them, it's like collecting Shang dynasty goblets or *ding* vessels from the Han dynasty. The Japanese only know that they are something to be valued, but have no practical use for them. There is no civil examination in Japan, and for that reason, they do not esteem literary arts. I have heard, though, that there are one or two people who are set on improving themselves and are quite able to read the works of the Sages. They are familiar with the Classics and Histories and study the ways in which the Chinese write poems, old airs, and the like. The daimyo of Izumi province is one such figure who appreciates Song and Yuan calligraphy and always requests it from visitors—treasuring it like precious jade. There are also Matsu Ennen, Hayashi Baikei, and Yanagi Tokuo[19] who all take inspiration from lofty matters and cut themselves off from anything that seems vulgar. In addition, there are poetry collections like *Rankyō sensei shū* (Collected Writing of Master Rankyō) and the Buddhist monk [Taiten Kenjō's 大典顕常] *Sakuhi shū* 昨非集 (Yesterday's Faults)—which imitate the style of the Tang and eschew the bland superficiality of Song and Yuan poets.

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[17] *Su Dongpo quanji* 蘇東坡全集 (Complete Works of Su Dongpo), vol. 1 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1996), pp. 246-47.

[18] *Xiuhai bian*, p. 892.

[19] It is unclear who these figures are. Tokuo 徳夫 was the courtesy name of the Confucian scholar Dazai Shundai 太宰春台 (1680-1747), whose works were known in China, but it seems unlikely that this is the figure of whom Wang is writing.

> 唐山書籍歷年帶來,頗夥,東人好事者不惜重價購買什襲而藏,每至汗牛充棟,然多不解誦讀,如商彝漢鼎,徒知矜尚而無適用也,國無制舉,故不尚文墨,聞有一二束修自愛者,亦頗能讀聖賢書博通經史,學中華所為韻語古風之類,如和泉王家者頗知寶貴宋元人妙翰,每向客求得其一二件,珍如珙壁,又有松延年林梅卿柳德夫皆淵雅絕俗,外此如蘭京先生集暨僧昨非集,皆裒然成帙,所為詩頗倣唐音無宋元澆薄氣.[20]

Wang occupied a unique critical stance with respect to Japanese literary Sinophilia, and it appears that he was unimpressed by the evidence he saw of China's cultural imprint on Japan. The pressing question—and one that is unanswered in the text—is the source of the information Wang relied upon in his judgment. The final lines of his discussion show that he was reading Japanese poetry, but there is little information as to which texts Wang may have had access: the only two named being the *Sakuhi shū* 昨非集 (Yesterday's Faults, published 1761) by the Buddhist monk Taiten Kenjō 大典顯常 (1719-1801) and a collection by "Rankyō sensei" 蘭京先生.[21] Though the reader of *Xiuhai bian* cannot but wish that Wang had been a slightly more patient reader and mentioned other works he read during his time in Japan, his brief summation is noteworthy in providing a rare example of a Chinese reader expressing interest in Japanese texts.

Other denizens of the China House pursued their interest in Japanese culture much further. One of the most fascinating documents chronicling Sino-Japanese interaction in Nagasaki is the early nineteenth-century illustrated gazetteer *Nagasaki meishō zue* 長崎名勝図絵 (*An Illustrated Guide to Nagasaki*). The *Nagasaki meishō zue* is a delightfully amorphous and impressionistic guide to Nagasaki that combines geographic description, narrative history, poetry, and anecdotal material. One section of the text is devoted to descriptions of the China House and the Chinese merchant-sailors who occupied it. The text concludes with a number of biographies of noteworthy travelers to Japan. One of these travelers, a Lu Mingzhai 陸明齋 from Zhapu, is of particular interest to the present query:

> Riku Meisai (Lu Mingzhai) was a Chinese from Zhapu in Zhejiang. Beginning in the An'ei period [1772-1781], he came to Japan to engage in trade, and thereafter he visited Japan every year. Mr. Riku was very fond of Japanese customs, and it is said that his residence in Zhapu was built in Japanese-style: made up of two stories and equipped with Japanese *tatami* laid out on the floors. He used bowls, eating utensils, and wine vessels from Japan, and all the food was prepared in the Japanese style. When he was entertaining a guest and emboldened by a bit of wine, or if the conversation touched the subject, he would perform a few lines from the puppet play *Chūshingura*. It is said that he learned this from a courtesan named Ōmachi during his time in Japan.

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[20] *Xiuhai bian*, pp. 893-94.

[21] Again, it is not clear to whom this refers. Wang might be referring to the well-known Confucian scholar, poet, diplomat, and student of contemporary spoken Chinese, Kinoshita Rankō 木下蘭皐 (1681-1752).

> 陸明斎は清朝浙江省乍浦の人なり,交易のため安永のころより年々長崎に渡来し往還しばしばにして,甚日本の風儀を好み,乍浦の居宅も日本の製の如く,二階造りにして,日本の畳を敷,日本の膳椀食具酒器を用ひ,烹調料理の品味すべて日本の風を学び效ふて,客を饗応し,又酒興,或は談話の折ふしには,忠臣蔵の浄瑠璃,一二句を口ずさみにす,これは大町といへる傾城より習ひ得しとぞ.[22]

The short biography of Lu is accompanied by a wonderful illustration in which a Chinese gentleman entertains a Japanese woman—presumably the Ōmachi mentioned above. Lu has a *jōruri* text, identifiable from its bold font, laid out in front of him on a table, and he is clearly delighted as he makes out the words. The woman in front of him uses her fan in place of the chanter's wand, and her *shamisen* is laid out on the floor next to her. The caption to the illustration explains: "Mr. Riku Meisai learns to chant *jōruri* texts" 陸明斎学語浄留利. It is a marvelous scene, and a tantalizing indication of the degree to which Sino-Japanese relations in Nagasaki moved past the purely commercial.

Directly after the description of Lu Mingzhai, the text records another case of literary Japanophilia:

> Mr. Meng's name was Shishou, and his courtesy name Hanjiu. He was also a native of Zhapu in Zhejiang, and he came to Japan during the Kansei reign period [1789-1801]—about ten years after Lu Mingzhai. During his time in the China House in Nagasaki, Mr. Meng studied the *kana* syllabary and spent his time copying old poems. If someone asked him for a sample of his calligraphy, he would give one over. In the past, when the Chinese could lodge in the city, there was a Mr. Chen Jiguan from Anhai in Zhangzhou, who lodged temporarily in Ogawa-chō. He also delighted in studying *kana* and copied out old *waka* poems by the Thirty-Six Immortals of Poetry. It's said there were many of them. This was also truly something remarkable!
>
> 孟涵九は名は世壽,字は涵九といふ,これもまた浙江省乍浦の人なり,明斎よりはおよそ十年あまりも後なるべし,寛政のころ,長崎の館中にありて,日本のいろは仮名を学びて,古歌など臨摸し,書を乞ふ者あれば,専らに書き與へけり,むかし町宿のころ,漳州安海の陳驥官といふ者,小川町に仮居せしが,好んで,仮名を学び,三十六人歌仙古歌集など,書うつせし,もの多く有しとぞいひ伝へぬ,これもまためずらし.[23]

The miscellany includes a picture of Meng, bespectacled and concentrated, inscribing a fan while two Japanese onlookers smile and point. The next plate shows the fan and Meng's calligraphy. Although the cases of Lu Mingzhai, Meng Hanjiu, and Chen Jiguan should certainly not be taken as normal practice, the *Nagasaki meishō zue* makes it clear that there were Chinese merchant-sailors who were interested in Japanese culture, and who used their limited time in Nagasaki to study both modern and classical forms of the language. In the case of Lu Mingzhai, the native informant is identified as a courtesan

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[22] *Nagasaki meishō zue*, p. 120.

[23] *Nagasaki meishō zue*, p. 121.

named Ōmachi; with Meng Hanjiu, the reader is not told whether or not he availed himself of professional instruction. Although both men are described only briefly, these passages provide a brief glimpse into an aspect of Sino-Japanese cultural contact almost entirely overlooked in existing scholarship. In the second half of the study, I will connect these instances to an attempt at rendering a particularly canonical work of Japanese drama legible to a Chinese reader.

Shū Bunjiemon and the Sinification of Japanese Puppet Theatre

Shū Bunjiemon 周文次右衛門 hailed from an extraordinarily undistinguished line of Chinese émigrés turned petty bureaucrats. The Shū line traced its roots to a certain Zhou Chenguan 周辰官 from Quanzhou 泉州, who first appeared in Nagasaki records in 1645.[24] Zhou was originally a Christian, but apostatized upon finding himself in an atmosphere hostile to the practice of Christianity. He channeled his former religious energies into a new vocation as an informant *cum* private police assistant (*meakashi* 目明かし)—presumably charged with detecting adherents to the beliefs he had practiced earlier. For generations after Zhou's death, scions of the family would stagnate in low-level bureaucratic posts in their adopted Nagasaki.

The Shū fortunes took an upswing in the late eighteenth century through the efforts of Zhou Chenguan's sixth-generation descendent, Shū Bunjiemon (aka, Shū Seijirō 政次郎 / Bunjirō 文次郎). In 1766, Shū was appointed to the same low-level rank that had constrained his predecessors for a century, but he continued to work his way up to a junior translator post (*kotsūji* 小通事) in 1791. By the time of his death in 1825, he had become an assistant inspector (*metsuke yakujo* 目附役助). Bunjiemon's gradual climb up the bureaucratic ladder and the agonizingly slow return to respectability of a minor Nagasaki family would hardly merit attention were it not for his composition of two remarkable translations. The first—a short work entitled *Act Three of* '*Kokusen'ya*' (*Kokusen'ya daisan kai* 國姓爺第三回)—was included in the literary polymath Ōta Nanpo's 大田南畝 (1749-1823) collection *Sankoshi* 鑽故紙 (*Mindless Reading*). Shū's second text—a much longer work called the *Vernacular Chinese Explication of* '*The Treasury of Loyal Retainers*' (Chūshingura engi 忠臣蔵演義)—has been preserved in manuscript copy in the library of Waseda University. *Chūshingura engi* lacks any clear means of dating, and can only be assigned a latter limit of composition through later "retranslations" 重訳 of the text—the earliest of which was published in 1815.

Kokusen'ya daisan kai is a partial translation of Chikamatsu Monazaemon's *Kokusen'ya kassen* into the style and language of vernacular Chinese fiction. The text does not include a preface or afterword, and it is only identified as Shū's work in an

[24] Miyata Yasushi 宮田安, *Tō tsūji kakei ronkō* 唐通事家系論考, pp. 786-97.

attribution attached to the end of the text.[25] Although this dearth of information makes any speculation about Shū's authorial motives risky, the third act of *Kokusen'ya kassen* is an intriguing selection that foregrounds the ambiguous relationship between Watōnai and the inhabitants of his ancestral homeland. Like most of Chikamatsu's works, the text defies simple summary. Watōnai's attempts to build an army capable of defeating the Tartars and restoring the fallen Ming have brought him, his father Tei Shiryū 鄭之龍 (Zheng Zhilong, 1604-1661), and his Japanese mother to the Lion Castle (*Shishigajō* 獅子が城) of Gojōgun Kanki 五常軍甘輝—a powerful Chinese general who is wedded to Tei Shiryū's daughter and Watōnai's heretofore unmet half-sister Kinshōjo 錦祥女. Watōnai's family learns that Kanki has been called away at the Tartar king's command, and the palace is currently under the supervision of Kinshōjo. The Chinese soldiers who guard the parapets abuse Watōnai and his family and attempt to dissuade them from seeking an audience with Kinshōjo. Their taunts alternate between Japanese (for the benefit of Chikamatsu's audience), and strings of nonsense syllables meant to sound like angry Chinese. Kinshōjo is aroused by the commotion and makes her way to the gate, where she discovers that Tei Shiryū is her long-lost father—a fact that a portrait Tei Shiryū left behind with his then-infant daughter confirms. A triumphant homecoming would seem to be in order, but the Chinese guards have been ordered not to allow anyone into the castle, and they remain inflexible. The impasse is only resolved when Watōnai's mother (Kinshōjo's stepmother) allows herself to be trussed up and taken into the castle as a hostage. She urges her husband and son not to worry and tells them that she will use signals to keep them informed of the status of her audience with Kinshōjo and her husband. If things go well, she tells the anxious men, she will deposit powder in the moat surrounding the castle, dyeing the waters white. If things go poorly, she will use rouge to dye the stream crimson. General Kanki returns, and fearful that he will be deemed too easily swayed by his wife, refuses to help Watōnai's forces while Kinshōjo is alive. Subsequently, the castle moat flows red. Watōnai and his father force their way inside the castle only to find that the crimson is blood flowing from Kinshōjo's self-inflicted stab wound—a maneuver that she correctly surmises will galvanize Kanki into assisting Watōnai's forces. Watōnai's mother is suitably impressed by her Chinese daughter-in-law's resolution, and not to be outdone, plunges her dagger into her own throat so that she will not bring shame upon Japan.[26]

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[25] The library of Tsukuba University has a manuscript copy of Ōta Nanpo's 大田南畝 collection *Sankōshi* 鑽故紙 (Mindless Reading) dated 1806. There is no other information about the translation's provenance provided. Only the line "This text was translated by the translator Shū Bunjiemon" 右譯司周文次右衛門所譯 identifies the text as Shū's work.

[26] *Chikamatsu zenshū* 近松全集 (Complete Works of Chikamatsu Monzaemon), vol. 9 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1985-1994), p. 709; Keene, p. 106.

In the introduction to this chapter, I briefly discussed the difficulties of locating a single and unambiguous message about Japan's position vis-à-vis China from the text of *Kokusen'ya kassen*. Nowhere is this cultural ambiguity better illustrated than in the third act of the play, in which the eponymous hero fades into the backdrop and cedes center stage to his Japanese mother and Chinese half-sister: figures who alternately vie with each other in demonstrating their sense of duty, or cooperate in a way that suggests that proper behavior transcends geographic and cultural divisions. Shū's *Kokusen'ya daisan kai* provides only a small excerpt from this complex scene—beginning with Watōnai's arrival at the base of the Lion Castle, and concluding with the ominous boom of Chinese cannons as his mother is taken into the fortress as a hostage. As is to be expected of an attentive reader of Chinese vernacular fiction, Shū has taken care to craft his narrative with respect to the structural demands of the genre. The original *jōruri* script uses the opening lines to foreshadow the complex cultural negotiations that are to follow:

> A lord endowed with Benevolence should not harbor a useless minister; similarly, a father imbued with Compassion should not show favor to a worthless son. Although Japan and China take different paths in many respects, parents and son have traversed the Road of Sincerity without growing confused, coming at last to the base of Sekiheki-yama, where the general Kanki—whom Tei Shiryū knows only to be his son-in-law—has his Lion Fortress. The fortress is even stronger than expected. On this chilly spring night, frost sparkles on the eaves of the soaring towers, and at the top, leviathans unfurl their fins. The indigo moat flows into the Yellow River like a knot being unraveled. The tower gates are locked and bolted, and the watchman's gong tolls from within the walls. Catapults and artillery are already crowded into place—ready to be used at a moment's notice. Truly, this is a sight unlike any in Japan!
>
> 仁ある君も,用なき臣は養ふ事あたはず,慈ある父も,益なき子は愛する事あたはず,大和唐土さまざまに道の巷は分かるれど,迷はでいそぐ誠の道,赤壁山の麓にて,親子三人巡り合ひ,我が聟とばかり聞き及ぶ,五常軍甘輝が館城獅子が城にぞ,着きにける　聞きしに優る要害はまだ寒え返る春の夜の,霜にきらめく軒の瓦鯱天に鰭ふりて,石塁高く築き上げたり,掘の水藍に似て縄を引くがごとく,末は黄河に流れ入り,楼門堅く鎖せり,城内には夜回りの鑼の聲かまびすく,矢狭間に弩隙間なく,所々に石火矢を仕掛置きすはといはば,打ち放さんその勢ひ和国に目馴れぬ要害なり.[27]

In contrast, Shū begins his translation with a brief (and comparatively flat) summary of the play's preceding action:

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[27] *Chikamatsu zenshū*, pp. 683-84; Keene, pp. 90-91.

> The story goes that Rō Ikkan [Watōnai's father Tei Shiryū] had returned to China, intending to attack the king of the Manchus and restore the Ming by raising a righteous army. One night, he arrived at the Lion Fortress of Gojōgun Kanki with his wife and son Watōnai. He saw that the gates were closed tightly and guarded with stout archers and artillery. The watch sounded, and indeed it was quite well-guarded! Watōnai called out loudly: "We wish to have an audience with Gojōgun Kanki, and you must open the gate." The guards on duty replied: "Our lord has received an order from the king of the Manchus. He left yesterday, and we don't know when he'll be back."
>
> 話說老一官既已再來唐山, 要攻打滿洲王, 興復明祚, 招募義旗之士. 一夜陪從老娘同和藤內到五常軍甘輝住領的獅子城下, 看見城門緊閉, 只擺着強弩硬弓砲石敵鑼巡哨, 好生防備. 和藤內高聲叫到, 只要拜謁五常軍甘輝公說話, 須要開門, 聽得城內當值的人員回報道, 主公甘輝只蒙大王釣旨, 昨日起身出城, 卻不知幾時回來.

Shū's translation makes no attempt to replicate the elaborate description and elegant cadences of the original Japanese text. Since the reader catches the storyteller *in medias res*, the chapter begins with the introductory phrase *huashuo* 話說 ("the story goes") and summarizes the preceding action. He deletes the poetic exposition of the original play, and dives directly into the narrative: "The story goes that Rō Ikkan had returned to China, intending to attack the king of the Manchus and restore the Ming by raising a righteous army." The fact that Shū conveniently sums up Tei Shiryū's mission and reasons for returning to China—a recapitulation absent in the original *jōruri* text—suggests that Shū never intended to translate the two acts leading up to the narrative he selected. Similarly, although Shū promised that those hoping to read the resolution of the cliff-hanger used as a stopping point need only "listen to the following installment" (*qieting xiawen fenshuo* 且聽下文分說), there is no indication that he had any intention of continuing where he left off.

Shū's *Kokusen'ya daisan kai* never rises above the level of a simple précis or summary of Chikamatsu's play, and he makes no attempt to replicate the virtuosic wordplay and literary depth of the original work. In the absence of paratextual material discussing the translation's provenance and underlying motivation, any statement about Shū's goals must remain largely speculative. The third act of *Kokusen'ya kassen* highlights the cultural comparisons that underlie the play as a whole, and Shū's selection is significant in that respect. As a translator in the Nagasaki customhouse, Shū would have come into regular contact with Chinese sailors, and it is possible that a work such as *Kokusen'ya daisan kai* was intended as a summary for curious readers like Lu Mingzhai or Meng Hanjiu. The text is equipped with the reading markers (*kunten* 訓点) that would have allowed a Japanese reader to read the composition in accordance with Japanese grammar patterns, but it is impossible to determine when these markers were affixed, and by whom. Notably lacking in *Kokusen'ya daisan kai* are the "contemporary Chinese pronunciation" markers (*Tō'on* 唐音) often affixed to materials intended for language practice. However, whether this is because Shū was writing for an audience who already

understood Chinese is impossible to determine from the meager clues provided by the text.

Shū's second surviving translation is a far more ambitious and complete work. *Chūshingura engi* 忠臣蔵演義 (A Vernacular Chinese Explication of 'The Treasury of Loyal Retainers') is a mid-length work of slightly over one hundred pages in one fascicle. As the name suggests, the text is a Chinese-language translation of the smash-hit *jōruri* play *Kana dehon Chūshingura* 仮名手本忠臣蔵 by the Osaka playwrights Takeda Izumo, Miyoshi Shōraku 三好松洛 (dates uncertain), and Namiki Senryū 並木千柳 (1695-1751). In selecting *Chūshingura* for translation, Shū succeeded in finding a work whose renown and import rivaled or even surpassed the already wildly popular *Kokusen'ya kassen*. As is well-known, the story of the ill-fated Enya Hangan 塩谷判官 and the spectacular revenge engineered by his chief retainer Ōboshi Yuranosuke 大星由良助 is a thinly disguised reference to the most famous revenge in Edo history: the "Akō incident" in which armed retainers of the deceased daimyo of Akō 赤穂, Asano Naganori 浅野長矩 (1667-1701), burst into the household of the senior master of ceremony Kira Yoshinaka 吉良義央 (1641-1703) in January 1703. The retainers succeeded in putting Yoshinaka to death and taking his head as an offering to Asano's grave at Sengaku-ji Temple 泉岳寺 in present-day Shinagawa ward in Tokyo. This unexpected massacre was a response to an incident nearly two years earlier in April 1701, in which Asano Naganori was sentenced to commit *seppuku* for attacking Yoshinaka in Edo Castle—a case adjudicated by the shogun Tsunayoshi 綱吉 (1646-1709), who saw Naganori's assault as a one-sided attack.[28] The literary representation of the Akō incident began a mere two weeks after the events themselves. Chikamatsu himself authored one of the best-known works: a text called *Goban taiheiki* 碁盤太平記 (A Chessboard Taiheiki), which was written in 1710. Since the onstage representation of contemporary events was forbidden, Chikamatsu transplanted the narrative into the world of the fourteenth-century military history *Taiheiki* 太平記: repackaging the Akō warriors' vendetta with reference to the older story of Enya Hangan's vendetta against the minister Kō no Moronao 高師直 (d. 1351). This use of historical material from the fourteenth century and association of Asano Naganori with Enya Hangan would become convention in later versions of the tale.

Kana dehon Chūshingura was first performed as a *jōruri* play in Osaka in 1748 and had been adapted as a *kabuki* play within a year of the original performance. The opening lines of the play reflect a historical interpretation that has remained alluring to the present day—casting the *rōnin* as anachronistic heroes whose outstanding devotion to their master and willingness to resort to violence to avenge his death made them inevitable but tragic victims of the *pax Tokugawa*:

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[28] This decision and its complicated implications are discussed concisely and lucidly in Bitō Masahide and Henry D. Smith II, "The Akō Incident, 1701-1703," *Monumenta Nipponica* 58.2 (2003), pp. 149-70.

> Though a sumptuous feast be set out before you, you will not know its fine flavor unless you taste it.[29] Similarly, when a country is at peace, the loyalty of its warriors remains hidden. They are like stars rendered invisible by the sun at noon—watch though, how they scatter in profusion when nighttime comes! Here, I have related an example of this truth in a work written in *kana*. It is a time of great peace: the latter part of the second month of the Ryakuō reign period . . .
>
> 嘉肴有といへども,食せざれば,其味を知らずとは,国治て,よき武士の忠も武勇も隠るるにたとへば,星の昼見えず,夜は乱れて顕はるる,例を爰に仮名書の太平の代の政,比は暦応元年二月下旬.[30]

It is difficult to overestimate the continuous popularity the text has enjoyed from the eighteenth century to the present day. In addition to its perennial presence in *jōruri* and *kabuki* theaters, the story has been employed as a base text for parodies, spinoffs, and unofficial histories (*jitsuroku*).

Shū Bunjiemon's translation of *Kana dehon Chūshingura* is an almost entirely unknown attempt at defamiliarizing the events of the Akō incident and an exponentially more ambitious undertaking than the far shorter *Kokusen'ya daisan kai*. While Shū's Chikamatsu translation is best seen as a summary that focuses upon the basic narrative and does little to replicate the atmosphere and structural complexity of the original text, *Chūshingura engi* translates the original text with a far higher degree of fidelity to framing narratives, narratorial digression, and figural language. The opening passage of the text—the original of which was translated above—serves as a representative example of Shū's translation style:

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[29] An adaptation of the "On Learning" 學記 chapter in the *Li ji*: "Though there be sumptuous victuals, if one does not eat them, he will not know their flavor; similarly, though there is a Perfected Way, if it is not studied, then one cannot know its Goodness" 雖有嘉肴,弗食不知其旨也,雖有至道,弗學不知其善也.

[30] Editions consulted include *Jōruri shū* 浄瑠璃集 (Collection of Jōruri Puppet Plays), Otoba Hiromu 乙葉弘 et al., eds., *Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 日本古典文学大系 (Masterworks of Classical Japanese Literature), vol. 51 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1960); *Jōruri shū* 浄瑠璃集, Torigoe Bunzō 鳥越文蔵, et al., ed. and trans., vol. 77 (Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 1994); and Donald Keene, *Chushingura* (*The Treasury of Loyal Retainers*), (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).

Chapter One, in which:

Ashikaga Takauji respectfully accepts the helmet of [Nitta] Yoshisada,
and
Lord Moronao recklessly rebukes Lord Momoi

It is said that one does not see a faithful vassal's integrity and ambition unless it is a time of upheaval. Similarly, a righteous knight does not display his comportment until tempted with wealth. It is as the saying goes: "One may have a sumptuous feast before him, but if he does not taste it, he will not know its fine flavor." In this era of great peace, there may be heroes and men of valor, but we're not going to see any amazing feats of valor.[31] It's like the stars that fill the heavens—they do not give off light by day, but rather shine against the nighttime sky. What this tale tells of is a particular lord, who lost his life on account of a quarrel—put to death for the rage sparked one morning. Afterwards, over forty of his vassals repaid their lord's disgrace by avenging his death. The time is the latter part of the second month of the inaugural year of Ryakuō . . .

第一回

尊氏公拜納義貞盔
高野候亂罵桃井候

卻說不臨亂則不見貞臣之志,不臨財則不見義士之操,正所為雖有嘉殽不食不知美味,太平之世縱有英雄豪傑,不見得甚麼驚人之功,只似滿空星辰白日無光,夜來放光一般,這一本所說的是有一位諸侯,為一件闘毆上特特送了性命,正是一朝之怒,竟亡其身,後來該臣四十餘人替主公報讎之事下來便見,時值歷應元年二月下旬.

Linguistic mistakes aside, the structure of this passage would be familiar to any Chinese reader of Shū's adopted genre, beginning with the heptasyllabic title couplet and brief summary of the story to be told—a summary conspicuously absent in the original *jōruri* text. Compared with the abridged Chikamatsu translation discussed earlier, the introduction to *Chūshingura engi* is a far more "literary" work that adheres closely to the contours of the original text, as can be seen in Shū's retention of the famous simile comparing the latent virtue of the warriors to stars hidden by the light of the sun. *Chūshingura engi* appears to have been a draft translation, and the manuscript shows signs of editing—by whom and for what purpose is unclear. The text is plagued by mistranscribed characters and incorrect grammatical constructions, which have been corrected or marked in the upper margin of the page. The first chapter and parts of the second and eighth chapters have been parsed with the *kunten* markers that would allow the text to be read (with difficulty) in Japanese word order. Again, there is no way of

31 The strange construction *bujian de shenme* 不見得甚麼 is emblematic of the ways in which Shū attempted to intersperse the text with phrases that appeared closer to a vernacular register.

determining when these markers were added, by whom, and whether they were part of an eventual plan for publication.

The obvious difficulties of translating a work as lengthy as *Kana dehon Chūshingura* and the singular status of Shū's translation invite the question of an intended audience. Though far more faithful than *Kokusen'ya daisan kai*, Shū has taken some liberties in translation. Throughout the text, Shū essentially ignored the musical and poetic aspects of Japanese theatre and translated the original work into simple prose interspersed occasionally with five- and seven-character Chinese poems. Similarly, "pivot words" (*kakekotoba*), "pillow words" (*makurakotoba*), and other instances of poetic wordplay are generally ignored.[32] The eighth act—a *michiyuki* 道行 (lovers' journey) in which the young bride Konami 小浪 and her mother make their way to her betrothed's abode—has been entirely excised.[33] This *michiyuki* scene is saturated with allusions, poetic resonances, punning, double entendre, and other feats of figural virtuosity that would have proved a formidable challenge for even the most ambitious translator. Allusions such as those presented in the introductory passages above are generally faithfully translated, but Shū made no attempt to engage the poetic rhythms or complex wordplay inherent in the texts he translated.

As is the case with the partial Chikamatsu translation, the absence of a preface or any other paratextual material largely precludes speculation about the intended audience for this anomalous text. However, I would argue that certain features of the work suggest that Shū intended to circulate it among a Chinese audience. In terms of hypothesizing a possible readership, it seems that the best location to look for clues is in sections that would have posed the greatest amount of difficulty for either the translator or a non-native reader of Japanese. Poetic language comprises such an area, but the fact that Shū refrained from translating most poetry leaves little material left to analyze. Another potentially fruitful area of the text is the large body of puns, plays on words, and other

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32 A *makurakotoba* 枕詞, or "pillow word," is a poetic epithet that modifies the word that follows: ie, use of the name "Akizushima" 秋津島 (Dragonfly Island) before the term "Yamato" (Japan) in classical poetry. See Edwin Cranston, *A Waka Anthology, Volume One: The Gem-Glistening Cup* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), p. 711. A *kakekotoba* 掛詞, or "pivot word," acts as a link between lines by serving as the last word or phrase of one line and the first word or phrase of the next. For instance, Cranston presents the first two lines of *Man'yōshū* 万葉集 X, 1833 / 1829: "Azusayumi / *Haru*yama chikaku" ("Taut catalpa bows / *Spring* mountains close at hand) in which the word *haru* ("to draw a bow" 張る or "spring" 春) completes the first phrase and starts the second. Aside from a handful of fortuitous examples (the Japanese word *matsu*, for instance, which can mean "pine-tree" 松 or to "pine" 待つ for a lover), *kakekotoba* are difficult to translate without inserting a footnote or breaking up the line. See Cranston, pp. xxiv-xxv for a full explanation.

33 The *michiyuki* 道行 focuses on the lyrical description of the scenery encountered during a character's journey. Often, the scene makes use of historical allusion and intricate poetic pastiches that would present enormous translational difficulties for the reasons discussed above.

turns of phrase dependent upon a given word's capacity for multiple signification. Although *Chūshingura* is a grim tale, it has its moments of levity—the seventh act of the play, in particular, is a comic peak and a good spot to look for language and grammatical constructions that highlight the gap between phonographic *kana* and logographic *kanji.* Act Seven focuses upon the exploits of Enya Hangan's chief retainer Ōboshi Yuranosuke, who has taken up a life of debauchery in order to mislead Moronao's henchmen into thinking that he is no longer interested in seeking revenge. The act takes place in the pleasure quarters, where Yuranosuke makes merry while supporting characters interrogate him and try to glean the motivations underlying his dissipated behavior. One of his first visitors is Teraoka Heiemon 寺岡平右衛門—a low-level foot soldier (*ashigaru* 足軽) who was formerly in Enya Hangan's employ. Heiemon has correctly surmised that Yuranosuke's dissipation is a façade designed to trick Moronao and his retainers, and he asks Yuranosuke if the rumors of a forthcoming vendetta against Moronao are true. Yuranosuke is aware that their conversation is being monitored by Moronao's spies, and he replies: "You, my friend, are not a 'foot-soldier,' but rather a 'blabbermouth'" 其元は足軽ではなうて,大きな口軽じゃの[34]—punning on the terms *ashigaru* 足軽 (written with the graphs for 'foot' and 'light') and *kuchigaru* 口軽 (written with 'mouth' and 'light'). In Chinese, the vocabulary enabling this play on words does not exist, and the joke unfolds somewhat more ponderously in Shū's translation:

> Without letting Heiemon finish what he was saying, Yuranosuke told him to hold his tongue and followed up: "You foot soldiers (歩卒) have another name: 'lightfoots' (足軽 C: *zuqing*, J: *ashigaru*). However, it's not your feet that are light, but rather your tongue!"
>
> 由良助卻不曾聽完, 叫他住口便道, 步卒人又一名足軽, 你正乃足不軽而口軽.

This is a lame joke in Japanese or Chinese, and its execution is particularly laborious in the translation. It is an interesting detail, however, in terms of Shū's circuitous explanation of the original context. Shū departs from the original *jōruri* script by inserting an explanation: "You foot-soldiers have another name . . ."—one of the rare instances in the translation in which his fidelity to the narrative contours of the drama is compromised. For a Japanese reader working his way through the text with *kunten* glosses, such an explanation would not be necessary, for the insertion of the Japanese term *ashigaru* into the translation would pose no problem. It seems that Shū presumed that the reader would not understand the Japanese term and embedded a gloss to clarify the meaning of *ashigaru*—the only term that would bring out the humorous contrast with *kuchigaru*.

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[34] *Jōruri shū*, p. 340.

A similar example occurs in the sixth chapter of Shū's translation. Hayano Kampei 早野勘平, the well-meaning but flawed retainer of Enya Hangan has attempted to re-enter Yuranosuke's graces by contributing a sizeable sum of money toward the erection of a monument to his deceased master. Through a complicated chain of events, the acquisition of these funds has led to the death of Kampei's father-in-law, and Kampei is further disgraced. Seeing suicide as his only means of redemption, Kampei thrusts his sword into his stomach and hands over the money—stored in his father-in-law's striped wallet—to two of Enya's retainers. In the original text, the retainers are moved by Kampei's sincerity and exclaim:

> As I think about it, the money in this striped wallet is nothing less than the golden color of a Buddha, whose state I pray you attain.
>
> 思へば思へば此金はしまの財布の紫摩黄金仏果を得よと.[35]

In the play, this is an elegantly phrased utterance that compares the stripes (*shima* 縞) of the wallet to the "purple-veined gold" color (*shima ōgon* 紫摩黄金) of the body of the Buddha. In his Chinese translation, however, Shū is in trouble: the pithiness of the Japanese relies upon a phonic resonance between *shima* 縞 and *shima* 紫摩 that is impossible to capture in logographic Chinese script. Shū resolves this tension as follows:

> [Enya's retainer] took up the wallet, and looking at the chessboard-striped pattern, exclaimed: "This is the highest-quality gold! In our land of Japan, the word for 'stripe' [柳條: lit. "willow-branch patterns"] is homophonous with the word for 'gold of the highest quality' [ie, the color of the Buddha's skin]. Regardless of how they are pronounced,[36] [we can say that] your gold allows you to attain the golden body of the Buddha himself."
>
> 就收了金子看了棋盤柳條布袋說,這是紫摩黃金.我朝柳條是紫摩的同音,雖是音不同而同音,借此二字,就算作紫摩黃金,照這金子得了金身成佛.

This passage is choppy and difficult to follow, but Shū appears to be attempting an explanation: while the effect of the Japanese passages derives from the homophones *shima* and *shima* [*ōgon*], the logographic Chinese characters Shū employs in his translation do not permit this double-meaning. Thus, Shū is reduced to using the

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35 *Jōruri shū*, p. 336; Keene, p. 102.

36 The meaning of the passage is unclear here, but the author is highlighting the fact that the words for "stripe" and "gold" are pronounced identically if read in Japanese. The first *on* 音 might be a mistranscription of *i* 意 "meaning": ie, "Even though the meanings are different, the pronunciation is the same." The retranslations discussed in the next section clarify this by translating: "In Japanese, we pronounce 'stripe' like 'gold.' The characters are different, but the pronunciation is the same." 邦俗呼柳條如紫磨, 文字各異而訓音同.

cumbersome introduction "In our land [of Japan] . . ." as a crash course in the Japanese language. As in the passage above, the insertion of this gloss is a departure from the contours of the original text and a jolt from the rhythm of the Japanese. Its insertion suggests that Shū's intended reader lacks any basic knowledge of Japanese: a Japanese reader would presumably read "gold" 紫摩 in its Sino-Japanese pronunciation *shima* and understand the double-meaning immediately—particularly if he were already familiar with the *jōruri* text.[37] Only a reader reading the text in Chinese would require a gloss to understand the connection between the non-homophones *liutiao* 柳條 and *zimo* 紫摩.[38]

Other difficult passages in *Chūshingura engi* have been explained through a commentarial gloss, and Shū's inclusion of this commentary in his translation similarly suggests the possibility of a Chinese readership. The use of these glosses is limited to a handful of instances. The first two glosses appear in the first chapter, where the narrator explains that the Ashikaga shogun belongs to the Minamoto 源 clan and has the given name Takauji 尊氏. Later, a gloss explains that the name Seiwa 清和 refers to the imperial progenitor of a branch of the Minamoto line. Both of these insertions explain simple historical facts that no Japanese reader would be ignorant of. In the next chapter, Shū uses a gloss to clarify the events in the narrative. In the second act of the play, the hot-headed daimyo Lord Momoi 桃井 has called his faithful retainer Honzō 本蔵 to his side to explain his decision to attack the villain Kō no Moronao at the next day's festivities. Angered by Honzō's lack of enthusiasm for the plan and fearful that he might be betrayed, Momoi asks for a sign of his retainer's fealty. In Shū's translation:

> Honzō stood up and rapidly unsheathed the short sword at his side. He left the study holding the sword in his hand, where he took out a single grass sandal, which he rubbed against his sword. Next, Honzō faced a pine tree and brought his sword down [slashing off a bough]. At that time, he resheathed his sword and said, "My lord, I only hope that you will bring things to a swift conclusion like this."
>
> 立起上來,拿了旁邊的短刀,早拔刀在手,從書院裡下去拿了單草鞋,抹著,望了松樹頭早舉刀就落.當時拿刀收在鞘內,便道,望乞相公如此一刀結果.

Apparently worried that his reader would not understand Honzō's gesture, Shū supplied an explanatory gloss:

> In our land of Japan, if we do not have a whetstone handy, we will make use of a straw sandal in its place.
>
> 我朝傍無磨石,將草鞋抹著當做磨刀石.

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[37] The Sino-Japanese pronunciation for the character 紫 is *shi* and the character 摩 is *ma*.

[38] Shū consistently uses the graphs 紫摩 to represent "gold." The correct characters are 紫磨. In either case, the Sino-Japanese pronunciation is *shima*.

What is more interesting than Shū's explanation of Honzō's behavior is his invocation of a comparative framework. The effect of the narrator's reference to practice in Japan (*waga chō* 我朝) is to imply a reader unfamiliar with these customs—an authorial distance that suggests Shū envisioned a Chinese reader when he composed the gloss.

Chūshingura engi is a rough translation, and it is clear that the text remained a work in progress. Despite its shortcomings, the work is a credible attempt at translating an enormously popular text in a way that not only relates the events comprising the play, but also attempts to convey the linguistic complexity of the original script. In the absence of more information about the provenance of the text and its circumstances of composition, definitive statements about Shū's intention are impossible. However, clues within the text suggest the possibility that the work was to be circulated among the Chinese sailors Shū would have had contact with as a professional translator. When necessary to an understanding of the narrative, historical information that a reader would find unfamiliar or unclear has been glossed, and jokes and other plays on words relying upon the phonic flexibility of Japanese *kana* have been accurately if laboriously explained in Chinese. While this falls short of conclusive proof that Shū's intention was to circulate the text among a Chinese readership, I presented evidence earlier that there were indeed Chinese readers who were interested in Japanese literature—including popular drama—and went so far as to learn rudimentary information about these texts. For the aforementioned Lu Mingzhai to chant even "one or two phrases" of the original *Chūshingura* as the *Nagasaki meishō zue* claims, he would presumably want to know what he was singing—requiring edification from a native informant. The idea that Shū's translation of *Chūshingura engi* might have found a Chinese readership (or was at least composed with that intention in mind) is not a far-fetched hypothesis. There is much in *Chūshingura engi* that would baffle a Chinese reader, and the lack of any historical context for the text makes speculation about its reception impossible. However, a critic generous enough to overlook the text's grammatical and orthographic mistakes would find the revenge of the forty-seven faithful samurai of Akō to be an intriguing tale worthy of exportation.

The Afterlives of the Forty-Seven *Rōnin* of Akō in "China"

The convoluted story of *Chūshingura engi* took one more turn in 1815 with the publication of a text entitled *Chūshinko* 忠臣庫 (*The Storehouse of Loyal Retainers*).[39]

[39] I have examined three Edo-period editions of *Chūshinko* preserved in the Tokyo Metropolitan Library. The earliest edition (1815) is entitled *Chūshinko* and is incomplete—the second of three fascicles is missing. The second edition is an 1820 reprint entitled *Strange Tales from Abroad* 海外奇談 (*Kaigai kidan*). The third edition was published in 1825—also under the name *Kaigai kidan*. During the Meiji, the title was changed to *The Japanese Storehouse of Loyal Retainers* 日本忠臣庫 (*Nihon Chūshinko*)—copies of which are available in the Tokyo Metropolitan Library and the National Diet Library. With the exception of the frontispieces and prefaces—which differ with respect to edition—the text in all four

Like Shū Bunjiemon's *Chūshingura engi*, *Chūshinko* was a Chinese-language translation of *Chūshingura*. This time, however, the text was equipped with a preface claiming a remarkable pedigree. According to the frontispiece of the text:

> This text is a translation of our popular play [*Chūshingura*] done by a Chinese writer. In recent years, it was brought [to Japan] by ship—is this not a rare and marvelous occurrence! We have asked a learned scholar to add Japanese annotations to the side of the text and had the play printed in the hopes that it would be perused by gentlemen at leisure.
>
> 此書清人譯我邦俗院本者,近海舶載來,不亦珍異乎,是以請一先生傍附國訓,以命梓公世冀備君子閑燕之覽采云爾.

On the next page, the preface to the text confirmed the Japanese editor's account—this time through a description by the "Chinese" author who had allegedly penned the translation:

> I, Hongmengzi, was once perusing texts in the marketplace, where I obtained a most marvelous tome. It was entitled *The Treasury of Loyal Retainers* (*Chūshinko*). When I opened it, I saw that it was written in the style of a "rustic history" and recorded a vendetta narrative from abroad. It claimed to be an aficionado's translation of a foreign country's popular theatre. Alas! The writing style was vulgar and uncouth, and there were places where mistakes made it impossible to read. And so, I followed in the footsteps of the venerable *Shuihu zhuan* and corrected the text while spicing it up a bit as well. This way, I can provide a topic of conversation for times of leisure.
>
> 59th Year of Qianlong, First Month, 15th Day, the Stale One of Timeless Confusion
>
> 鴻濛子嘗閱市獲奇書,題曰忠臣庫,披之則稗史之筆蹟,而錄海外報讎之事,謂好事家譯異域之俳優戲書也,惜哉其文鄙俚錯誤,有不可讀者,是以追卓老水滸之跡,潤色訂補,以備遊宴之譚柄焉耳.
>
> 乾隆五十九年正月上元鴻濛陳人誌.

If there were any truth to the preface, it would be a remarkable story of cross-cultural literary interaction. Unlike Shū Bunjiemon's translation, which languished in manuscript form, this second translation of *Chūshingura* was republished in 1820 and 1825.

The preface and its assertion of Chinese involvement have guaranteed a certain amount of scholarly interest in *Chūshinko*.[40] However, as the excerpts translated below

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printings is clearly from the same blocks. For this study, I have relied upon a facsimile of the Meiji reprinting from the Diet Library, while cross-referencing the earlier versions preserved in the Metropolitan Library.

[40] Ishizaki Matazō 石崎又造 was one of the earliest scholars to discuss the text in his magisterial *Kinsei Nihon ni okeru Shina zokugo bungakushi* 近世日本における支那俗語文学史 (A History of Vernacular Chinese Literature in Early Modern Japan) (Tokyo: Kōbundō shobō, 1940), esp. pp. 378-85. See also

make clear, the Chinese in which the text is composed is no language that a resident of the Nagasaki China House would have recognized, and the consistent utilization of Japanese vocabulary and syntax throughout the work is a clear indication of Japanese authorship. Although its claim of transoceanic travel is spurious, the *Chūshinko* translator's reliance upon a preexisting text at least is true. From the opening lines of the translation, it is clear that Shū Bunjiemon's *Chūshingura engi* is the earlier base text alluded to in the prefaces. As the opening lines of *Chūshinko* also clarify the ways in which the retranslator attempted to improve Shū's text, it bears my own retranslation here:

> Chapter One, in which:
>
> Lord Ashikaga Respectfully Accepts Nitta Yoshisada's Helmet
> and
> Kō no Moronao Causes a Disturbance by Scolding Lord Wakanosuke
>
> A great undertaking of one thousand autumns, the splendor of a realm,
> Row after row of burial mounds, names still resplendent.
> In their final struggle, they are not shamed to stand beside Yu Rang,
> Their righteous hearts equal to those who repaid Tian Heng.[41]
> Even in the depths of winter, one is certain the cypress retains its verdure,
> But in secluded places, who will recognize the scent of angelica and orchid?
> If one understands the *waka* poem of forty-seven names,[42]
> The flowers of spring may fall, but they will remain fragrant in dreams.
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> This poem is by a famous Japanese Confucian scholar named Hayashi Bunkei,[43] and was written as a death paean for the righteous samurai of Akō. People always say that if you are not living in

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Nakamura Yukihiko chojutsushū 中村幸彦著述集 (Collected Works of Nakamura Yukihiko), vol. 7 (Tokyo: Chūō kōronsha, 1984), pp. 96-97.

[41] Yu Rang 豫讓 is the righteous assassin *par excellence* described in Sima Qian's "Biography of Assassins" 刺客列傳. In the ninth act of the original play, Yuranosuke is proudly proclaimed to be Yu Rang's Japanese double (*Jōruri shū*, p. 128). Tian Heng 田橫 (d. 202 B.C.E.) was a general, prime minister, and eventual king of the state of Qi—set up during the period of disorder following the fall of Qin. After the state of Qi was toppled, Han Gaozu 漢高祖 (256-195 B.C.E.) requested that Tian Heng come to the capital for an audience. En route, Tian Heng committed suicide, fearing that he would be put to death by the new emperor of Han. After his burial, his two followers both committed suicide in mourning; furthermore, when Han envoys brought news to Tian Heng's exiled followers, all five hundred of them killed themselves. See Sima Qian, *Records of the Grand Historian*, Burton Watson, trans. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), pp. 201-2.

[42] The forty-seven *kana* alluded to here constitute an important motif running throughout the original *jōruri* play, in which the number of *kana* corresponds to the number of faithful retainers. This reference surfaces continually in the original play, but for obvious reasons, those scenes are impossible to replicate in the Chinese text.

> a time of upheaval, you will not see a warrior's true colors, and if you are not tempted by wealth, you'll never understand a righteous man's comportment. This is a case of "having a sumptuous meal, but not knowing its fine flavor until you taste it." In a time of peace, there may be heroes and men of valor, but you'll never see any amazing feats—it's like a full sky of stars not giving off light by day. When night comes, however, look how they shine! What this tale tells of is an official in a country east of the sea, who . . .
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> 第一回
>
> 足利公拜納義貞盔
> 高野直亂罵桃井介
>
> 千秋大業國之光,累累古墳名姓昌,死力何慙比豫讓,義心不折報田橫,歲寒松柏人知綠,地僻茝蘭誰認香,曉得和歌四十七,春花散落夢芬芳.
>
> 這詩乃是日域一個名儒姓林道號文靖先生,題義臣墓作,眾人都道,不臨亂則不見貞臣之志,不臨財則不見義士之操,譬這是雖有嘉殽,不食口不知其味一樣,泰平之世,有英雄豪傑,不見做甚麼驚人的功,只似滿空星辰,白日無光,夜來發輝一般,這一本所說的是海東國,有一位判官. . .

At this point, the translation transitions into the narrative proper by repeating Shū's summation of the narrative.

From this introductory paragraph, it is clear that the preexisting translation alluded to in Hongmengzi's preface was indeed Shū Bunjiemon's *Chūshingura engi*. Much of the opening passage of *Chūshinko* is adapted directly from Shū's translation, although care has been taken to defamiliarize the text. References to Japan as "the country beyond the sea to the east" (*haidong guo* 海東国) and the Japanese emperor as "that foreign emperor" (*taguo tianzi* 他国天子) exoticize the Chinese-language text in a manner contrary to the attempts at familiarization employed by Shū. This can be seen in Hongmengzi's decision to introduce the tale's central figure, Enya Hangan 塩谷判官 with a different title. Whereas Shū's tale tells the story of a "feudal baron" who lost his life—using the Chinese term *zhuhou* 諸侯 to Sinify the Japanese context—the retranslation uses Enya's Japanese official title *hangan* 判官.

The "Chinese" retranslator utilizes this distancing effect in other areas of the text as well. Most of these instances of inventiveness are found in the areas I highlighted earlier: poetry, jokes and other wordplay made possible by the phonic flexibility of Japanese *kana*. The retranslator preserves Shū's original text in each case, but care has been taken to reverse the direction of the interpretive compass. In the second chapter, when Shū explained the retainer Honzō's behavior by telling the reader, "In our country (*waga chō*), sandals are used in place of whetstones," Hongmengzi dutifully adjusts the gloss to emphasize the foreignness of Japan: "When *Japanese* find themselves without a

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[43] I have not been able to find any references to such a poet.

whetstone, they will use a straw sandal in its place" (*Woren pang wu moshi, jiang caoxie mozhe dangzuo modao shi* 倭人旁無磨石,將草鞋磨着當做磨刀石). Shū's authorial voice is rooted in Japan and explains the text to a reader unfamiliar with Japanese customs, while Hongmengzi's text translates the text from a Chinese perspective. This attention to detail—to be expected in a text being passed off as a product of China—is more intriguing in what it retroactively says about Shū's original translation. The obfuscating tactics the *Chūshinko* author uses to exoticize the narrative appear to act as a corrective measure to Shū's explanatory glosses.

The most notable change to Shū's *Chūshingura engi* is the retranslator's attempt at highlighting the translation's vernacular elements. Wherever possible, monosyllabic verbs have been substituted with bisyllabic and trisyllabic equivalents, the use of colloquial particles has been increased, and narrative pacing has been more closely regulated through the active employment of an omnipresent implied storyteller. These changes are visible in Hongmengzi's treatment of Act Seven, in which we return to the *faux*-lecher Yuranosuke's flirtation with the prostitute Okaru おかる. Despite the often incomprehensible syntax and vocabulary, it is clear that the retranslator is attempting to give the work a more "colloquial" feel akin to Chinese narrative fiction. Elements that make use of these constructions have been printed in bold typeface:

> Yuranosuke called out to her: "Turn around and come down the ladder. If the madam and the rest see you, I'm going to penalize you a drink—and **don't think I'll let you go**!" "**Oh! What can I do, then?**" "**Aha! There just happens to be** a ladder right here! Come down quick!" He had already taken the ladder and **rested it in place**. Okaru called out: "I'm **not at all used to** coming down ladders! Isn't that a bit dangerous, **huh**?" Yuranosuke replied: "What harm could there be? **What are you afraid of**?" . . . Okaru said, "**Don't say such stupid things**! Why, it feels like getting on a boat—rolling and tossing, rolling and tossing without stopping." Yuranosuke said, "**That's natural**! In fact, 'Lady Mazu' herself just made an appearance!"
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> 由良助道,你轉過胡梯下來,倘若塢婆媽兒等看過,強勸酒不肯放當,怎麼樣好,阿呀,恰好這裡有一個梯子頓爾填此走下來,早把梯子靠住了,活佳兒道這個梯子竟走不慣,莫不是危險了呀,由良助道,不妨不妨,怕甚麼危險的,活佳兒道,不要說傻話,像個上船一般搖搖動動,停當不得,由良助道,是該的,媽祖娘娘出現了.

Reading the text in Chinese, this passage is often indecipherable, but it is clear the retranslator is attempting to show off his knowledge of Chinese language and literature by peppering his readers with colloquial utterances. For the reader's convenience, the translator has also glossed these terms in Japanese: *dō shitara yokarōka* ("What should I do?") for *zenme yang hao* 怎麼樣好, *noki ni kakeru* ("set [the ladder] against the eaves") for *kaozhu le* 靠住了, *ahō iwansu na* ("Don't say such stupid things!") for *buyao shuo shahua* 不要說傻話, etc. Although these glosses were intended to help Japanese readers of the "Chinese" text, they are of equal use to the modern reader in deciphering

nonsensical terms such as "*wupo*" 塢婆 for "madam" or "go-between." The retranslator has also retained one of Shū Bunjiemon's translated jokes. In the original play, Yuranosuke attempts to solidify the impression that he has become a dissipated lecher by commenting on the view up Okaru's kimono—comparing it to "the moon over Lake Dongting in autumn," and calling out that he can see her "boat god" (*funagami* 船神).[44] Here, the term is slang for a woman's vagina, but in the translation, Shū (and his retranslator) substitutes: "Lady Mazu herself just made an appearance!" 媽祖娘娘出現了 (*Mazu niangniang chuxian le*)—an irreverent nod to a figure of worship well-known among the Chinese residents of the Nagasaki China House.

A final noteworthy feature of *Chūshinko* is the extended use of editorial commentary to draw the reader's attention to characters' development and the artistic quality of the writing itself. As discussed earlier, this type of auto-commentary is used in an extremely limited capacity in Shū's text as well, but the author of *Chūshinko* has expanded this role by developing an individualized persona—a presentation apparently modeled upon the idiosyncratic and domineering voices of Chinese commentators like the great Jin Shengtan 金聖歎 (1610-1661). Sometimes the annotator's asides are benign remarks about the quality of the writing. When Moronao's henchman Sagisaka Bannai 鷺坂坂内, for instance, is described as "a white heron gingerly looking for mudfish" (*quesi bailu daotan niqiu* 卻似白鷺蹈探泥鰌), the commentator proclaims the text "Well-written, indeed!" (*xiede miao* 寫得妙). In contrast, the passage in the sixth chapter in which Hayano Kampei accidentally kills the villain Ono Sadakurō 斧定九郎 is criticized as "being without flavor" (*wuwei* 無味).

At other times, the commentator appears to be cultivating the type of irascible eccentricity one finds in Jin Shengtan at his best. Just as Jin directed his choler at the bandit leader Song Jiang 宋江 in *Shuihu zhuan*—utilizing every possible opportunity to lambast the character's perceived hypocrisy and deceit—the *Chūshinko* commentator focuses his ire at Enya Hangan's retainer Hayano Kampei. The sixth chapter, in which Kampei unwittingly causes the death of his father-in-law, only to redeem himself through suicide, keeps the commentator particularly busy. Kampei's "evasive words do not show the nerves of a warrior" (*dunci wu wufu chang* 遁辭無武夫腸), and we are told that "a gentleman behaving [like Kampei] does not deserve to be called a gentleman" (*wei shi ruci buzu wei shi* 為士如此不足為士). And while a more charitable reader might find Kampei's suicide to be ample proof of repentance, the commentator finds fault with him even *post mortem*—remarking in the next chapter that even Moronao's odious henchman Sagisaka Bannai is superior to the hapless Kampei:

[44] *Jōruri shū*, p. 345.

> Alas! Were [Bannai] one of Enya Hangan's men, he'd come out way ahead of [the now-deceased] Hayano Kampei.
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> 惜哉為塩谷氏臣, 則出勘平上遠矣.

Although the commentator's severity suggests that the auto-commentary is largely tongue-in-cheek, it is an interesting indication of the retranslator's take on Chinese vernacular fiction: Chinese fiction requires a commentary, and while Shū Bunjiemon's limited comments were largely restricted to explanatory glosses, the commentator for *Chūshinko* granted himself a rhetorical mandate to aid the reader's moral development through explication of the text.

Conclusion

Although its claims to be a product of Sino-Japanese literary collaboration are clearly spurious, the line of *Chūshinko* translations discussed above is worthy of comment in several respects. Despite the fact that the text itself adheres largely to the model provided by Shū Bunjiemon's earlier *Chūshingura engi*, the rhetorical positioning of the text has been reversed. In the interpretive paradigm created by the work's prefaces, the text is credited to a Chinese scholar fascinated with Japanese narrative and eager to make the Japanese text known to his countrymen. Although this justification is nothing more than playful invention by a Japanese editor, it places the *Chūshingura* retranslations within a sizeable body of literature of the imagination—a body of work that playfully reconceptualizes and reformulates cultural boundaries and flows of information between China and Japan.[45] Within the rhetoric of the work, it is Japan that has a story worthy of exportation and emulation, and a Chinese audience that is held spellbound by events in a strange kingdom beyond the eastern sea.

Shū Bunjiemon's translation lacks a preface, and any authorial motivations are correspondingly more difficult to divine. Although the retranslated *Chūshinko* announces its desire to help Chinese readers by correcting the errors that clog Shū's original translation, it is clear that the retranslation was undertaken with the intent of making the Chinese-language text more accessible to Japanese readers. While there are considerably more "colloquial" expressions that would have challenged Japanese readers, the text has been so heavily glossed and annotated that these difficulties have been effectively minimized. Likewise, the retranslator's extensive usage of Japanese vocabulary and syntax clearly suggest that the text was never intended for actual exportation. Although *Chūshinko*'s readership would have been limited to a handful of readers in Japan, and interest in the text would be sparked primarily through its reputation as a curiosity, it is a far more accessible text for a Japanese student of vernacular Chinese. *Chūshingura engi*,

[45] Chikamatsu's original *Kokusen'ya kassen* is, of course, one such text—particularly in Chikamatsu's authorial decision to re-enthrone the Ming.

on the other hand, is an enigmatic work—not least of all because the absence of any paratext makes any statement about its intended purpose highly speculative. What is intriguing about *Chūshingura engi* is the degree to which the language and setting of the text have been successfully "Sinicized." Throughout the translation, the original text has been altered and adapted in such a way that—orthographic and grammatical errors aside—the text would be comprehensible to a *Chinese* reader. In cases where Japanese vocabulary is used, clarification has been provided, and when characters' behavior is unfamiliar, the foreign has been explained. In light of the fact that the text was produced in an area characterized by international contact between Chinese sailors and Japanese translators, these efforts take on additional significance.

In discussing *Chūshingura engi* and its retranslation, I have attempted to place the texts in a larger context by connecting them to examples of cultural and literary exchange between China and Japan in the port city of Nagasaki. Despite the paucity of information surrounding these texts, it is possible to see both works as prefiguring later attempts at enlisting popular works of Japanese drama in a larger rhetoric of literary representation. Certainly, in considering Japan's entry into the global circulation of national literatures in the latter half of the nineteenth century, we can do no better than to look at the case of *Chūshingura*. In the decades after Shū completed his translation, both *Chūshingura* and Chikamatsu's *oeuvre* would undergo a dramatic reinterpretation that recast domestic masterpieces as avatars of a unique national essence capable of contending with other nations on the newly emergent stage of "world literature."[46] As one of the earliest Japanese-language dramatic narratives to be translated into English and French, *Chūshingura*, in particular, would play a unique role in questions of representation and self-definition in the Meiji and post-Meiji eras. A full account of this history requires discussion of the texts described above. Barring an unlikely bibliographic discovery, the translators' motives may never be known. However, the mere fact of the texts' translation suggests an interest in participating in a larger system of literary circulation. Just as Chikamatsu's Coxinga traveled overseas to resuscitate the Chinese empire at the same time he brought its centrality into question, the texts discussed above are significant in their attempts (real or imagined) at using the Chinese vernacular as a vehicle for both exalting and circulating Japanese narrative.

[46] For a discussion of Chikamatsu's reception and canonization in the Meiji period, see William Lee, "Chikamatsu and Dramatic Literature in the Meiji Period," in Haruo Shirane and Tomi Suzuki, eds., *Inventing the Classics: Modernity, National Identity, and Japanese Literature* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), pp. 220-51.