

Loyalty, Filial Piety, and Multiple “Chinas” in the Japanese Cultural Imagination,

12th – 16th Centuries

Chi Zhang

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ABSTRACT

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This project explores Japan’s complex literary and cultural negotiation with China from the twelfth through the sixteenth centuries, focusing on the role of intermediary texts (dictionaries, encyclopedias, and commentaries) and the different modes of receiving and constructing Chinese culture depending on historical periods and scholarly lineages. As the larger process by which Chinese history and literature became part of the Japanese literary culture has long been studied on the assumption that there is direct textual continuity between Japanese texts (in literary Sinitic) and Chinese continental texts, the tracking down of citations, allusion, and references to Chinese source texts has commanded great scholarly attention. Yet this assumption obscures other, equally important histories – such as a popular understanding of Chinese culture, or a conceptual perception of Chinese culture, that was NOT based on direct textual continuity – that lies at the heart of this project.

The introduction outlines three modes of receiving and constructing Chinese literary culture in pre-modern Japan. One was the text-based, canonical view of Chinese history and literature, which relied almost exclusively on texts and genres that were canonized in the Nara and Heian periods state university (*daigakuryō*) – Confucian classics, Chinese official dynastic histories, and Chinese poetry. In contrast with it was a more popular, name-based understanding of Chinese culture that emerged from various intermediary genres (such as anecdotal literature, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and commentaries) both in China and in Japan. This mode of reception and construction was not based on texts so much as on what I call “cultural signs” (particularly Chinese names, well-known anecdotes, and visual cues) and required no knowledge

of the original literary Sinitic. Third was a conceptual, term-based perception, manifested in such concepts as “loyalty” and “filial piety.” Written in the same *kanji* characters, these terms served as common threads linking Chinese and Japanese literary writings on the one hand, but also took on new meanings and associations in the Japanese cultural imagination.

Chapter 1 outlines the importation of Chinese books and manuscripts in relation to the center of scholarship and the main intellectual groups up until the twelfth century. Drawing on evidence from commentaries on the *Wakan rōeishū* (*The Collection of Japanese and Chinese Poems for Recitation*, 1013) and from *The Tales of China* (*Kara monogatari*, late Heian period) on the themes of exile and loyalty, I discuss the rising interests in referencing anecdotal literature and compiling intermediaries (dictionaries, encyclopedias, and commentaries) in the twelfth century that eventually contributed to the formation of a more popular, name-based understanding of Chinese history and literature.

Chapter 2 investigates the Japanese medieval interpretations of Chinese official histories (“*Chūsei Shiki*”), which features a tension and negotiation between the canonical and the non-canonical texts and gravitates towards recurring themes, character types, and core values. In particular, I look into the themes of wisdom, virtue, loyalty, and filial piety in *A Miscellany of Ten Maxims* (*Jikkinshō*, 1252) and *The Tales of the Heike* (*Heike monogatari*, ca. 1308-1311), which were largely constructed from a relatively more classical, Tang-based perspective, in despite of the fact that Chinese Song dynasty culture had already been imported to Japan along with the introduction of Chinese Chan (J. Zen) Buddhism in the thirteenth through fourteenth centuries.

In Chapter 3, I examine the *Taiheiki* (*A Chronicle of Great Peace*, 1340s-1371), a unique text that acts as a nexus for many themes of this project. Analyzing the use of Chinese tales, maxims

and proverbs, and poetry in relation to the themes of loyalty, wisdom, righteousness, and filial piety, I show that, unlike *The Tales of the Heike*, the *Taiheiki* revealed a thriving concern with the Song culture, which involved new editions, new commentaries, and new poetic theory. I also show that a conceptual, term-based perception of Chinese culture was taking shape.

Chapter 4 explores the suddenly intensified scholarly exchange among different intellectual groups – the Zen monks, the Shintō priests, warriors, and court aristocrats – in the fifteenth through sixteenth centuries. Tracing the threads of new books and new theories in Kiyohara Nobukata's lecture notes on the *Mōgyū* (*Inquiry of the Youth*), *The Twenty-Four Filial Exemplars*, and the picture scroll (*emaki*) of the Xianyang Palace, I discuss the expansion of knowledge and audience from priests and aristocrats to influential military families and wealthy commoners in late medieval Japan, the formation of new imaginations regarding Chinese history and literature, and the final transition from a pro-Tang prospective to a Song-centered understanding of China.

In conclusion, I argue for the literary and cultural reception and construction of Chinese culture as not only a large and complex source text, in a long history of Sino-Japanese intertextuality, but as a complex cultural construction that was packaged and modified, sometimes for easy consumption, to reinforce key values (such as loyalty and filial piety), and that was readily identified even by those with limited access to literary Sinitic. By illustrating the processes by which Chinese history and literature were largely filtered through and transmitted by intermediaries into medieval Japanese literary culture, this project provides a new history of the reception of Chinese culture in the Japanese literary imagination.

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Introduction

In the history of Japanese literature, Japan's complex literary and cultural negotiation with China has long commanded great scholarly attention, either in an effort to isolate a Chinese "influence," "style," or "element" so as to avoid or emphasize its presence in Japanese literature, or in an effort to reconstruct a larger process by which Chinese history and literature became part of Japanese culture. The former treats China as a foreign space, while the latter assumes that it is a shared culture.

In defining the notion of "Japanese literature," the issue at stake centers on language and script. For quite a long time in the modern era, it was defined almost exclusively as literature written in Japanese script. More recent scholarship started to set eyes on the vast body of literature written by Japanese in Sinitic, on the textual continuity between Japanese texts (in Sinitic) and Chinese continental texts, and on the intertextuality and intertopicality among texts in Japanese script, texts by Japanese in Sinitic, and Chinese continental texts. Yet still, many angles remain unexplored. One important aspect concerns the pipes through which Chinese texts and knowledge were shaped and transmitted, the transmitters who took part in this complex process, and the formation and transformation of a multi-layered perception of Chinese literary culture, which lies at the heart of this project.

The notion of "China" as it appeared in Japanese literature is also an ongoing discourse as well as a convenient name for all the constructs that were made in Japan in relation to the many dynasties in history nowadays named as China. As I show in this project, there were always multiple Chinas in the Japanese cultural imagination, ranging from the one received through serious writings in literary Chinese to the one mediated through names and anecdotes, from the one canonized in the Nara period state university curricula to the one found in unofficial

histories and vernacular literature, and from the one characterized as a different land to the one perceived as a shared history. The “China,” or “Chinas,” was always a construct and in a state of flux. It was the Tang dynasty (618-907) culture and manuscripts as they were imported to and canonized in the Nara (710-794) and Heian (794-1185) period Japan, the Song (960-1279) and Yuan (1271-1368) dynasties cultures and books as they gradually attracted more and more attention in the Kamakura (1185-1333) and Muromachi (1336-1573) periods Japan, as well as all the coexistence and negotiation between the Tang and the Song and Yuan cultures as they were perceived and constructed in the medieval period (1185-1600) Japan.

In this project, I focus on the span from the twelfth through the sixteenth centuries, which corresponds to the span from the late Heian period through the end of the Muromachi period in Japan. In addition to being a period of successive wars and chaos that witnessed the rise of anecdotal literature, commentary tradition, and Buddhist preaching through storytelling and performance in Japan it was a period of continuous importation of Chinese books and texts from the continent that fostered new themes and new perspectives for the understanding of Japan’s complex literary and cultural negotiations with China. In this time period, a dramatic change occurred in the study of Chinese writings, including Confucian classics, Chinese history, and Chinese poetry, in terms of both by and for whom the scholarship was conducted and in what ways. If, for instance, in the Nara and early Heian periods the study of Confucian classics was primarily the work of those aristocratic scholars affiliated with the state university (*daigakuryō*), then from the mid-Heian period onwards, along with the domestic political and social changes, it became the speciality of the aristocratic scholar families (such as the Kiyohara) and Buddhist priests (later, the Gozan Zen monks in particular), which led to the privatization of texts and knowledge, and in the late medieval period the scholarly exchange among these intellectual

groups suddenly intensified, with the gradual collapse of boundaries among different scholarly lineages and the expansion of audience from aristocrats and priests to influential military families and wealthy commoners.

Moreover, the twelfth through the sixteenth centuries were a time when intermediary texts – dictionaries, encyclopedias, and commentaries – started to come to the fore and competed with the canonical source texts in the ongoing construction of the Japanese cultural imagination of China. It is also a time when the authoritative presence of the classical perspective of China, based on the study of Tang dynasty manuscripts and the tradition of aristocratic scholar families, started to break down and make some room for a more Song-centered understanding of China, which was to prevail in the early modern period Japan. This project seeks a new perspective on Japan's complex literary and cultural negotiation with China from the twelfth through the sixteenth centuries by examining the role of intermediary texts (dictionaries, encyclopedias, and commentaries) in shaping and transforming the study of Chinese writings and the knowledge of China.

I start in Chapter 1 with an overview of the center of learning and the main intellectual groups in relation to the study of Chinese writings in the twelfth century (late Heian period). In this time period, the compilation of commentaries had already become both a way of studying and a way of transmitting classical knowledge in the Heian period. Here I am inspired by scholarships on *kanbun* (texts in literary Sinitic) literacy (for instance, by Kōno Kimiko, Brian Steininger, and Jennifer Guest), on reference culture and canonization (by Haruo Shirane and Wiebke Denecke), and on the images of China in Japanese historiography (by Erin Brightwell). Drawing on evidence from commentaries on the *Wakan rōeishū* (*The Collection of Japanese and Chinese Poems for Recitation*, 1013) and from *The Tales of China* (*Kara monogatari*, late Heian

period) on the themes of exile and loyalty, I discuss the rising interests in referencing anecdotal literature and compiling intermediaries (dictionaries, encyclopedias, and commentaries) in the twelfth century that eventually contributed to the formation of a more popular, name-based understanding of Chinese history and literature.

Chapter 2 then investigates the understanding and interpretations of Chinese official histories in medieval period Japan (“*Chūsei Shiki*”), which features a tension and negotiation between the canonical and the non-canonical texts and gravitates towards recurring themes, character types, and core values. Here I am indebted to the works on commentaries and the “*Chūsei Shiki*” (especially those by Makino Kazuo and Kuroda Akira). As a reflection and reconstruction, I look into the themes of wisdom, virtue, loyalty, and filial piety in *A Miscellany of Ten Maxims* (*Jikkishō*, 1252) and *The Tales of the Heike* (*Heike monogatari*, ca. 1308-1311), which were largely constructed from a relatively more classical, Tang-based perspective, in despite of the fact that Chinese Song dynasty culture had already been imported to Japan along with the introduction of Chinese Chan (J. Zen) Buddhism in the thirteenth through fourteenth centuries.

In Chapter 3, I examine the *Taiheiki* (*A Chronicle of Great Peace*, 1340s-1371), a unique text that acts as a nexus for many themes of this project. I am inspired by the scholarship on the Chinese references in the *Taiheiki* (by Masuda Motomu and Ōsumi Kazuo), and expand on the major themes and issues by looking into another variant of the text. Analyzing the use of Chinese tales, maxims and proverbs, and poetry in relation to the themes of loyalty, wisdom, righteousness, and filial piety, I show that, unlike *The Tales of the Heike*, the *Taiheiki* revealed a thriving concern with the Song culture, which involved new editions, new commentaries, and new poetic theory. I also show a conceptual, term-based perception of Chinese culture that was

both a borrowing and a construct and imagination.

Chapter 4 explores the suddenly intensified scholarly exchange among different intellectual groups – the Zen monks, the Shintō priests, warriors, and court aristocrats – in the fifteenth through sixteenth centuries. Here I am indebted to the literature and scholarship on Zen monks (especially by Haga Kōshirō), and on the study of tales of filial piety (by Tokuda Susumu and Kuroda Akira). I am also inspired by the scholarship on the dissemination, interpretation, and vernacularization of Chinese texts outside China (by Komine Kazuaki, Kōno Kimiko, Victor Mair, and Peter Kornicki). Tracing the threads of new books and new tales in *The Twenty-Four Filial Exemplars* (Ch. *Ershisi xiao*, J. *Nijūshikō*) and Kiyohara Nobukata's lecture notes on the *Mōgyū* (Ch. *Mengqiu*, *Inquiry of the Youth*), I discuss the expansion of knowledge and audience from priests and aristocrats to influential military families and wealthy commoners in late medieval Japan, the formation of new imaginations regarding Chinese history and literature.

By illustrating the processes by which Chinese history and literature were largely filtered through and transmitted by intermediaries into medieval Japanese literary culture, this project provides a new history of the reception and construction of Chinese literary culture in the Japanese cultural imagination. I argue for the literary and cultural reception and construction of Chinese culture as not only a large and complex body of source texts, in a long history of Sino-Japanese intertextuality, but as a complex cultural construction that was packaged and modified, sometimes for easy consumption, to reinforce key values (such as loyalty and filial piety), and that was readily identified even by those with limited access to literary Sinitic.

Chapter 1 Scholarship in the 12th Century: Aristocrats and Family Learnings, Monks and Temples, and the Rise of and Reliance on Intermediaries

The Nara (710-794) and early Heian (794-1185) periods witnessed a dramatic increase in the number and the scope of subject matters of Chinese books and manuscripts imported to Japan, due to the official, intermittent dispatch of Japanese diplomatic envoys to the Chinese Sui (581-618) and Tang (618-907) courts, who were named respectively as *kenzui-shi* 遣隋使 (imperial embassies to the Sui dynasty) and *kentō-shi* 遣唐使 (imperial embassies to the Tang dynasty). In addition to government officials, the envoys were mainly made up of oversea students, who were members of the court nobility (*kuge*), and Buddhist monks. They also included descendants of continental immigrants, particularly in early times. Though most of them only stayed in China for a year or so, some remained for decades before returning to Japan.

Chinese books and manuscripts imported by these students and Buddhist monks upon their return, ranging from Confucian classics and literary anthologies to books of mathematics and technology, then formed the base of learning (*gakumon* 学問) in Japan up until at least the fourteenth century. A partial glimpse of the books imported to Japan by this time can be obtained from the *Bibliography of Books Extant in Japan* (*Nihonkoku genzaisho mokuroku* 日本国現在書目録, 891), compiled at imperial command by Fujiwara no Sukeyo 藤原佐世 (847-897), which lists around seventeen thousand volumes of Chinese books, and is still an incomplete record.¹ Inspired by what they had studied in China, these Buddhist monks not just continued to

¹ A volume count of Chinese books can be found in Yajima Genryō, *Nihonkoku genzaisho mokuroku: shūshō to kenkyū* (Tōkyō: Kyūko shoin, 1984), a fundamental study of the *Bibliography*. For a list of sources not included in the *Bibliography*, see Onogaya Keikichi, *Nihonkoku genzaisho mokuroku kaisetsukō* (Kunitachi: Kunitachi hon no kai, 1936; Tōkyō: Komiyama shuppan, 1976), 40-56. Citations refer to the 1976 edition.

import Chinese translations of Buddhist texts but also started to develop new schools of Buddhism in Japan. Saichō 最澄 (767-822), for instance, founded the Tendai school of Buddhism after his visit to the Tang court, and Kūkai 空海 (774-835) established the teachings of the Shingon school after his return to Japan. Due to their efforts, Buddhist temples started to become and remain the library and center for Buddhist studies outside the court from this time period on.

The State University and Its Decline

As the envoys were mainly composed of members of the court nobility (*kuge*) and Buddhist monks, most scholars in this time period also came from these two groups. In the court, the Japanese aristocrats founded the state university (*daigakuryō* 大学寮) in the late seventh century, the development of which was inseparable from the efforts of such overseas students as Kibi no Makibi 吉備真備 (695-775).² The university initially had two curricula – Confucian studies (*Myōgyōdō* 明経道) and mathematics (*Sandō* 算道), but soon expanded to include a law curriculum (*Myōhōdō* 明法道) and a curriculum of letters (*Monjōdō* 文章道 or *Kidendō* 紀伝道). As a result, Confucian studies began to dominate in the education for Japanese aristocratic men, while history and poetry were regarded as the two highest literary genres among the Yamato court.

The textbooks that were used in the core curricula were mainly Chinese texts. In fact, in this time period, the study of writings in literary Sinitic was so prominent that the term

² For a detailed account of Kibi no Makibi's life and learning, see Miyata Toshihiko, *Kibi no makibi* (Tōkyō: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1961). For a more focused research on the Chinese books he had brought back to Japan, see Ōta Shōjirō, "Kibi no Makibi no kanseki shōrai," *Kagami* 1 (1959): 55-58.

learning (*gakumon* 学問) almost exclusively referred to the study of writings in literary Sinitic (*kangaku* 漢学). In the core curriculum of Myōgyōdō (Confucian studies), for instance, the two required texts were the *Analects* (Ch. *Lunyu*, J. *Rongo* 論語) of Confucius and the *Classic of Filial Piety* (Ch. *Xiaojing*, J. *Kōkyō* 孝經). In the core curriculum of Kidendō (history and literary studies) were Chinese official dynastic histories and poetry anthologies, particularly the *Records of the Grand Historian* (Ch. *Shi ji*, J. *Shiki* 史記), the *Official History of the Han Dynasty* (Ch. *Hanshu*, J. *Kanjo* 漢書), the *Official History of the Later Han Dynasty* (Ch. *Hou Hanshu*, J. *Go-Kanjo* 後漢書), and the *Selections of Literature* (Ch. *Wenxuan*, J. *Monzen* 文選).³ These canonical Chinese texts took a high place in Heian aristocratic culture, providing the source for extensive allusions and references in poetic and prosaic compositions.

The state university system gradually broke down from the mid-Heian period onward, when higher education and scholarship became more and more privatized into “family learning” (*kagaku* 家学). Confucian scholars, for instance, particularly those who can achieve the rank of professor (*hakase* 博士), were mostly members from the Nakahara and the Kiyohara families, while professors of literature were limited to members from the Sugawara, the Ōe, and certain branches of the Fujiwara families.⁴

³ Haruo Shirane, “Curriculum and Competing Canons,” in *Inventing the Classics: Modernity, National Identity, and Japanese Literature*, edited by Haruo Shirane and Tomi Suzuki (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2000), 220-250. For more on the educational system in Nara period Japan, see Momo Hiroyuki, *Jōdai gakusei no kenkyū* (Tōkyō: Meguro shoten, 1947; Kyōto: Shibunkaku shuppan, 1994) and Kanda Kiichirō, *Fusō gaku shi. Geirin dansō* (Kyōto: Dōhōsha shuppan, 1987).

⁴ Shirane, “Curriculum and Competing Canons,” 220-250. For more English-language scholarships on the issue of curriculum and canonization, particularly regarding the study of *kanbun* (texts in literary Sinitic) literacy in the Heian period Japan, see Jennifer Guest, “Primers, Commentaries, and Kanbun Literacy in Japanese Literary Culture, 950-1250CE” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2013), Wiebke Denecke, *Classical World Literatures: Sino-Japanese and Greco-Roman Comparisons* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), and Brian Steininger, *Chinese Literary Forms in Heian Japan: Poetics and Practice* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Asia Center, 2017).

Monks, Temples, and Chinese Studies

In this time period, the study of these texts in literary Sinitic was mainly conducted through the copying, annotating, editing, and rebinding of them, which then formed the base of an elite, canonical view of Chinese culture among the Japanese court. To aid the reading of Buddhist sutras in Chinese, around the late eighth century, the Japanese monks invented *kunten* 訓点, or explanation marks, which they added to between the Chinese characters and lines. The way of using *kunten* then was spread to the state university and soon adopted by Confucian scholars and professors of literature in the mid-ninth century. As a result, aristocratic scholar families started to edit what they would later rely on as *shōhon* 証本 (literally, “evidential texts”), which were Japanese editions of Chinese texts, annotated with *kunten* (not always) aiming to organize and preserve existing interpretations and scholarships.⁵ On the one hand, the appearance of *kunten* necessarily facilitated the education and transmission of texts and knowledge in literary Sinitic. On the other hand, however, it also accelerated the privatization of higher education and scholarship, in the sense that *shōhon*, or Japanese editions of Chinese texts with *kunten* annotations, were to become the standard, canonical, and orthodox textbooks for teaching and for further copying.

The editing of *shōhon* by aristocratic scholar families initially centered on texts canonized in the Myōgyōdō (Confucian studies) and Kidendō (history and literary studies)

⁵ A fundamental study of texts in literary Sinitic (*kangaku*) in the medieval period is Sumiyoshi Tomohiko, *Chūsei Nihon Kangaku no kiso kenkyū: Inruihen* (Tōkyō: Kyūko shoin, 2012). Also see Guest, “Primers, Commentaries, and Kanbun Literacy,” for a more focused study of *kanbun* (texts in literary Sinitic) literacy in the Heian and medieval period Japan.

traditions, including the five Confucian classics,⁶ the *Analects*, the *Classic of Filial Piety*, the Three Histories,⁷ and the *Selection of Literature*. Later on, when education for the upper aristocracy started to be carried out largely at home with tutors, and when Confucian scholars started to give regular lectures to the royal families, the editing of *shōhon* expanded to include political compilations and treatises, such as the *Important Matters of Governance from All Types of Literature* (Ch. *Qunshu zhiyao*, J. *Gunsho chiyō* 群書治要), the *Essentials about Politics from the Zhenguan Reign* (Ch. *Zhenguan zhengyao*, J. *Jōgan seiyō* 貞觀政要), the *Models for An Emperor* (Ch. *Difan*, J. *Teihan* 帝範), and the *Pathways of Ministers* (Ch. *Chengui*, J. *Shinki* 臣軌), philosophical and literary anthologies, such as the *Laozi* (J. *Rōshi* 老子), the *Zhuangzi* (J. *Sōshi* 莊子), and the *Complete Works of Bai Juyi* (Ch. *Baishi wenji*, J. *Hakushi bunshū* 白氏文集), as well as military treatises, such as the *Three Strategies* (Ch. *Sanlüe*, J. *Sanryaku* 三略) and the *Six Secret Teachings* (Ch. *Liutao*, J. *Rikutō* 六韜).⁸

The 280th section of Sei Shōnagon's *Pillow Book* (*Makura no sōshi* 枕草子, ca. 1000), for instance, provides a revealing window on this text-mediated knowledge of Chinese Literature. “How is the snow on the Peak of the Perfume Burner?” Empress Teishi asked Sei Shōnagon on a day of heavy snow. Instead of uttering any word, the latter raised the shutters and the blind.⁹

⁶ The Five Confucian Classics 五經 refer to the *Book of Odes* (Ch. *Shijing*, J. *Shikyō* 詩經), the *Book of Documents* (Ch. *Shu jing*, J. *Shokyō* 書經), the *Book of Rites* (Ch. *Li ji*, J. *Raiki* 禮記), the *Book of Changes* (Ch. *Yi jing*, J. *Ekiyō* 易經), and the *Spring and Autumn Annals* (Ch. *Chunqiu*, J. *Shunjū* 春秋).

⁷ The Three Histories 三史 refer to the *Records of the Grand Historian* (Ch. *Shi ji*, J. *Shiki* 史記), the *Official History of the Han Dynasty* (Ch. *Hanshu*, J. *Kanjo* 漢書), the *Official History of the Later Han Dynasty* (Ch. *Hou Hanshu*, J. *Go-Kanjo* 後漢書).

⁸ Sumiyoshi, *Chūsei Nihon Kangaku no kiso kenkyū*.

⁹ 雪のいと高う降りたるを、例 (れい) ならず御格子 (みかうし) 参りて、炭櫃 (すびつ) に火おこして、物語などしてあつまりさぶらふに、「少納言よ。香炉峰 (かうろほう) の雪いかならむ」と仰せらるれば、御格子上げさせて、御簾 (みす) を高く上げたれば、笑はせたまふ。人々も「さる事は知り、

This gesture reflects the common knowledge of Chinese poetry shared by Empress Teishi and Sei Shōnagon by evoking the renowned couplets by Bai Juyi, the single most important Chinese poet in the Heian period Japan, “Hearing the bell of the Monastery of Mercy, I set my pillow upright. And raising the blind, I look at the snow on the Peak of the Perfume Burner.”¹⁰ In other words, there is no need for the author to cite the whole source; the audience is already equipped with the necessary, text-based knowledge to appreciate the suggested meanings.

Aristocratic Scholar Families and Family Learnings

As the state university (*daigakuryō*) system gradually broke down from the mid-Heian period onward, the center of scholarship in the court gradually moved to aristocratic scholar families, and each family became more and more specialized in a particular field, with Myōgyōdō (Confucian studies), Kidendō (history and literary studies), and Japanese poetry families. But within each these large divisions there were also competition and divergence among families regarding the inheritance of texts and knowledge and specializations. At the same time, temples continued to be another center of scholarship. Unlike the aristocratic scholar families, whose production of texts and knowledge mainly catered for the needs of aristocrats and royalty, the priests also provided texts and knowledge for a more general and less literate audience.¹¹ This does not mean, however, that there were no communications between the groups. On the contrary, members from these groups often exchanged texts and knowledge, which can be known from the common textual and topical references in their compositions,

歌などにさへうたへど、思ひこそよらざりつれ。なほこの宮の人にはさべきなめり」と言ふ。 *Makura no sōshi*, edited by Matsuo Satoshi and Nagai Kazuko (Tōkyō: Shōgakkan, 1997), 433-434.

¹⁰ See *Bai Juyi ji jian jiao* (Shanghai: Shanghai chubanshe, 1988).

¹¹ For an English-language introduction to the Japanese educational system, curriculum, and canons in the premodern period, see Shirane, “Curriculum and Competing Canons,” 220-250.

particularly those regarding the study of writings in literary Sinitic (*kangaku* 漢学).

Studies in this period featured the rise of and reliance on intermediary texts, namely dictionaries (*kojisho* 古辞書), encyclopedias (*ruisho* 類書), and commentaries (*chūshakusho* 注釈書).¹² On the one hand, the compilation of these intermediaries was part of scholarship, which emphasized the revisiting and reconstruction of classical texts and knowledge. On the other hand, since these intermediaries were often organized by topics and with introductory notes, they gradually became a more handy and direct source for contemporary scholars and writers. Although texts canonized in the Myōgyōdō and Kidendō traditions remained authoritative and widely referenced, these intermediaries gradually showed stronger presence, particularly in literature and popular culture.

Dictionaries, Encyclopedias, and Commentaries

The compilation of dictionaries and encyclopedias was often conducted in imitation of their Chinese precedents. Earlier Chinese dictionaries and encyclopedias, which had served as an important source of topics and tales for earlier poetic and literary compositions, now provided models for the compilation of Japanese intermediaries. In other words, Japanese intermediaries emerged as a contemporary new way of receiving and constructing Chinese literary culture – more specifically, Tang dynasty’s culture – in this period. In many cases they were also connected with beginning education. Examples included the *Yōgaku shinan sho* 幼学指南書 (*Collection of Handbooks for Children’s Study*), a topical kanbun encyclopedia, which was compiled in the late Heian period in imitation of the Tang dynasty Chinese topical encyclopedias

¹² For a theoretical approach to the medieval commentaries, see Komine Kazuaki, “Chūsei no chūshaku o yomu,” in *Chūsei no chi to gaku*, edited by Mitani Kuniaki and Komine Kazuaki (Tōkyō: Shinwasha, 1997), 11-44.

Yiwen leiju 芸文類聚 (J. *Geimon ruijū*, *Topical Collection of Literature*, 624) and *Chuxue ji* 初学記 (J. *Shogakuki*, *Record for Beginning Study*, 727). There also appeared collections of Chinese maxims and proverbs, later commonly grouped together as *kingenshū* 金言集, a subgenre of encyclopedias. Following the mid-Heian compilation of *Sezoku genbun* 世俗諺文 (*Common Sayings of Our Age*, 1007), an annotated collection of kanbun-based sayings, three more similar collections appear successively in the late Heian and early Kamakura periods – *Meibunshō* 明文抄 (*Collection of Enlightened Writings*, 1158-1246), *Gyokkan hishō* 玉函秘抄 (*Secret Collection of Jade Case*, 1169-1206), and *Kanreishō* 管蠡鈔 (*Collection of Limited Visions*, 1158-1246), all having a profound impact through the late Heian and medieval periods.¹³

The source for these Japanese encyclopedias are mainly Chinese texts - more precisely, Tang dynasty manuscripts - that have been canonized in the Myōgyōdō and Kidendō traditions, namely, Chinese official dynastic histories such as the *Records of the Grand Historian* 史記 (Ch. *Shi ji*, J. *Shiki*), Chinese literary anthologies such as the *Literary Selections* 文選 (Ch. *Wenxuan*, J. *Monzen*), and Confucian classics such as the *Analects* 論語 (Ch. *Lunyu*, J. *Rongo*). In other words, these Japanese intermediaries are still part of the classical culture, inheriting from the classical reception and construction of the Tang dynasty's culture, and relying heavily on canonical texts and text-based references. This being said, however, it is also worth noting that, as Chinese intermediaries gradually play more role in shaping the compilation of Japanese intermediaries, it is sometimes very hard to tell whether the immediate source of a specific

¹³ For an introduction to these dictionaries and encyclopedias, as well as their contextualizations and other relevant texts, see Sumiyoshi, *Chūsei Nihon Kangaku no kiso kenkyū*, 38-82.

Chinese couplet referenced in, for example, the Japanese warrior tale *The Tales of the Heike* (*Heike monogatari*, ca. 1308-1311) is the *Literary Selections* 文選 (Chinese literary anthology) or the *Topical Collection of Literature* (Chinese topical encyclopedia) or the *Meibunshō* (Japanese collection of Chinese maxims and proverbs). Therefore, what I aim to explore in this chapter is not so much to track down every single citation, allusion, or reference to their Chinese or Japanese source texts as to examine the gradual formation and transformation of the larger pool of text and knowledge according to period, genre, and cultural players.

The compilation of commentaries is another way of organizing the classical knowledge of China and introducing it to a wider audience in the late Heian and medieval period. In the premodern period, in both China and Japan, commentaries are exclusively written for canonical texts, which are mainly Confucian classics, Chinese dynastic histories, or poetry.¹⁴ The appearance of commentaries on a certain text is already itself an indication of the canonization of this text. It implies the intellectual interests shared among the scholars of the time, providing insight into the larger pool of texts and knowledge of the time. There is also a connection between commentaries and the transmission of classical knowledge to a wider and contemporary audience, sometimes children. In this sense, commentaries can serve as dictionaries or encyclopedias as well, and their target texts, accordingly, gradually become part of the introductory textbooks. This can often be seen in the case of poetry commentaries such as the commentaries on the *The Wakan rōeishū* (*The Collection of Japanese and Chinese-Style Poems for Recitation*, 1013).

¹⁴ There are sometimes, however, discrepancies between premodern China and Japan in deciding whether a text is canonical or not. *The Youxian ku* (J. *Yūsenkutsu*, *The Dwelling of Playful Goddesses*, 660-740), a Tang period tale of the unusual, for example, while never having been considered a canonical text in China, was canonized in Japan as early as in the Nara and Heian periods. On this point, I am particularly indebted to Kōno Kimiko's lectures.

Commentaries on *The Collection of Japanese and Chinese Poems for Recitation*

(*The Wakan rōeishū* 和漢朗詠集)

The Wakan rōeishū 和漢朗詠集 (*The Collection of Japanese and Chinese-Style Poems for Recitation*, 1013), a topically arranged poetry anthology, starts to be widely used in introductory education in the Kamakura period (1185-1333), and continues to show strong presence throughout the medieval period. The only text compiled in Japan, it is regarded in this time as one of the Four Primers (*shibu no dokusho*), while the other three – the *Thousand Character Classic* (J. *Senjimon*, Ch. *Qianzi wen*), the *Inquiry of the Youth* (J. *Mōgyū*, Ch. *Mengqiu*), and the *Hundred-Twenty Compositions* (J. *Hyaku nijū ei*, Ch. *Bai ershi yong*) – are all texts from China, already widely used in Japan as introductory textbooks from the mid-Heian period (10th – early 11th centuries). Unlike the *Wakan rōeishū*, which, when compiled by Fujiwara no Kintō in the mid-Heian period, was not particularly meant for this purpose, the three Chinese texts were all originally compiled specifically for children’s education.¹⁵

What makes the *Wakan rōeishū* one of the Four Primers – in other words, part of the introductory education – are certainly the common features it shares with the three Chinese texts. As Satō Michio points out, there are at least three major ones. First is that they all contain the basic knowledge and manners necessary for aristocratic society. Second is that they are all written in rhyme, and thus easy to recite and memorize. Finally, they are all accompanied by commentaries.¹⁶

The commentaries on the *Wakan rōeishū*, or *rōeichū*, first emerged in the late Heian

¹⁵ Ōta Shōjirō, “Shibu no dokusho kō,” *Rekishi kyōiku* 7, no. 7 (1959). Reprinted in Volume 1 of *Ōta Shōjirō chosakushū* (Tōkyō: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1991).

¹⁶ Satō Michio, “‘Wakan rōeishū,’ yōgakusho e no michi,” *Wakan hikaku bungaku* 36 (2006): 35-48.

period (late 11th - late 12th centuries) and continued to be produced through the medieval period. They take different formats and reveal different characters, which often have much to do with the scholarly lineages and concerns of their authors as well as the audience they are intended for. The earliest, *Rōei gōchū* (*Wakan rōeishū Ōe Commentary*), was compiled by Ōe no Masafusa (1040-1111), a member of the Ōe aristocratic scholar family, who had studied at the state university, the highest academic institution of the time. It was written in pure *kanbun* (literary Chinese), on the margin or between the lines on the old manuscript of the *Wakan rōeishū*, much more resembling a lecture or study note than a commentary.¹⁷

A good example is the following entry (no. 716) for a poem (no. 701) on “Wang Zhaojun” (*Ōshōkun*)¹⁸ in the second half of the *Wakan rōeishū*.

『和漢朗詠集』 王昭君 701
胡角一声霜後夢 漢宮万里月前腸

大江朝綱¹⁹

『朗詠江注』 716
霜字此韻要湏字也然而犯大韻作成此詩朝綱為澄景作藏枕管中而殿上人 ㄨ 欲作文時澄景稱王昭君可作由人得意竊開管得之云 ㄨ²⁰

A single blare of barbarian horn –
awake from frost-chilled dreams;

¹⁷ Haruo Shirane, “Mediating the Literary Classics: Commentary and Translation in Premodern Japan,” in *Rethinking East Asian Languages, Vernaculars, and Literacies, 1000-1919*, edited by Benjamin A. Elman (Boston: Brill, 2014): 132.

¹⁸ Wang Zhaojun was a palace lady-in-waiting of Emperor Yuan of Han. According to the *Official History of the Later Han Dynasty*, she was never acknowledged or visited by the emperor during her time in the palace, despite her exceeding beauty. In 33 BCE, the chief of the Xiongnu, Huhanye Chanyu, visited Chang’an, the Han capital, and made a request to become an imperial son-in-law. He was finally presented with five women from the palace, one of whom was Wang Zhaojun. She then departed from Chang’an, became the consort of Huhanye Chanyu, and stayed in the land of Hu until her death. I will discuss her tale in more detail later in this chapter.

¹⁹ *Wakan rōeishū*, 366.

²⁰ Volume 1 of *Wakan rōeishū kochūshaku shūsei*, 259.

the palace of Han, ten thousand miles –
heartbroken beneath the moon!

Ōe no Asatsuna²¹

Gōchū: Rhyme requires the use of character “*min*” (a smooth flow of water) instead of “*shuang*” (frost), so this poem was composed in violation of rhyme. It was composed by Asatsuna for (his son) Sumikage and stored in his pillow box. When the courtiers were about to compose poems, Sumikage claimed that *Ōshōkun* should be the topic, and was pleased to have people open the box and get the poem.²²

The brief entry from the *Gōchū* is concerned with the rhyme of *kanshi* poetry, claiming that the use of the character “frost” goes against the rhyme of this particular couplet. The language here is very concise and even coded, requiring of the audience certain basic knowledge in literary Chinese and the composition of *kanshi* poetry. It then relates an episode of the occasion when the poem was composed and presented as well as the people who were involved. However, there is no mention of the actual content of the poem.

One major commentary that is often referred to side by side with the *Gōchū* was the *Wakan rōeishū shichū* (*Private Commentary on the Wakan rōeishū*, 1161), which was compiled by monk Shingyū (birth and death dates unknown; active c. 1160-1205) as a commentary on selected couplets. Shingyū was a low-ranked aristocrat who had become a priest. Though he was not a member of the aristocratic scholar families, in his youth he had some scholarly training at the Kangakuin academy, the semi-private school (*daigaku bessō*) of the Fujiwara house, and later was affiliated with the Fujiwara family temple Kōfukuji. Probably because of his connections with both the aristocratic academy and the temple, Shingyū writes in a more anecdotal and

²¹ Translation from J. Thomas Rimer and Jonathan Chaves, trans. and annotated with an introduction, *Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing: The Wakan rōeishū* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 211.

²² All translations in this project are by myself unless noted.

explanatory way.²³

A good example of the character of the *Shichū* is the following entry (no. 169) for a poem (no. 252) on the “moon” (*tsuki*) in the first half of the *Wakan rōeishū*.

『和漢朗詠集』月 252
誰人隴外久征戎 何処庭前新別離

白居易²⁴

『私注』169

中秋月。白。漢代李將軍守胡寇。其家在隴西。又蘇武為漢使在胡地十九年。文選曰、昔為倡家女、今為蕩子婦。蕩子行不返、空床難獨守。注曰、列子曰、有人翫月遙去鄉土、遊於四方而不返也。謂之為狂蕩之人。又曰、遊士出城外。²⁵

Who's been stationed for so long
Out beyond Long-zhou?
And where's a new parting taking place
In the courtyard out front?

Bai Juyi²⁶

Shichū: The moon on the mid-autumn day. White. General Li guarded against the barbarians. His home lied to the west of Long-zhou. Also, Su Wu stayed in the land of the barbarians as a Han Dynasty envoy for nineteen years. A poem in the *Literary Selections* reads, “Once a singing girl, she is now the wife of a wanderer. The wanderer went out and has never returned. How hard it is to defend the vacant bed alone!” It is noted in the *Commentary* that, Liezi said, a person who admires the beauty of the moon, goes far away from his home, travels to the four corners of the world, and never returns can be called a wanderer. It is also said, a traveler goes out of the town.

The entry from the *Shichū* begins by noting that the topic “moon” refers specifically to the moon on the mid-autumn day. It then annotates on the geographic location “Long wai” (out beyond

²³ For a brief introduction to Shingyū and his work, see Ōta Tsugio, “Shaku Shingyū to sono chosaku ni tsuite: fu Shingafu ryakui nishu no hon'in,” *Shidō bunko ronshū* 5 (1967): 225-343.

²⁴ *Wakan rōeishū*, 140.

²⁵ Volume 1 of *Wakan rōeishū kochūshaku shūsei*, 422.

²⁶ Translation from Rimer and Chaves, trans., *Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing*, 86, adjusted for consistent pinyin spelling.

Long-zhou) in the upper verse by relating two famous Chinese figures – General Li (Li Guang, 184-119 BCE) and Su Wu (140-60 BCE) – who were stationed in Long-zhou in history and gradually became associated with this place in literature. What follows is the explanation of the poetic theme of this couplet, that is, the longing for the one in exile, which the commentary does by citing another Chinese poem on the same theme from both the *Literary Selections* (Ch. *Wenxuan*, J. Monzen) and its commentaries.

A common feature shared between Masafusa and Shingyū, between the *Gōchū* and *Shichū*, is the concern with how to appreciate and compose *kanshi* poetry, with rhymes, literary topos, and poetic associations, a common concern among the Heian aristocrats, yet they each emphasize very different aspects. If the *Gōchū* is meant to be a more rigid, scholarly handbook for *kanshi* composition, to pass down to his students the knowledge core from his own learning as well as his family's, then the *Shichū* seems to aim at a wider audience by providing a more collective encyclopedia, rich in anecdotes, maxims, and poetic themes and associations. In the sense that it indeed puts much emphasis on literary topos and poetic associations, the *Shichū* is certainly more of an extension of than a departing from the scholarly *Gōchū*, whereas at the same time, in the sense that it starts to incorporate more poetic and anecdotal associations, referencing from a variety of Chinese source texts, prepares for a wider audience from different social backgrounds who are not necessarily less educated but tend to use the commentary more as a handy encyclopedia than a serious lecture note.

Commentaries that were compiled after the *Shichū* tend to inherit and further develop this encyclopedic, anecdotal character, perhaps as a result of the more and more active participation of Buddhist priests in writing these commentaries, and of the expansion of audience to incorporate those who are not necessarily concerned with poetry composition but certainly

more interested in the names and anecdotes that were alluded in the *Wakan rōeishū*. These later commentaries cite – and more significantly, start to adapt – extensively from a variety of Chinese texts and intermediaries that were produced before or during the Tang dynasty China, including both the canonical, such as official histories and literary anthologies (as well as their commentaries, which were considered inseparable from the texts being commented on), and the non-canonical, such as anecdotal literature and encyclopedias.

A major later commentary is the *Wakan rōeishū Eisai chū* (*Eisai's Commentary on the Wakan rōeishū*, early Kamakura period), which retains the content of the *Shichū Commentary* but at the same time, by translating the *kanbun* (literary Chinese) text into a mixed style of *kanji* (Chinese graphs) and *katakana*, also transforms the text and commentary into a form of Japanese vernacular literature.²⁷ A good example is the following entry (no. 263) from the *Eisai Commentary* for a poem (no.389) on “ice (with spring ice appended)” (*kōri, haru no kōri tsuketari*) in the first half of the *Wakan rōeishū*.

『和漢朗詠集』氷付春氷 389
 胡塞誰能全使節 呼沱還恐失臣忠

相規²⁸

『永濟注』263
 此詩、上句、雪消意也。胡塞トハ、胡国也。塞ノ字ヲ、ソコトヨム。ソコトハ奥也。蘇武、漢皇ノ御使トシテ胡塞ニユキタリシニ、エヒスニ、ウチトハメラレテ、年月ヲ、ヲクリシアヒタ、エヒス、クヒ物ヲアタヘスシテ、サハニ、ヒツシヲカハセケリ。此人ノ賢忠ヲミムトナリ。蘇武、雪をクヒテ、命ヲタモチタリケレバ、此人カシコシトイヒテ、命ヲタハサリケリ。サテ、ツイ二十九年ヲヘテ、ミヤコニカヘリマヒリニケリ。漢書ニ見タリ。委ハ下卷ニアリ。今、言ハ、ユキ、キヘツキヌレバ、胡塞ニ使節ヲマホル人モ、ナニヲクヒテカ命ヲ

²⁷ Shirane, “Mediating the Literary Classics,” 134.

²⁸ *Wakan rōeishū*, 206.

存シテ、ソノ使節ヲマタクセムト云也。下句、氷积雪也。氷コトコトクトケヌレハ、呼沱ニハ、臣忠ヲウシナヒテ、カヘリテ詐偽ノモノニ処セラレナムト、ヲソルハ意也。²⁹

At the barbarian frontier, who was it
that was able to uphold the integrity of his mission?
At Hu-tuo River, one was afraid of failing
in a subject's loyalty.

(Minamoto no) Sukenori³⁰

Eisai Commentary: The theme of the upper verse of the couplet is snow melting. The barbarian frontier refers to the land of the barbarians. The character “*sai*” (frontier) can be read as “*soko*,” which means “the interior.” Su Wu was sent by the Han Emperor as an envoy to the land of the barbarians, and detained there by the barbarians. During his long stay there, the barbarians provided him no food, but asked him to herd sheep in the marshland, in order to observe his virtue and loyalty. Su Wu ate ice to save his skin. The barbarians thought that he was a virtuous man, and saved his life. Nineteen years passed, and he finally was able to return to the Han capital. This is recorded in the *Official History of the Han Dynasty* (ca. 82). A more detailed account is included in the lower volume of this commentary. Now, what this verse means is, if the snow had melted away, for the one who were sent to the barbarian land as an envoy, what else could he eat in order to save his life and uphold the integrity of his mission? The theme of the lower verse is ice thawing. It means, if the ice had completely thawed, at Hu-tuo River, one would be afraid of giving up his loyalty and becoming a deceitful person.

Written in a more vernacular style, the entry from the *Eisai Commentary* summarizes the tale of Su Wu, who was associated with the barbarian land and with the theme of exile and loyalty. It points to the *Official History of the Han Dynasty*, one of the canonical texts in the Kidendō tradition, as its original source, while at the same time also refers to its own recount in the last (*ge*) volume. By summarizing rather than citing directly from the Chinese source texts, the *Eisai Commentary* paves the way for a wider, often less educated audience. By providing a more detailed, sometimes inter-referenced account of the Chinese names and anecdotes that are alluded to in different couplets, it also can help establish or further reinforce the associations

²⁹ Volume 3 of *Wakan rōeishū kochūshaku shūsei*, 136-137.

³⁰ Translation from Rimer and Chaves, trans., *Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing*, 120, adjusted for consistent pinyin spelling.

between a particular theme and a group of Chinese names and anecdotes.

The *Eisai Commentary* points not just to the canonical texts, namely, Confucian classics, Chinese official histories, and Chinese poetry and rhymed prose. In fact, a very prominent feature of it is to refer to the non-canonical, that is, anecdotal literature and encyclopedias, as well. A good example is the following entry (no. 274) for a poem (no. 406) on “Clouds” (*kumo*) in the second half of the *Wakan rōeishū*. It is a very long entry, so I simply cite what is relevant here for convenience.

『和漢朗詠集』雲 406
漢皓避秦之朝 望礙孤峯之月 陶朱辭越之暮 眼混五湖之煙

大江以言³¹

『永濟注』274

[...] 冤魂志トイフハ、ミハ、伍員、公孫聖トイフ。吳王、伍員ヲコロシテ、胥山ノフモトニステハ、ノチニ、ソノトコロヲユクニ、アシ、スクミテ、アユハレサリケレバ、伍員カ靈ノ、スルニコソト、オソレテ、大宰嚭ニツケテイワク、ワレ、スハムコト、アタハス。汝、サキニユケ。又、コハロミニ公孫聖トヨヘ、トイヒケレバ、ミタヒ、公孫聖トヨフニ、ミタヒ、コタヘタリケリ。ソノトキニ、吳王ノイハク、蒼天々々、寡人、ソヒニ、カヘルヘケムヤ、トイヒテ、イノチヲハリヌトイヘリ。 [...] ³²

On the morning when the Han Whiteheads fled from Qin,
their view of the moon above the solitary peak was blocked;
on the evening that Fan Li withdrew from Yue,
his eyes were fogged by mists on the Five Lakes.

Ōe no Mochitoki³³

Eisai Commentary: ... In a text titled *Record of Vengeful Souls*, Wu Yuan is named as Gongsun Sheng. The King of Wu killed Wu Yuan and dumped his body over the foot of Mount Xu. Shortly afterwards, when he tried to pass that place, his knees gave away

³¹ *Wakan rōeishū*, 218.

³² Volume 3 of *Wakan rōeishū kochūshaku shūsei*, 147.

³³ Translation from Rimer and Chaves, trans., *Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing*, 124-125, adjusted for consistent pinyin spelling.

and he could not walk. He was frightened and thought that it must have been the work of the spirit of Wu Yuan, so he approached Minister Pi and said, “I cannot move forward. You go ahead, and try to call out the name Gongsun Sheng.” Minister Pi called out the name Gongsun Sheng for three times, and was answered so three times. At that time, the King of Wu said, “Heaven! Heaven! Is it that I, in the end, am not able to return?” He said so, and met his death there. ...

The abridged entry above makes reference to a text titled *Record of Vengeful Souls* (Ch. *Yuan hun zhi* 冤魂志), a collection of supernatural tales compiled by Yan Zhitui (531–ca. 591) during the Six Dynasties period (220-589) in China, which is not considered canonical in the Myōgyōdō or Kidendō traditions, but carries a strong Buddhist flavor.³⁴ In fact, it is not rare for the *Eisai Commentary* to refer to non-canonical texts. But what is more, the passage above is not even a very relevant comment on the poem itself. It relates the episode of Wu Yuan (d. 484 BCE), who was a loyal and righteous minister but killed by the King of Wu because of slander. The reason this episode is cited here is that Wu Yuan was a contemporary and rival of Fan Li (517 BCE–?), who appears in the lower verse of the couplet. Unlike Fan Li, who was first a loyal and intelligent courtier, devoted to his king, and then a wise and happy recluse, able to enjoy the beauties of nature, Wu Yuan was a tragic figure, likewise loyal and intelligent, but distrusted by his king and slandered to death by a favorite of the king. The purpose of this entry, and of the *Eisai Commentary*, thus, is not just to offer a detailed comment on the imageries or figures or other poetic elements that are central to the poem, but also to call attention to names, anecdotes, or texts that might seem peripheral to the poem but are either important knowledge of Chinese culture worthy of knowing for the reader, or simply interesting tales ready to be enjoyed.

Not much is known about Eisai, the author of the *Eisai Commentary*, but he was

³⁴ The *Record of Vengeful Souls* is listed in the monograph on bibliography of the *Book of Sui* (Ch. *Sui shu*, J. *Zuisho*, 636), the official history of the Sui dynasty (581-618), and the Buddhist encyclopedia *Forest Gems in the Garden of the Dharma* (Ch. *Fayuan zhulin*, J. *Hōon jurin*, 668).

probably a monk who was active in the early Kamakura period and the same author who compiled the *Inquiry of the Youth in Japan (Fusō Mōgyū)* and the *Private Commentary on the Inquiry of the Youth in Japan (Fusō Mōgyū Shichū)*.³⁵ Compared with the previous *Gōchū* and *Shichū*, the *Eisai Commentary* is clearly more vernacular, anecdotal, and explanatory, suggesting a wider and more popular audience who probably could not read literary Chinese and whose knowledge of Chinese culture seems to come more from famous names and anecdotes and less from classical texts and thus is more fragmentary.

The purpose of writing these commentaries is at least twofold. One is to organize and understand classical texts and knowledge, as the references in these commentaries are taken not just from canonical texts but also from their commentaries. One is to transmit and introduce them to a wider, sometimes younger or less-educated audience. Each couplet in the *Wakan rōeishū* thus becomes a small topic for collecting and organizing - and gradually for associating and constructing - the knowledge of Chinese culture. From the *Gōchū* to the *Shichū* and then to the *Eisai Commentary*, while they each have a different character, and were compiled by authors from different social strata with different concerns, together they provide a window into the gradual formation and transformation of a particular Chinese name or anecdote with which a specific theme or evaluation becomes associated.

Female Jealousy and Political Exile in *The Tales of China (Kara monogatari 唐物語)*:

The Tale of Wang Zhaojun

Chinese names and anecdotes start to form an essential part of the knowledge of classical Chinese culture in the late Heian and early Kamakura period. While in the hands of the

³⁵ For a brief introduction to Eisai and his work, see Volume 3 of *Wakan rōeishū kochūshaku shūsei*, 61.

aristocratic scholars and poets they are often referenced in a more concise and coded way, with the assumption that the audience is already equipped with the necessary knowledge of the original classical Chinese, in the hands of the priests these Chinese names and anecdotes are often related in great detail, not just by translating or adapting the original source text(s) written in literary Chinese into a more Japanese vernacular style, but by enriching them through the making of references to a wider range of intermediary and non-canonical texts such as collections of supernatural tales or unofficial histories, and through the establishing of connections between names and anecdotes that are not initially connected in the source text(s).

This being said, however, the priests were not the only ones who were interested in translating or adapting original Chinese source text(s) into a more Japanese vernacular style. Aristocratic poets and scholars also played a role, but in a more poetic and romantic way, as represented by *The Tales of China* (*Kara monogatari*, late Heian period), a collection and adaptation of twenty-seven Chinese tales, with the creation of *waka* poetry. The author was generally believed to be Fujiwara no Shigenori (1135-1187), a late Heian court official and *waka* poet, who had thirteen poems selected into the imperially commissioned *waka* anthologies. Along with his own talents in *waka* composition, his family also provided for Shigenori the necessary literary and scholarly environment to compile such a collection. His father, Michinori (1106-1160), or Shinzei, was an aristocratic Confucian scholar and Buddhist monk, who also owned a large personal library as demonstrated in the *Catalogue of the Library of Lay Priest Michinori* (*Michinori Nyūdō zōsho mokuroku*). His grandfather, Sanekane (1085-1112), was a court official and *kanshi* poet, who had studied at the state university as a *monjōshō* (student of literary studies) and became a *shinshi* 進士 (advanced scholar), and who was also the recorder

of the *Selection of Ōe's Conversations (Gōdanshō, ca. 1104-1108)*.³⁶

The Tales of China is a combination of different genres, standing in between collection of poem tales (*uta-monogatari shū*) and collection of anecdotes (*setsuwa shū*). Written in pure *wabun* (Japanese-style writing), each tale ends with a *waka* poem, and most of the tales focus on human emotional attachment or love.³⁷ In this sense, *The Tales of China* has a resemblance to collections of poem tales such as *The Tales of Ise (Ise monogatari, early Heian period)*. Yet unlike *The Tales of Ise*, *The Tales of China* places much more emphasis on female characters, on the topic of female tragic love, which may imply that the intended readers were mostly aristocratic women. Furthermore, there is often a didactic message contained in the tale, either the appreciation or lamentation of the depth of human emotions or the critique of the shortsighted views. In this regard it has some structural parallels to anecdotes in the *Collection of Tales of Times Now Past (Konjaku monogatari shū, ca. 1120)* and *A Miscellany of Ten Maxims (Jikkishō, 1252)*. In fact, there are many tales shared among these collections, each with the same character names and almost identical plot structure.

The Chinese tales collected in *The Tales of China* are all famous ones already familiar to the contemporary Japanese aristocrats. They appear in such Chinese official histories as the *Records of the Grand Historian*, the *Official History of the Han Dynasty*, the *Official History of*

³⁶ Kobayashi Yasuharu, *Kara monogatari zenshaku* (Tōkyō: Kasama shoin, 1998), reprinted as *Kara monogatari* (Tōkyō: Kōdansha, 2003), 367-368. Citations refer to the 2003 edition. For more information on the date and authorship of this collection, see Yoshida Kōichi, “*Kara monogatari wa Heian jidai no sakuhin nari*,” *Heian bungaku kenkyū* 20 (1957): 15-34, and “*Kara monogatari wa Heian jidai no sakuhin nari (ge): sakusha Fujiwara no Shigenori no sōsaku nenji ni tsuite*,” *Heian bungaku kenkyū* 21 (1958): 26-40.

³⁷ For the use of *waka* poetry in *The Tales of China*, see Komine Kazuaki, “‘*Kara monogatari*’ no hyōgen keisei,” 1987, reprinted in *Inseiki bungakuron* (Tōkyō: Kasama shoin, 2006); Mimura Terunori, “*Kankoji-dai waka kara mita chūsei ruidai shū no keifu*,” in *Shinkokinshū to Kanbungaku*, edited by Wa-Kan Hikaku Bungakkai (Tōkyō: Kyūko shoin, 1992); Inokuma Noriko, “‘*Kara monogatari*’ ni okeru sakuchū waka no isō,” *Kokubungaku kenkyū* 117 (1995): 35-45; and Sasaki Takahiro, “*Kasho to shite no ‘Kara monogatari*,” *Setsuwa bungaku kenkyū* 39 (2004): 29-39.

the *Later Han Dynasty*, and the *Book of Jin* (Ch. Jin shu, J. Shinjo, 648), all canonized in the Kidendō tradition. Nearly half of the tales can be found in the *Inquiry of the Youth* as well, which the aristocrats learn in their childhood. For the rest, many of them are related in *Complete Works of Bai Juyi* (Ch. *Bai shi wen ji*, J. *Hakushi bunshū*), one of the most popular Chinese texts at court, and are frequently referenced in court tales (*monogatari*) such as *The Tale of Genji* (*Genji monogatari*, ca. 1008), essays such as *The Pillow Book* (*Makura no sōshi*, 1002), and poetry, such as *The Collection of Japanese and Chinese-Style Poems for Recitation* (*Wakan rōeishū*, 1013).³⁸ *The Tales of China* also seems to draw from the non-canonical texts and in many cases, the latter seems a more direct source than the former. Scholars have pinned down a number of these texts, mostly encyclopedias and collections of anecdotes, as the possible source texts for *The Tales of China*, including the *Monograph on Various Matters* 博物志 (Ch. *Bowu zhi*, J. *Hakubutsu shi*, third century), the *Stories on Emperor Wu of Han* (Ch. *Han Wu gushi*, J. *Kanbu koji*, sixth century?), and the *Miscellanies of the Western Capital* (Ch. *Xijing zaji*, J. *Seikyō zakki*, ca. 283-363).³⁹ In fact, the titles and contents of most of these texts appear time and again in contemporary commentaries on the *Wakan rōeishū* as well, indicating a shared interest of the

³⁸ For an in-depth research on the connection between *The Tales of China* and these canonical texts, see Ikeda Toshio, *Nitchū hikaku bungaku no kiso kenkyū: hon'yaku setsuwa to sono tenkyo* (Tōkyō: Kasama shoin, 1974). Also see Erin Brightwell, “‘The Mirror of China’: Language Selection, Images of China, and Narrating Japan in the Kamakura period (1185-1333),” (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2014) on the images of China in Japanese historiography in relation to *The Tales of China*. In her dissertation, Brightwell provides a summary of earlier scholarships on *The Tales of China*, both in Japanese and English (see Erin Brightwell, 180-185). To avoid repetitions, in this chapter I only refer to those to which I am more indebted. In particular, Brightwell uses the tale of Wang Zhaojun as an example, which is also the subject of this chapter. While Brightwell’s emphasis lies more in the issues of language selection and images of China, here I am more concerned with the circulation and transformation of the tale as well as its themes and poetic imageries. I started this chapter without knowing hers, but while I later continued to work on it, her discussion of the “broader context of the reception and re-imagination of things Chinese,” as she puts it, also provides inspiration. Also see David Bialock, *Eccentric Spaces, Hidden Histories: Narrative, Ritual, and Royal Authority from The Chronicle of Japan to The Tale of the Heike* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), 177-216 for a discussion of the imagination of China in the medieval period Japan.

³⁹ Kobayashi, *Kara monogatari*, 378-379.

time in finding new sources and references for literary composition – in this case, encyclopedias and collections of anecdotes – and a strong connection between the *Wakan rōeishū* commentaries and *The Tales of China*.⁴⁰

The following anecdote is a representative case of the popularity and familiarity of the tales collected in *The Tales of China* to the contemporary Japanese aristocrats. It concerns the tragic encounter of Wang Zhaojun (J. Ōshōkun), a palace lady-in-waiting who lived in the Western Han Dynasty (206 BC-8 CE). The tale reads:

In olden days there was an emperor called Emperor Yuan of the Han. Among his three thousand consorts and serving women, the woman called Wang Zhaojun exceeded any other in beauty, but the many other women in the court disliked Wang, fearing that, if she were indeed to enter the emperor's personal service, they would then count for nothing.

At this time a barbarian king came to the Chinese court and requested that the emperor present him any of the three thousand ladies of the court.

As it would have been very difficult for the emperor himself to look over all these ladies, he had pictures painted of them; perhaps at someone's urging, Wang was painted so as to appear ugly. Thus the emperor bestowed Wang upon the barbarian king, who in great happiness took her home to his own country.

As she departed China, her tears of longing for her old home exceeded in volume the dew at the roadside, and her sorrow at parting from her loved ones was deeper than the depths of the remotest mountains. She continued to do nothing but wail her sorrow, although her weeping could come to no avail.

Ukiyo zo to	While knowing fully
katsu ha shirushiru	the present world is but
hakanaku mo	an exercise in vanity,
Kagami no kage wo	She relies upon the power
tanomikeru kana. ⁴¹	of the image in her mirror.

⁴⁰ For case studies on the connection between *The Tales of China* and the commentaries on the *Wakan rōeishū*, see Masuda Motomu, “*Kara monogatari no sekai: Shōshi to Rōgyoku*,” *Kokugo to Kokubungaku* 64, no. 9 (1987): 1-15; Tanaka Mikiko, “Kanshi, rōei no denshō to Ōshōkun setsuwa: ‘miru kara ni kagami no kage no tsuraki kana’ uta no haikai to henshen,” in *Inbun bungaku “uta” no sekai*, edited by Manabe Masahiro et.al (Tōkyō: Miyai shoten, 1995); and Mitta Akihiro, “‘*Kara monogatari*’ no sozai to shudai: rōeichū to no kakawari kara,” *Setsuwa bungaku kenkyū* 39 (2004): 40-50. Here I am particularly indebted to Tanaka Mikiko’s case study of Ōshōkun (Wang Zhaojun) setsuwa.

⁴¹ うき世ぞとかつはしるしるはかなくも かゞみのかげをたのみけるかな. See Kobayashi, *Kara monogatari*, 343.

Although this barbarian king was a warrior who did not understand the refinements of feeling and the sentiments of the court, his love for Wang Zhaojun's fragile beauty and the care he gave her exceeded his attention to the affairs of his kingdom. But despite this, from the day she left the old capital, each day that passed found her tears of regret undried.

This woman relied only on the pure beauty revealed in her mirror and did not know of the impurity to be found in the hearts of men.⁴²

The earliest account of Wang Zhaojun dates back to “The Biography of the Xiongnu” in *The Official History of the Han Dynasty*. It was a very brief and matter-of fact account, relating only that Zhaojun, a palace lady-in-waiting in the reign of Emperor Yuan (75-33 BCE, r. 48-33 BCE), was sent to marry Huhanye Chanyu (J. Kokan’ya zen’u), the chief of the Xiongnu, who visited the Han capital Chang’an in 33 BCE and requested to become an imperial son-in-law. So delighted with her presence, Huhanye then promised a long-lasting peaceful and friendly relation with the Han Dynasty.⁴³ *The Official History of the Later Han Dynasty*, in contrast, provides a relatively vivid and touching version of the tale. Zhaojun entered the Han palace as a lady-in-waiting for years, but was never once visited by Emperor Yuan. Sorrowful and resentful, she volunteered to be one of the five women from the palace to be presented to Huhanye Chanyu, the chief of the Xiongnu. At her departure for the land of Hu, she was summoned to court, and, for the first time, revealed her beauty to the Emperor. Startled at her exceeding beauty, the Emperor considered retracting his decision, but it was too late by then, so he regretfully sent her. After Huhanye’s death, Zhaojun requested to return, but Emperor Cheng (51-7 BCE, r. 33-7 BCE) ordered that she follow the levirate marriage customs in Xiongnu and

⁴² Translation from Ward Geddes, trans. with an introduction, *Kara monogatari: Tales of China* (Tempe, Arizona: Arizona State University, 1984).

⁴³ See *Han shu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1995), 3803-3804.

become the wife of the next Chanyu, her stepson.⁴⁴

The tale of Wang Zhaojun in *The Tales of China*, however, does not seem to derive directly from these two official histories. It is not concerned with the diplomatic relations between the Han court and the barbarians. Nor does it portray the sorrow or resentment of Zhaojun to volunteer for the marriage, or the regret of the emperor to send her. Rather, the focal point lies in an anecdote of a painting, where her marriage was due to a deceitful portrait of her.

The most likely source for the anecdote of painting is the *Miscellanies of the Western Capital*, a collection of semi-historiographical anecdotes pertaining to the Western Han capital Chang'an.⁴⁵ *The Miscellanies of the Western Capital* contains both stories of historiographical content and those belonging to the genre of supernatural stories (*zhiguai*), and is frequently cited in Li Shan's (d. 689) authoritative commentary to the *Literary Selections* and the Tang period (618-907) topical encyclopedia *Record for Beginning Study* (Ch. *Chuxue ji*, J. *Shogakuki*, 727). Perhaps because of its popularity in China, it was introduced to Japan at a very early stage and became well known and perhaps also widely read, for the references to it appeared as early as in the *Summary of the Palace Library* (*Hifuryaku*, 831), the first proto-encyclopedia produced in Japan, compiled upon the imperial orders by Shigeno no Sadanushi and others in the early Heian period,⁴⁶ and later on frequently in the *Wakan rōeishū* commentaries as well.

The tale of Wang Zhaojun in the *Miscellanies of the Western Capital* relates that, since there were so many ladies in the palace, Emperor Yuan ordered portraits of all of them in order

⁴⁴ See *Hou Han shu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1995): 2941.

⁴⁵ Here I am particularly indebted to Kobayashi, *Kara monogatari*, 341-352 for the discussion of the textual relations of the tale of Wang Zhaojun in *The Tales of China* and in other Chinese and Japanese writings.

⁴⁶ Here I borrow the term "proto-encyclopedia" from Maria Grajdian, "Translating the Other Constructing the Self: Japanese Premodern Encyclopedias and the Transculturality of Knowledge," *Analele Universitatii Crestine Dimitrie Cantemir, Seria Stiintele, Limbii, Literaturii si Didactica predarii* 1 (2013): 111 to define the *Summary of the Palace Library* (*Hifuryaku*). The translation of the title is also hers.

to decide whom to visit. While all the other ladies bribed the painter, Zhaojun alone, confident of her beauty and temperament, refused to do so. She was then painted to appear so ugly that the Emperor never once visited her. Only when summoned to court, right before her marriage to Huhanye Chanyu, was Zhaojun's true beauty revealed, but it was already too late for the Emperor to retract his decision. What figures in this tale is Zhaojun's refusal to bribe the painter, her confidence in her own beauty and temperament, and her vivid and proud personality, all in contrast with her tragic ending to be married off. This particular anecdote was so famous in the Heian period Japan that Ōe no Asatsuna (886-958), a renowned scholar and *kanshi* poet in the court, even composed a couplet on it, which was collected in the *Wakan rōeishū* (no. 702). It reads,

昭君若贈黃金賂 定是終身奉帝王

大江朝綱⁴⁷

If only Zhaojun had paid that man
the bribe of yellow gold,
certainly she'd have lived out her life
serving the emperor!

Ōe no Asatsuna⁴⁸

The reference to the bribe and the hypothetical, counterfactual result imagined in the couplet well expresses Asatsuna's sympathy for her. The allusion to the painting anecdotes also suggests that, at least for Asatsuna's generation, the *Miscellanies of the Western Capital* is far from an inaccessible text but rather has become a new source for poetic and literary inspiration.

The same anecdote of the painting, featuring the bribe to the painter, appears in other

⁴⁷ *Wakan rōeishū*, 366-367.

⁴⁸ Translation from Rimer and Chaves, trans., *Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing*, 211, adjusted for consistent pinyin spelling.

contemporary Japanese collections of anecdotes as well. In the *Collection of Tales of Times Now Past* (*Konjaku monogatari shū*, ca. 1120), for example, the tale of Wang Zhaojun relates that, when men from the land of Hu, the land of barbarians, appeared in the capital of Han, a wise minister suggested that the emperor find one of the less attractive women among the palace ladies to present to the barbarians so that they would be satisfied and go back.

How Wang Zhaojun, Consort of the Han Emperor Yuan, Went to the Land of Hu
(Volume 10, Tale 5)

...The emperor thought it a very good idea when he heard it. He decided he had better go himself to take a look at these women and make up his mind which of them to send away. Except there were such huge crowds of them that just considering the task made his head ache. And then the emperor happened upon an idea of his own: He would summon crowds of painters and let them see the women and have them paint the women's portraits, and then he would compare these portraits and pick one of the less attractive of the women to present to the men from Hu! This was his idea. So he summoned the painters and showed them the women and gave them his orders. You must paint these women as they are, he said, and then give the pictures to me. The painters began painting, and the women – saddened and distressed at the notion that they might end up the plaything of barbarians and have to go off to some distant and unknown land – began competing with one another, each trying to load her own painter more heavily with gold and silver than anyone else or to give him more of all sorts of other treasures, and the painters got so swept up in the gift giving that they painted even the uglier women in such a way as to give them an air of great beauty, and they gave these paintings to the emperor. Now among all these women there was one named Wang Zhaojun. Since her features were more beautiful than those of the other women, she figured there was really no need for her to give her painter anything at all, she would just let her beauty work its magic. So her painter didn't portray her as she really was but made her look dreadfully vulgar, and he gave this ugly painting to the emperor, who then promptly made up his mind. This woman, he announced, this woman here is the one to send!⁴⁹

⁴⁹ 卷第十 漢前帝后王照君、行胡国語第五

天皇、此ノ事ヲ聞給テ、「然モ」ト思給ケレバ、自ラ此等ヲ見テ、其ノ人ヲト定メ可給ケレドモ、此ノ女人共ノ多カレバ、思ヒ煩ヒ給フニ、思ヒ得給フ様、「数ノ絵師ヲ召テ、此ノ女人共ヲ見セテ、其ノ形ヲ絵ニ令書メテ、其レヲ見テ、劣ナラムヲ胡国ノ者ニ与ヘム」ト思ヒ得給テ、絵師共ヲ召テ、彼ノ女人共ヲ見セテ、「其ノ形共ヲ絵ニ書テ持参レ」ト仰セ給ケレバ、絵師共此レヲ書ケルニ、此ノ女人共、夷ノ具ト成テ、遥ニ不知ヌ国□行ナムズル事ヲ歎キ悲テ、各我モ我モト絵師ニ、或ハ金銀ヲ与ヘ、或ハ余ノ諸ノ財ヲ施シケレバ、絵師、其レニ耽テ、弊キ形ヲモ吉ク書成シテ持参タリケレバ、其ノ中ニ王照君ト云フ女人有リ。形チ美麗ナル事、余ノ女ニ勝タリケレバ、王照君ハ、我ガ形ノ美ナルヲ憑テ、絵師ニ財ヲ不与ザリケレバ、本ノ形ノ如クニモ不書ズシテ、糸ト賤氣ニ書テ持テ参リケレバ、「此ノ人ヲ可給

Like in Asatsuna's couplet and the Chinese source text *Miscellanies of the Western Capital*, here again, it is precisely Zhaojun's own refusal to bribe the painter, due to her confidence in her beauty and temperament, that caused her to be painted to appear ugly and eventually led to her tragic ending to be sent away.

In *The Tales of China*, however, the painting anecdote gains a new perspective: it is no longer her refusal to bribe the painter but rather "someone's urging" that should be blamed for the cause of her exile. The tension thus shifts from that between Zhaojun and the painter to that between her and other palace ladies, which echoes the opening passage where Zhaojun was disliked and feared by the many other women in the court because of her exceeding beauty, and is very reminiscent of the first chapter in *The Tale of Genji* where Lady Kiritsubo was resented by the other ladies in the palace. As a result, the decisive role of the painter is reduced – his deceitful portrait of Zhaojun is not necessarily out of his own will; instead, female jealousy becomes a more decisive factor and a newly established motif.

The new establishment of the motif of female jealousy makes Wang Zhaojun a more innocent and piteous figure, which forms a contrast with her vivid and proud character in the *Miscellanies of the Western Capital*, or in the *Collection of Tales of Times Now Past*, and this new figuration of her is further reinforced in the *waka* and the closing message, where the

ベシ」ト被定ニケリ。

Volume 2 of *Konjaku monogatari shū*, edited by Ikegami Jun'ichi (Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 1999), 300.

According to Komine Kazuaki's notes, the source for this story is *Toshiyori zuinō* (early twelfth century), a poetic treatise by Minamoto Toshiyori (1055-1129), but it is very likely that other texts were consulted as well. Similar tales can be found in *Utsubo monogatari*, *Genji monogatari*, *Kara monogatari*, *Hōbutsushū*, *Waka dōmōshō*, *Kara kagami*, *Hyakuei waka*, *Kyōkunshō*, *Engyō-bon Heike monogatari*, *Soga monogatari*, *Saikyō zakki*, and *Monzen*. See *Konjaku monogatari shū*, 299.

Translation from *Traditional Japanese Literature: An Anthology, Beginning to 1600*, edited by Haruo Shirane (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 540-541 by Michael Emmerich.

narrator sighs that she “relies upon the power of the image in the mirror (*kagami no kage wo tanomikeru kana*)” and does “not know of the impurity to be found in the hearts of men.” While the “impurity to be found in the hearts of men” certainly echoes the motif of female jealousy, “(the power of) the image in the mirror (*kagami no kage*),” is another new motif that cannot be found in the three Chinese source texts above, or in *Collection of Tales of Times Now Past*, but was very popular in *waka* poetry and often associated with the image of Wang Zhaojun. In other words, the author of *The Tales of China* does not just turn to new, more intermediary sources – namely, encyclopedias and collections of anecdotes – for literary inspiration, but at the same time also relates the tales in a way that they could be enjoyed from multiple dimensions with the necessary knowledge in the motifs and themes in *waka* and *kanshi* poetry.

A good example of the motif of “the image in the mirror,” for example, is the following poem (no. 729) in *Tametada's First Hundred-Poem Sequences* (*Tametada-ke shodo hyakushu*, ca. 1134).

くやしくもかがみのかげをたのみつつちじのこがねをつくさざりける⁵⁰

I feel regretful for relying solely on my image in the mirror, and not presenting the painter with all the gold that I have.

The mood is regret and sorrow, but what is regretted here is not just that Zhaojun relied solely on her image in the mirror, as in *The Tales of China*, but that she failed to bribe the painter, as in the *Miscellanies of the Western Capital* and in Asatsuna’s poem mentioned earlier.

The mirror, however, reflects not just beautiful appearances. In other poems, it reflects

⁵⁰ Ienaga Kaori, *Tametada-ke shodo hyakushu zenshaku* (Tōkyō: Kazama shobō, 2007), 470-471. I am indebted to Ienaga’s annotations.

withered beauty as well, such as that in the poem (no. 730) that follows in the same *Tametada's First Hundred-Poem Sequences* and that in another poem (no. 1018) in the *Later Collection of Gleanings of Japanese Poems (Goshūi wakashū, ca. 1086)*.

なげくまにかがみのかげぞかわりゆくこやえにかけるすがたなるらん⁵¹

In grief and sorrow, my image in the mirror keeps withering. It must have become an image that resembles that in the painting.

見るからに鏡の影のつらきかなかからざりせばかからましやは⁵²

It is painful to look at my image in the mirror. If I had not come to this barbarian land, would I have appeared like this?

The two poems both portray Zhaojun's withered image in the mirror during her time in the barbarian land, but one alludes to the painting anecdote, associating the withered image in the mirror with that ugly image in the painting, and one laments that the direct cause for her withered image in the mirror is her being married off to the barbarian land. The mood is consistent: grief, sorrow, and pain.

The emphasis on Zhaojun's withered beauty as it is reflected in the mirror or the painting may have to do with her representations in *kanshi* poetry. In *kanshi* poetry, when Zhaojun's appearance is portrayed, in most cases the emphasis is on her beauty gradually exhausted by the harsh climate in the barbarian land. A poem in the *Collection for the Governing of the State (Keikokushū, ca. 827)*, for example, concerns her withered beauty in the mirror.

⁵¹ Ienaga, *Tametada-ke shodo hyakushu zenshaku*, 471-472. I am indebted to Ienaga's annotations.

⁵² *Goshūi wakashū*, annotated by Kubota Jun and Hirata Yoshinobu (Tōkyō: Iwanami shoten, 1994), 328. I am indebted to Kubota and Hirata's annotations.

一朝辭寵長沙陌 萬里愁聞行路難
 漢地悠悠隨去盡 燕山迢迢猶未殫
 青虫鬢影風吹破 黃月顏粧雪點殘
 出塞笛聲腸斷絕 銷紅羅袖淚無乾
 高巖猿叫重壇苦 遙嶺鴻飛隴水寒
 料識腰圍損昔日 何勞每向鏡中看⁵³

Once departing from the emperor's favor, from the county of Changsha,
 in sorrow she heard that the long journey is rough and difficult.
 Faraway she has left the land of the Han behind –
 yet the Yan Mountains are still distant.
 Her hair, as green as the caterpillar, is withered by the wind;
 while her makeup, as bright as the yellow moon, is sprinkled by the snow.
 Passing through the barrier, she feels heartbroken as the sound of the flute.
 Her sleeves, whose red color is faded by her tears, never become dry.
 On the high rocks the ape is crying, the mist deep and unpleasant –
 over the distant peak the swan goose is soaring, the Long River chilly.
 Her waist must have become thinner than ever –
 she knows it, no need to look at her appearance in the mirror.

The green caterpillar and the bright yellow moon serve as visual similes for Zhaojun's beautiful hair and makeup. Yet her beauty is withered by the wind and the snow, her grief aroused and accompanied by the sound of the flute, the crying of the ape, and the soaring of the swan goose, all of which are imageries that suggest wilderness and loneliness. The landscape, too, is desert and cold: the mist appears deep and unpleasant, the river chill. The natural imageries and the landscape both serve as a foil to Zhaojun's solitude and emaciation. The poem ends by claiming that it is easy to know her withered appearance even without looking into the mirror, implying a strong connection between female appearance and mirror, perhaps because mirror is typically coded as female and portrayed an object of intimacy and everyday life for women.

If what the mirror reflects is her real daily life in which her beauty irrevocably fading away, then what the painting reflects is either a deception, untrue to Zhaojun's actual appearance,

⁵³ *Keikokushū*, from Volume 8 of *Gunsho ruijū* (Tōkyō: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1928-1934), 530.

or an ironic foretelling in retrospect, suggesting that Zhaojun would eventually exhaust her beauty and become what the painting portrays her to be. The former is well represented in a poem (no. 727) in *Tametada's First Hundred-Poem Sequences*, and the latter in a couplet (no. 697) in the *Wakan rōeishū*, composed by the mid-Tang poet Bai Juyi (772-846).

おもひきやすみえにわれをかきなしてはなのすがたをけたるべしとは⁵⁴

How can one think of it! In ink painting, my dazzling beauty was deliberately portrayed to appear in nowhere.

愁苦辛勤顛顛尽 如今却似画图中

白居易⁵⁵

With grief and pain, with bitterness,
she's withered quite away:
now, alas, she really looks
as she did in that painting!

Bai Juyi⁵⁶

Unlike the mirror, which constantly reflects Zhaojun's actual appearance in accordance with time, the painting never presents her in the here and now. In the *waka* poem, the poet, assuming Zhaojun's voice, laments the deliberate concealing of her dazzling beauty in the painting. In the *kanshi* couplet, the poet mourns the unfortunate, ironic reversal – after many years of life in the barbarian land, Zhaojun's appearance now becomes almost identical with what she looked like in the painting. In other words, it is the reality now that “portrays” the painting, not vice versa.

As discussed above, the motifs of female jealousy and “the power of the image in the mirror” are, on the one hand, the inventions of *The Tales of China* in regard to the tale of

⁵⁴ Ienaga, *Tametada-ke shodo hyakushu zenshaku*: 469-470. I am indebted to Ienaga's annotations.

⁵⁵ *Wakan rōeishū*, 364.

⁵⁶ Translation from Rimer and Chaves, trans., *Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing*, 210.

Zhaojun, given that they are not to be found in either earlier Chinese source texts or contemporary Japanese rewriting of the tale, and, on the other hand, *not* the inventions of *The Tales of China*, for they are actually deeply rooted in the tradition of Japanese *monogatari* (court tales), *waka*, and *kanshi* in representing the image of Zhaojun. In other words, the tale of Wang Zhaojun in *The Tales of China*, and by extension *The Tales of China* itself, calls for more nuance when it is read intertextually and intertopically with other literary genres and texts.

In the same way, in terms of literary themes, the two most representative ones in the tale of Wang Zhaojun in *The Tales of China* – the nostalgic feeling for the Han capital and the sorrow at parting – are not pure inventions of this collection but have long been portrayed in *waka* and *kanshi* poetry as well. While the former is often associated with tears, the dew, the moon, and clouds, and the latter with the wind, the frost, the mountains, and the desert landscape, in many cases these two themes are intertwined with each other, and so are the imageries that they share. For instance, the depiction in *The Tales of China*, “her tears of longing for her old home exceeded in volume the dew at the roadside,” is undoubtedly based on a poem (no. 1016) in the *Later Collection of Gleanings of Japanese Poems*.

なげきこし道の露にもまさりけりなれにし里を恋ふるなみだは⁵⁷

My yearning tears, shed for the dear old village, were even more than the dew on the roadside, which I had passed in grief.

In *waka* poetry, the dew is often associated with ephemeral existence such as flowers or life, and sometimes used as the simile for tears. Here in the poem, the dew on the roadside symbolizes the

⁵⁷ *Goshūi wakashū*, annotated by Kubota Jun and Hirata Yoshinobu, 328. I am indebted to Kubota and Hirata’s annotations.

tears at parting, which is also connected with the longing for the old home. In addition to tears and the dew, the imageries of the moon and clouds appear frequently as well, such as in the following poem (no. 724) in *Tametada's First Hundred-Poem Sequences* (ca. 1134).

こころにもあらぬ雲井にきてみれば月ばかりこそかはらざりけれ⁵⁸

Unwillingly I arriving in the land of clouds (the land that is remote from home), only the moon has never changed.

Typically, “the land of clouds” (*kumoi*) is a word association (*engo*) of “the moon” (*tsuki*) in *waka* poetry, and they both may indicate solitude, loneliness, or longing. In this case, they also represent geographical distance and isolation: once arriving, there is no way for her to return. The imagery of the moon is essential. On the one hand, the moon consoles her heart, as it is the same moon up which she used to gaze when she was in the Han palace, and the only natural feature of the landscape that remains familiar to her. On the other hand, the moon deepens her sorrow, as the contrast between the only familiar and the other all changed always evokes solitude and loneliness in one's heart.

The imagery of the moon is also persistent in *kanshi* poetry. Earlier representations include the following poem (no. 62) in the *Collection of Beauties among the Literary Flowers* (*Bunka shūreishū*, ca. 827).

弱歳辭漢闕 含愁入胡關 天涯千萬里 一去更無還
沙漠壞蟬鬢 風霜殘玉顏 唯餘長安月 照送幾重山⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Ienaga, *Tametada-ke shodo hyakushu zenshaku*: 467-468. I am indebted to Ienaga's annotations.

⁵⁹ *Bunka shūreishū*, from Volume 8 of *Gunsho ruijū* (Tōkyō: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1928-1934), 478.

At a young age, she departs the Han palace,
 and passes through the barrier of the Hu in sorrow.
 Where she arrives is the end of the world, thousands of *li* away;⁶⁰
 once leaving for, there is no way to return.
 The desert withers her black hair;
 the wind and the frosts fade her fair complexion.
 Only the moon that shines above Chang'an –
 illuminates the mountains, seeing her off.

The poem features a contrast between the imagery of the moon and other natural imageries.

While the moon is the only imagery here that can bridge between Chang'an, the Han capital, and the land of the barbarians, other natural imageries – the desert, the wind, and the frost – are all characterized as being exclusive to the barbarian land and the very reason for Zhaojun's withered beauty. The same antithesis also appears in the poem (no. 63) that follows in the same collection.

虜地何遼遠 關山不忍行 魂情還漢闕 形影向胡場
 怨逐邊風起 愁因塞路長 願為孤飛雁 歲歲一南翔⁶¹

How distant and far the barbarian land is,
 that no one can bear to pass through the barriers and mountains.
 Thought her heart and soul yearns for the return to the Han palace,
 her body alone can only head for the land of Hu.
 Her resentment is raised by the frontier wind,
 her sorrow endless, caused by the long-lasting road.
 Her only wish is to become a lonely wild goose,
 so that annually she could fly south (to her home).

In the poem, what bridges between the Han capital and the land of the barbarian land is the imagery of a lonely wild goose. A migratory bird, the wild goose in poetry is often associated with the messenger⁶² or represents the person in exile who yearns for return. Here, however, the

⁶⁰ Approximately, 1 *li* = 0.5 km.

⁶¹ *Bunka shūreishū*, 478.

⁶² The association between the wild goose and the messenger originally derives from the biography of Su Wu (J.

wild goose becomes an object of admiration for Zhaojun, because it can fly annually back to the Han capital. In this sense, the imagery of the wild goose has the same function with that of the moon, for they both are imageries shared between the two lands and thus arouse the same nostalgic feeling for Zhaojun. In contrast with the imagery of the wild goose is that of the frontier wind, an indication of harsh climate and life in exile, which belongs exclusively to the barbarian land.

Later representations of the moon, more contemporary to the time of *The Tale of China*, include the following poem (no. 701) by Ōe no Asatsuna (886-958) in the *Wakan rōeishū*.

胡角一声霜後夢 漢宮万里月前腸

大江朝綱⁶³

A single blare of barbarian horn –
awake from frost-chilled dreams;
the palace of Han, ten thousand miles –
heartbroken beneath the moon!

Ōe no Asatsuna⁶⁴

In the poem, the frost and the barbarian horn are categorized as exclusive to the barbarian land, while the moon connects the barbarian land with the Han capital. Frost is an imagery that is often associated with autumn. Here it chills Zhaojun's dreams, which are probably dreams about her past life in the palace of Han or in her old home. Awakening from such dreams suggests the present,

Sobu, 140-60 BCE) in *The Official History of the Han Dynasty*. According to the biography, Wu was a minister during China's Han dynasty. He was commissioned by Emperor Wu to serve as an ambassador to the Xiongnu, but was detained and forced to capitulate. The Xiongnu even faked Wu's death to the Han court. After nineteen years, another ambassador from the Han dynasty happened to know that Wu was still alive. In order to extricate Wu, he made up a story to the chief of the Xiongnu, claiming that the Han emperor had shot down a wild goose in his garden to whose foot a letter from Wu was tied and thus realized that Wu was still alive. As a result, the Xiongnu released Wu; he was able to return to the Han capital after nineteen years of detention. I will discuss his tale in more detail later in Chapter Two.

⁶³ *Wakan rōeishū*, 366.

⁶⁴ Translation from Rimer and Chaves, trans., *Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing*, 211.

the reality of being in a remote land, so the frost, which chills her dreams and wakes her up, both connects and separates the past and the present, the dreams and reality. Similar is the imagery of the moon. Although it is not necessarily associated with a particular season, but rather a representation of things not ever changed or spatially remote and unapproachable, it is also the same moon that Zhaojun once gazed upon when she was still in the palace of Han, and thus connects and separates the past and the present, the barbarian land and the capital of Han. Perhaps because exile is such a touching topic inviting sympathy, and the yearning for the old capital is such a common literary motif shared between cultures, the tale of Wang Zhaojun, as well as Asatsuna's couplet on her, is often alluded to in other contemporary court tales (*monogatari*) and later warrior tales (*gunki-mono*) too. In *The Tale of Genji*, for example, it is referenced in the chapter of *Suma*, where Genji mourns for Zhaojun's tragic exile and her parting from those she loved: "His thoughts went to that lady long ago, sent off to the land of Hu, and he wondered what *that* was like, to send away one's only love; the thought was so chillingly real that he sang 'awake from frost-chilled dreams.'"⁶⁵

As discussed above, the two most representative themes in the tale of Wang Zhaojun in *The Tales of China* – the nostalgic feeling for the Han capital and the sorrow at parting – are persistent in *waka* and *kanshi* poetry as well. In poetry, these two themes are often portrayed through an antithesis between life in the barbarian land and memory of the Han capital, metaphorized through the extensive use of contrastive natural imageries. For instance, life in the barbarian land is characterized by harsh climate and hard living conditions: frontier wind, frost,

⁶⁵ 昔胡の国に遣はしけむ女を思しやりて、ましていかなりけん、この世にわが思ひきこゆる人などをさやうに放ちやりたらむことなど思ふも、あらむことのやうにゆゆしうて、「霜の後の夢」と誦じたまふ。
Genji monogatari, edited by Abe Akio, et al. (Tōkyō: Shōōgakkan, 1994), 208.
Translation from Royall Tyler, ed. and trans., *The Tale of Genji: Abridged* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), 245, with minor adjustments.

and desert, whereas the antithesis of it, memory of the Han capital, is recalled by natural imageries shared across geographical distances: the moon and the wild goose. The antithesis between the two then helps set off Zhaojun's nostalgic feeling toward the Han capital and her sorrow at parting.

While the incorporation of the tale of Wang Zhaojun into *The Tales of China* indicates the popularity and familiarity of the tale to the contemporary Japanese aristocrats, which is made possible by the many and varied accounts of her in both official and unofficial histories, the intertextual and intertopical negotiation of the tale with its representations in other literary genres and texts provides insights into the shared knowledge and understanding of Chinese female characters as well as the theme of exile and longing for the old home. In this sense, *The Tales of China* is not just a collection of tales pertaining to China but also a collection of tales pertaining to the constructed China in the Japanese cultural imagination.

Conclusion

As shown in the case of the *Wakan rōeishū* commentaries and the *Tales of China*, the mid- and late Heian period saw the emergence of a more popular, sign-based reception and construction of Chinese literary culture. Constructed by scholars, professors, and priests for a wider, less educated audience, the popular understanding of Chinese high culture is based not so much on texts as on anecdotes, often supplemented by visuals and oral performance as well. This mode of reception and construction relies more on what I call “cultural signs,” particularly Chinese names, well-known anecdotes, and concepts and terms (such as “loyalty” and “filial piety”), requiring no knowledge of the original classical Chinese. I hope to show that these names represent the very core of the Japanese popular knowledge of Chinese culture. In the

popular imagination, for example, the reference to Su Wu (140-60 BCE), a Chinese exile of nineteen years during the Han Dynasty, no longer points to *The Official History of the Han Dynasty*. Instead it points to an anecdote in which Su sent a message to the Han emperor to proclaim his loyalty and longing for home by attaching a letter to the foot of a wild goose. The anecdote was widely known and did not require knowledge of the original classical Chinese.

This popular, sign-based reception and construction of Chinese literary culture flourishes also has much to do with the decline of aristocratic power and the expansion of readership of a wider and less educated audience. As the preservation and transmission of elite culture became increasingly difficult, efforts were made to compile commentaries and digests that would aid in the transmission of the elite canon. These intermediary texts (encyclopedias, miscellanea, and commentaries) helped to rework the elite classical knowledge of Chinese culture into a more popular, anecdotal and sign-based knowledge of Chinese literary culture, which provided rich models for literary and visual adaptation.

Chapter 2 The Popularized Classics in the 13th – 14th Centuries: Chinese Histories and Japanese Anecdotal Literature

In the late Heian and Kamakura period (late 12th – mid-14th centuries), there appeared a tendency for Japanese authors and compilers to turn to more intermediary and non-canonical sources, usually Chinese collections of supernatural tales or unofficial histories, to look for new tales and knowledge of China. In comparison with those canonized in the Myōgyōdō (Confucian studies) and Kidendō (history and literary studies) traditions, which were written in literary Sinitic and required higher literacy, these intermediary and non-canonical texts were more readable and easier to access, and often contained interesting accounts and associations that could not be found in the canonical texts. In fact, they were so popular and widely consulted that even anecdotes and sayings derived (sometimes exclusively) from them were often considered to originate from canonical texts. This is particularly true for historical figures and events.

This being said, however, it does not mean that texts canonized in the Myōgyōdō and Kidendō traditions, in particular, Chinese official histories – represented by the *Records of the Grand Historian* (Ch. *Shi ji*, J. Shiki) – had lost their place. On the contrary, they became both the mark of authority, as they were often referenced as an indication of “true” history that could be relied upon, and the convenient, all-inclusive name for all Chinese source texts, canonical or not, as they the canonical texts were sometimes treated quite loosely as an open source for literary imagination and adaptation, even to the extent that it blurred the fact that, in actuality, it was the intermediary and non-canonical sources that played the decisive role in providing references and inspirations.

Chinese Official Histories and Japanese Medieval Interpretations (“*Chūsei Shiki*”)

In order to distinguish between the real Chinese official histories and the intermediary and non-canonical sources claimed to be “Chinese official histories,” scholars has termed the latter “*tsūzoku Shiki*” (the popular or commoner *Records of the Grand Historian*) or “*Chūsei Shiki*” (the medieval *Records of the Grand Historian*).¹ The formation of this “*tsūzoku Shiki*” or “*Chūsei Shiki*” was inseparable from the new interest in finding new tales and knowledge of China that occurred in the late Heian period. Originally these intermediary and non-canonical sources were mainly Chinese encyclopedias, collections of supernatural tales, and unofficial histories, but they soon expanded to incorporate Japanese commentaries, encyclopedias, and anecdotal literature as well, revealing a strong interest in the medieval period in re-inventing and re-imagining older tales and knowledge of Chinese culture.

This “*Chūsei Shiki*” complex is not simply a pool of intermediary or non-canonical texts to be held at least of equal importance to the original, canonical ones. It is also a type of scholarship and learning that places the same, if not more, emphasis on the derivatives than the original, and in many cases mixes the two in order to formulate a larger, more inclusive pool of

¹ I am deeply indebted to the notion of “*Chūsei Shiki*,” which was first brought up by Kuroda Akira in his study of the negotiation between medieval anecdotal literature (*setsuwa*, or anecdotes, and *gunki-mono*, or warrior tales) and writings in literary Sinitic (*kanseki*). The term was named to match the notion of “*Chūsei Nihongi*” in the study of Heian and medieval periods commentaries on the *Nihon shoki* (*Chronicles of Japan*, 720). Kuroda uses the term “*Chūsei Shiki*” to refer to the intermediary textual world and interpretations of introductory textbooks (*yōgakusho*), commentaries (*chūshakusho*), and encyclopedias (*ruisho*), particularly the “Four Primers and Three Commentaries,” which became a more immediate source of tales and knowledge about Chinese literature and history. See Kuroda Akira, *Chūsei setsuwa no bungakushiteki kankyō* (Ōsaka-shi: Izumi shoin, 1987). Here I borrow the term “*Chūsei Shiki*” to point to not just this intermediary textual world but also the larger process of knowledge production and reconstruction. In many cases the term “*tsūzoku Shiki*,” brought up by Makino Kazuo, can be considered an equivalent of “*Chūsei Shiki*,” but it places more emphasis on the process of popularization and vernacularization. See Makino Kazuo, “‘*Heike monogatari*’ Kan-koji no shūten kenkyūshi: ‘tsūzoku Shiki,’ iwayuru ‘Chūsei Shiki’ o jiku ni,” in *Heike monogatari no seisei*, edited by Yamashita Hiroaki (Tōkyō: Kyūko shoin, 1997), 129-148, and *Engyō-bon “Heike monogatari” no setsuwa to gakumon* (Kyōto-shi: Shibunkaku shuppan, 2005). For “*Chūsei Nihongi*,” see Itō Masayoshi, “Chūsei Nihongi no rinkaku: *Taiheiki* ni okeru Urabe Kanekazu setsu wo megutte,” *Bungaku* 40, no. 10 (1972): 28-48 and Kōnoshi Takamitsu, “Kodai tennō shinwa no kansei,” *Kokugo to Kokubungaku* 73, no. 11 (1996): 1-14.

text and knowledge, shared among different social groups and scholarly lineages.

Character Types, Recurring Themes, and Core Values

A prominent feature of Chinese references in medieval Japanese anecdotal literature (*setsuwa*) is that they rely heavily on character types. The most conspicuous Chinese character types are loyal/disloyal ministers, benevolent/bad monarchs, and political exiles, while other common Chinese types include recluses, immortals, and beautiful women. The most striking example of this typological interest is the frequent use of *kyōmyō* 交名, or lists of names, in which Chinese figures are mentioned not as individuals but as examples of a common type, which may be compared or contrasted to a specific Japanese historical figure.² In the opening passage of the *Heike*, for instance, Zhao Gao 趙高 (J. Chōkō, ?-207 BCE), Wang Mang 王莽 (J. Ōmō, 45 BCE-23 CE), Zhu Yi 朱伊 (J. Shui, ?-257), and An Lushan 安祿山 (J. Anrokuzan, 703-757) are mentioned as examples of corrupt ministers from different dynasties of China to be compared with Taira no Masakado 平将門 (?-940, Fujiwara no Sumitomo 藤原純友 (?-941), Minamoto no Yoshichika 源義親 (?-1108), Fujiwara no Nobuyori 藤原信頼 (1133-1159), and Taira no Kiyomori 平清盛 (1118-1181), who are considered their Japanese equivalents. It reads,

Long ago in a different land, Zhao Gao of the Qin dynasty in China, Wang Mang of the Han, Zhu Yi of the Liang, and An Luhan of the Tang all refused to be

² I am inspired by Ōsumi Kazuo's discussion of the use of *kyōmyō*, or lists of names, in the *Taiheiki*, especially by his exploration of a preference for particular dynasties and particular people thereof that the author of the *Taiheiki* made when referencing Chinese history. See Ōsumi Kazuo, "'*Taiheiki*' to ōraimono," in *Chūsei Rekishi to bungaku no aida* (1993; Tōkyō: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2011), 204-207. I am also deeply indebted to Haruo Shirane for his comments on the use of Chinese names and events in Japanese literature.

governed by former sovereigns. Pursuing every pleasure, deaf to admonitions, unaware of the chaos overtaking the realm, ignorant of the sufferings of the common people, before long they all alike met their downfall.

More recently in our own country there have been men like Masakado, Sumitomo, Gishin, and Nobuyori, each of them proud and fierce to the extreme. The tales told of the most recent of such men, Taira no Kiyomori, the lay priest of Rokuhara and at one time the prime minister, are beyond the power of words to describe or the mind to imagine.³

At the same time, a number of recurrent themes frequently recur in relation to these Chinese references in medieval Japanese warrior tales, or chronicles: loyalty/betrayal, filial piety, impermanence, immortality, moral integrity, tragic love, benevolent/bad rulership, devotion to the arts, longing for home, and military cunning, to name just the most prominent. Moreover, many of these recurring themes are popular in a wide variety of Japanese genres, and the four most prominent of these recurring themes are tragic love, political exile, loyalty, and filial piety. Female tragic love and political exile are two very prominent themes in Heian aristocratic literature, carrying with them the aura of court culture, but they also become very popular in medieval samurai culture. Loyalty and filial piety, though sometimes appearing in Heian court literature, are two dominant themes in medieval and early modern popular culture, often related to themes such as bravery, immortality, moral integrity, and good rulership.

The topic of tragic love is particularly important in Japanese court literature, and forms the basis for many literary references to Chinese female figures. The love story between the Emperor and Lady Kiritsubo in *The Tale of Genji* is deliberately made to echo that between Emperor Xuanzong of Tang 唐玄宗 (J. Tō no Gensō, 685-762) and Consort Yang 楊貴妃 (J. Yōkihi, 719-756) through allusion to and citations from *Song of Everlasting Sorrow* (Ch.

³ Translation from Burton Watson trans., *The Tales of the Heike*, edited with an introduction by Haruo Shirane (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 9.

Changhen ge, J. *Chōgonka* 長恨歌), the Chinese poet Bai Juyi's most renowned poem in Heian period Japan. In addition to Consort Yang, Chinese female figures who are often associated with the topic of tragic love also include Lady Li 李夫人 (J. Rifujin, 141-87 BCE), the lady of Shangyang 上陽人 (J. Jōyōjin), and Consort Yu 虞姬 (J. Guki, ?-202 BCE), to name just a few. Even in the medieval warrior tales, or chronicles, where samurai replace aristocrats as protagonists, these Chinese female figures continue to show a strong presence.

Political exile, often intertwined with the longing for the old home, is another recurrent topic in Japanese literature associated with Chinese figures. Su Wu 蘇武 (J. Sobu, 140-60 BCE), Li Ling 李陵 (J. Riryō, ?-74 BCE), and Wang Zhaojun 王昭君 (J. Ōshōkun, 50 BCE-?) are perhaps the most popular Chinese figures referenced in these Japanese stories. They often appear together as a group, yet each represents a different character type. Wu is the embodiment of moral integrity, loyal to his mission regardless of being a captive for nineteen years. Ling is the counter-example of Wu, whose surrender to the enemy enraged the Han emperor, who ordered the death of all the members of Ling's family. His tragic encounter makes him both culpable as a traitor and worthy of sympathy as an exile. On the other hand, Zhaojun is known for the striking contrast between her beauty and her tragic end: in this story, she is taken from the Han court and married off to the land of the barbarians and spends the rest of her lonely life there.

The topic of loyalty is particularly important in medieval Japanese warrior tales and chronicles, and is heavily imbued in these text with Confucian political overtones and accompanied by abundant references to Chinese names and anecdotes. As in the *Taiheiki*, "loyalty" often appears together with concern for military cunning and bravery, or is put in contrast to betrayal, filial piety, and parental love. In the *Heike*, for instance, those who are loyal

to their rulers but suspected by them are given much more emphasis and portrayed in a very sympathetic way, as in the case of Fujiwara no Narichika 藤原成親 (1138-1178) and his son Naritsune 成経 (?-1202), who are compared to such Chinese loyal figures as Xiao He 蕭何 (J. Shōka, ?-193 BCE), Fan Kuai 樊噲 (J. Hankai, ?-189 BCE), Han Xin 韓信 (J. Kanshin, 231-196 BCE), and Peng Yue 彭越 (J. Hōetsu, ?-196 BCE).

The theme of filial piety carries a strong Confucian flavor. *The Classic of Filial Piety* (Ch. *Xiaojing*, J. *Kōkyō* 孝經) was considered among the most important Confucian texts in both China and Japan. As an effective way of explaining and transmitting the idea of filial piety, filial tales became an essential part of elementary education, and eventually become part of popular literature. The earliest use of Chinese filial tales in Japanese literature may date from *The Collection of Myriad Leaves* (*Man'yōshū* 万葉集, ca. 785), Japan's oldest anthology of poetry, which contains a poem regarding the Chinese filial figure Yuan Gu 原谷 (J. Genkoku), who persuades his father to fulfill his filial duties properly. Beginning as early as the Nara period, more than a hundred different Chinese filial figures appear in Japanese literature, ranging from filial monarchs and filial ministers to filial commoners and filial daughters. Many of these filial figures became the prototype for filial characters in Japanese popular culture.

Wisdom (賢) and Virtue (良) in *A Miscellany of Ten Maxims* (*Jikkishō* 十訓抄)

The compilation of dictionaries, encyclopedias, and commentaries stimulated the compilation of anecdotal collections, which in return also played a role in organizing and transmitting classical texts and knowledge. Most of the anecdotal collections were the work of Buddhist priests. There were also some by Confucian scholars. In either case, a shared

characteristic was that they all carry a didactic message, be it Confucian or Buddhist or, in most cases, a syncretism of them. Generally, these collections were compiled for a less learned audience, often children or commoners. Typical examples included the *Collection of Tales of Times Now Past* (*Konjaku monogatari shū* 今昔物語集, ca. 1120), the *Collection of Treasures* (*Hōbutsushū* 宝物集, ca. 1179), the *Teachings of Words of Truth* (*Jitsugokyō* 実語教, late Heian period), *A Miscellany of Ten Maxims* (*Jikkinshō* 十訓抄, 1252), and the *Teachings for Children* (*Dōjikyō* 童子教, mid- or late Kamakura period). In this section, I take a closer look at *Jikkinshō*, or *A Miscellany of Ten Maxims*, a particularly dramatic example.⁴

The author of the *Jikkinshō* is unknown. One of the existing manuscripts provides a name – “the Lay Priest Rokuhara Jirōzaemon (Rokuhara Jirōzaemon Nyūdō 六波羅二膳左衛門入道), and scholars have brought up several possibilities, but the true identity of this name remains unclear.⁵ In the Preface, the author describes himself as “an old man living in a grass hut at the foot of Higashiyama, hoping for a lotus seat among the clouds of the Western Paradise.”⁶ He also articulates the naming and purpose of the collection, and its aimed audience and style.

⁴ Here I am relying on the Shinpen Nihon koten bungaku zenshū edition of the *Jikkinshō*, ed. Asami Kazuhiko (Tōkyō : Shōgakkan, 1997) for citations and references. I am also indebted to Asami Kazuhiko’s *kaisetsu* and notes in this edition, and have consulted John Brownlee’s introduction and partial translation in his “Jikkinshō. A Miscellany of Ten Maxims,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 29, no. 2 (1974): 121-161.

⁵ For a discussion of those possibilities, see Asami Kazuhiko’s *kaisetsu* in *Jikkinshō*, ed. Asami Kazuhiko, 501-503. Brownlee also points out that judging from the content, the author “identified with the nobles,” “accepted and passed on the standard values of warrior society – bravery, loyalty, strength, modesty, and so forth,” and held a rather practical philosophy towards Confucianism and Buddhism (“Jikkinshō. A Miscellany of Ten Maxims,” 128-130).

⁶ 草の庵を東山のふもとにしめて、蓮の台を西土の雲にのぞむ翁. *Jikkinshō*, ed. Asami Kazuhiko, 19. The translation is Brownlee’s.

それ、世の中にある人、ことわざしげき振舞につけて、高き賤しき品をわ
かず、賢なるは得多く、愚なるは失多し。しかるに、いまなにとなく、聞き見
るところの、昔今の物語を種として、よろづの言の葉の中より、いささかその
二つのあとをとりて、良きかたをば、これをすすめ、悪しきすぢをば、これを
誡めつつ、いまだこの道を学び知らざらむ少年のたぐひをして、心をつくる便
りとなさしめむがために、こころみに十段の篇を別ちて、十訓抄と名づく。す
なはち三巻の文として、三余の窓に置かむとなり。

その詞、和字をさきとして、必ずしも筆の費多からず。みるもの、目安か
らむことを思ふゆゑなり。そのためし、漢家を次として、広く文の道を訪はず。
聞くもの、耳近からむことを思ふゆゑなり。すべてこれをいふに、空しき詞を
かざらず、ただ実のためしを集む。道のかたはらの碑の文をば、こひねがはざ
るところなり。⁷

In the world people differ greatly, having a huge variety of interests, but there is one thing that all have in common, whether they are mighty or humble: the wise gain much and the foolish lose much. What I am going to do is make selections from the abundant materials of all kinds of ancient and modern tales, both oral and written, to follow the trail of both the wise and the foolish through history, promoting virtue and reproofing vice. This is meant to be a help for the formation of good character in young people who have not yet had proper instruction of this type.

As a start, I have divided it into ten parts, and called it “A Miscellany of Ten Maxims.” A book of three volumes, it can be read at the three customary times of leisure – winter, evenings, and on rainy days. I have written preferably in the Japanese syllabary and not Chinese characters, without worrying that the sentences will come out too long, so that it will be easy for a person reading it by himself. Similarly, in order to make the examples intelligible to a person having it read to him, I took them mainly from Japanese literature and only secondly from Chinese literature, without scouring great numbers of books.

I have not adorned my work with useless words, and have used only true examples, for I have no desire to write in the style of a stone monument by the highway!⁸

In short, the *Jikkinshō* is a book for beginners, particularly young people, to learn wisdom 賢 and virtue 良, through true examples 実のためし. True examples, as the author explains, refer

⁷ *Jikkinshō*, 17-18. The base text for this edition is the manuscript (*katakana-bon*) in the Imperial Household Archives. See *Jikkinshō*, 11.

⁸ Translation from Brownlee, “*Jikkinshō*. A Miscellany of Ten Maxims,” 133. It is a partial translation, based on the sixth edition of Ishibashi Shōbō, *Jikkinshō shōkai* (Tōkyō : Meiji Shoin, 1942). See John Brownlee, “*Jikkinshō*. A Miscellany of Ten Maxims,” 132.

to ancient and modern tales 物語. Wisdom and virtue, however, is only loosely defined in opposition to stupidity and vice. In order to achieve its purpose, the author prefers Japanese syllabary and literature to Chinese characters and literature.

This being clearly articulated, however, the content of *Jikkinshō* does not always go in line with its preface. While the emphasis on true examples, which come from ancient and modern tales, is quite persistent in the book, the hesitation in using Chinese characters and literature is hardly the case.⁹ One good example of the character of *Jikkinshō* is the following passage in Chapter Three, “On Not Despising Humanity (人倫を侮らざる事).”¹⁰

後漢書いはく
胡広累世之農夫也。伯始致位公相。
黄憲牛医之賤子也。叔度動名京師。
胡広は累世の農夫なり。伯始、位を公相に致せり
黄憲は牛医が賤子なり。叔度、名を京師に動かす
しかのみならず、傳説が殷宗の夢の内に入りし志、すみやかに民を渡す船
となり、呂尚が周文の車の右に乗りし、すなはち世を治むる器たりき。かれこ
れ賤老の身なりといへども、あやまたで輔佐にいたる、賢才かかはらざるがゆ
ゑなり。¹¹

The Official History of the Later Han Dynasty reads,
Hu Guang came from a family of farmers for many generations, yet he reached
the high position of premier.

Huang Xian was the humble son of a bovine vet, yet his name filled the capital.

Furthermore, Fu Yue entered the dream of King Gaozong of Yin, because he
aspired to soon become the boat to ferry and save the people. Lü Shang seated himself
on the right side of the carriage of King Wen of Zhou, because he had the ability to
administer the country. Although they were humble and old people, they all ascended

⁹ For a discussion of the language and style of *Jikkinshō* in relation to introductory education and literacy, see Kōno Kimiko, “‘Bun’ to riterashii no kiso,” in *Nihon “bun”gakushi daiisattsu* (Volume 1 of *A New History of Japanese “Literature”*), edited by Kōno Kimiko, et al. (Tōkyō: Bensei shuppan, 2015), 194-247. I am indebted to her article and her seminar discussions.

¹⁰ The translation of the chapter title is Brownlee’s.

¹¹ *Jikkinshō*, 143.

to the position of premiers because of their wisdom and talent.¹²

The passage above offers a list of wise men in China who were of humble birth but were able to ascend to high positions by wisdom and talent. What precedes this passage is a list of wise men in Japan who were of the same kind. It seems that the contrast between humble birth and shining talent has a fascination for the contemporary Japanese, and the passage above can be regarded as providing a list of Chinese equivalents in order to parallel and better demonstrate the Japanese exemplars.

What figures in the list of wise men in China but is lacking in the list of wise men in Japan is the indication of the source: *The Official History of the Later Han Dynasty* (Ch. *Hou Hanshu*, J. *Go-Kanjo* 後漢書), a canonical text in the Kidendō tradition. Perhaps aiming to emphasize the authoritative character of the source text, the passage above does not just cite literally from it or render it into Japanese. Instead, it puts both in parallel, revealing an eager concern with “the original,” the “authenticity” of the citation.

Further examination of the source and citations mentioned in the passage above, however, raises questions about the authenticity of the source. Although the tales of Hu Guang and Huang Xian are indeed related in detail in the *Official History of the Later Han Dynasty*, the citation in literary Chinese are nowhere to be found in it. The earliest source for the citation is the *Literary Selections* (Ch. *Wenxuan*, J. *Monzen* 文選), another canonical text in the Kidendō tradition, but there are also other possibilities, as the same citation also appears in the *Meibunshō* 明文抄 (*Collection of Enlightened Writings*, 1158-1246), a Japanese encyclopedia of Chinese maxims and proverbs, and the *Shinsen rōeishū* 新撰朗詠集 (*Newly Compiled Collection for*

¹² The translation of this passage is mine. (Brownlee’s partial translation skips this part.)

Poetic Recitations, ca. 1110), an anthology of *waka* and *kanshi* poetry, both completed earlier than the *Jikkishō*. In either case, it is safe to infer the authoritative position of Chinese official histories in providing didactic examples, even in the case of educating young people and commoners. Chinese official histories thus are mentioned more as a sign of authority, representing a knowledge of Chinese culture and history, rather than as a source of names and tales.

The passage above is not an exceptional case. In the *Jikkishō*, it is very often that author mentions the title of some canonical text as the source for a particular citation, while in actuality the source lies in somewhere else. More often is the case that these citations can also be found in topical encyclopedias, particularly in the following four: the *Sezoku genbun* 世俗諺文 (*Common Sayings of Our Age*, 1007), the *Meibunshō* 明文抄 (*Collection of Enlightened Writings*, 1158-1246), the *Gyokkan hishō* 玉函秘抄 (*Secret Collection of Jade case*, 1169-1206), and the *Kanreishō* 管蠡抄 (*Collection of Limited Visions*, 1158-1246). It is very likely that these topical encyclopedias are the more direct and convenient source for the writers and compilers in the late Heian and Kamakura periods, even though the titles of them rarely appear in their works. Given that the source for these topical encyclopedias is also the canonical texts in the Myōgyōdō and Kidendō traditions, more specifically, Tang dynasty manuscripts, it is safe to say that the majority of these references are still part of the core knowledge of China, canonized in the Heian aristocratic court.¹³ The only difference is that, in this case, the author's aim, as indicated in the Preface, was to cater to a more popular, non-aristocratic audience. In fact,

¹³ I am relying on Endō Mitsumasa's discussion of the four encyclopedias and their source texts in his *Ruishi no denrai to Meibunshō no kenkyū: Gunki monogatari e no eikyō* (Saku: Asama shobō, 1984). Also see Endō Mitsumasa, *Meibunshō no kenkyū narabi ni goi sakuin* (Tōkyō: Gendai bunkasha, 1974) and Yamauchi Yōichirō, *Honpō ruishi Gyokkan hishō Meibunshō Kanreishō no kenkyū* (Tōkyō: Kyūko shoin, 2012) for in-depth examinations of the four encyclopedias.

almost all the Chinese names, tales, and texts mentioned in the *Jikkinshō* had already been introduced to Japan by the mid-Heian period and thus were quite familiar to the contemporary Japanese aristocrats. The only exception might be the brief mention of the establishment of the Southern Song court (1127-1279), which indicates that the contemporary Japanese were not unaware of what was happening at that time in China, yet the mention of this historical event is only confined to a passing description without any concrete names or tales, suggesting this was an exception.

The passage above argues for the possibility of looking for wise men within those who have a humble birth. Perhaps because of this, the chapter is titled “On Not Despising Humanity,” and the author connects the attitude of not thinking lightly of other people to the idea of wisdom and the character of wise men (賢人 or 賢臣). Earlier in the chapter, the author cites the tale of Emperor Gao-Zu of Han, and provides a slightly more concrete profile of wise men.

昔、漢の高祖と楚の項羽と、秦の世を争ひし時、あまたの合戦をいたすといへども、つつがなくで、つひに項羽を亡ぼして、天下をとれりしほどに、黥布といふ小臣の、心に背くことありけるを、侮りて、みづからせめ給ふほどに、流れ矢にあたりて、失せ給ひにけり。

いづかたにつけても、人を侮るまじきなり。すべて賢人も万慮に一失あり。愚かなるものも千慮に一徳あり。この千が一の徳をならひて、かの万が一の失をのがるべし。

これによりて、「智者は空門を破す」ともいふ。「聖人は芻蕘にはかる」といへり。この意は、よき人は人を侮らずして、ゆゑに黄帝の牧童の言葉を信じ、徳宗は農夫のいさめをぞいれ給ひける。

街談巷説の中にも、必ずとるべきことありといへり。¹⁴

In ancient history, when Gao-Zu and Xiang Yu were struggling for the Qin Empire, they fought many great battles but Gao-Zu emerged safely from them all. In the end he destroyed Xiang Yu and took possession of the Empire. But he thought lightly of Qing

¹⁴ *Jikkinshō*, 136-137.

Bu, a minor retainer who did things contrary to the royal will. He led the attack on Qing Bu in person, was wounded by a stray arrow, and died.

Thus we see that no-one should think lightly of other people.

Generally, of the ten thousand schemes of a wise man, one ends in error. Of a thousand schemes of a fool, one is a success. By studying that one successful scheme in a thousand, the one failure in ten thousand can be avoided. The sage shatters the Gate of Emptiness; the wise man consults the grass and firewood-gatherers. This means that the wise man does not think lightly of people, and is not ashamed to ask about things and learn from the humblest person. Thus Huang Di believed the words of the cowherd, and De Zong followed the advice of the farmer.

You must always snatch up even what you hear in gossip and rumor.¹⁵

By attributing the rise and fall of Gao-Zu to different evaluations of other people and his different manner of dealing with them, the author of *Jikkinshō* reveals a rather ethical and even strategic aspect of the notion of wise men. Xiang Yu being a competitive rival, Gao-Zu thought highly of him, so Gao-Zu was able to win the battles. When it came to Qing Bu, however, since he was simply a minor retainer, Gao-Zu did not think highly of him, so Gao-Zu died a pitiful death. The author thus concludes that no one should think lightly of other people, which he further demonstrates by citing a number of maxims. The earliest account of the tale was the *Shi ji*, or the *Records of the Grand Historian*, but the maxims and proverbs were not necessarily derived from there. As in the previous case, the maxims and proverbs can largely be found in the four topical encyclopedias, with only minor revisions. For instance, the saying, “Of the ten thousand schemes of a wise man, one ends in error. Of a thousand schemes of a fool, one is a success,” appeared in the *Sezoku genbun (Common Sayings of Our Age, 1007)*, though originally it was derived from the *Shi ji*. The phrase, “consulting the grass and firewood-gatherers,” was taken from the *Book of Odes* (Ch. *Shijing*, J. *Shikyō* 詩經), and included in the *Meibunshō (Collection of Enlightened Writings, 1158-1246)*. Furthermore, the saying, “You must always snatch up even

¹⁵ Translation from Brownlee, “Jikkinshō. A Miscellany of Ten Maxims,” 140-141, adjusted for consistent pinyin spelling.

what you hear in gossip and rumor,” was also a maxim in the *Meibunshō*, taken from the *Literary Selections* (Ch. *Wenxuan*, J. Monzen).

The four topical encyclopedias, compiled in Japan, became the most convenient source of knowledge and maxims regarding Chinese history and culture. Yet the Chinese references (names, tales, maxims, and texts) in the *Jikkinshō* are not selected randomly from these encyclopedias. Rather, they coincide with the two key values emphasized in the Preface, wisdom 賢 and virtue 良. As shown above, wisdom is discussed in relation to talent (才), and the author emphasizes that these are regardless of birth. Wisdom may also have an ethical and strategic implication, which is why no one should think lightly of other people.

Loyalty and Filial Piety in *The Tales of the Heike* (*Heike monogatari* 平家物語):

The Tale of Su Wu

As revealed in the cases of the *Wakan rōeishū* commentaries and *The Tales of China* discussed in Chapter 1 and in the case of *A Miscellany of Ten Maxims* analyzed above, the tendency to rely more on Chinese intermediary and non-canonical texts was not a simple transition but a complex process. On one hand, texts canonized in the *Myōgyōdō* and *Kidendō* traditions remained authoritative and well known, as they were a mark of “true” history that could be relied upon, even if they only served as a more convenient, all-inclusive name for all Chinese source texts, including the intermediary and non-canonical. On the other, the intermediary and non-canonical sources, which were originally Chinese encyclopedias, collections of supernatural tales, and unofficial histories, but soon expanded to include Japanese commentaries, encyclopedias, and anecdotal literature, played a decisive role in re-inventing and re-imagining older tales and knowledge of China in the medieval period, even if they concealed their identities

under the name of those canonical texts until they were eventually re-discovered by modern scholars and re-named as part of “*Chūsei Shiki*,” the medieval understanding and interpretation of such Chinese official histories as the *Record of the Grand Historian*.¹⁶

Another example of this “*Chūsei Shiki*” phenomenon is *The Tale of the Heike* (*Heike monogatari*, ca. 1308-1311), a medieval Japanese warrior chronicle, as it makes extensive references to Chinese names and anecdotes in narrating the Genpei War (1180-1185), fought between the Taira (or Heike) and the Minamoto (or Genji) clans.¹⁷ The important characters described in *The Tale of the Heike*, including those referenced from Chinese literature and history, enjoyed considerable popularity from the time of its composition to the present day, in a variety of texts, genres, and media.¹⁸

Like most warrior tales (*gunki monogatari*), or chronicles, *The Tale of the Heike* cannot be ascribed to a single, particular author.¹⁹ The oldest account of its authorship dates back to Yoshida Kenkō (1283?-1352?), a Japanese poet, essayist, and Buddhist monk. In his most famous work *Essays in Idleness* (*Tsurezuregusa*, 1330-1332), Kenkō attributes *The Tales of*

¹⁶ See footnotes no. 1 in this chapter.

¹⁷ Ibid. Kuroda Akira in his book provides a number of case studies of the Chinese tales in *The Tale of the Heike* to explicate his conceptualization of the world of “*Chūsei Shiki*,” all containing intensive citations and annotations, to which I am deeply indebted. In particular, I am relying on his notes and annotations of the tales of Su Wu and Wang Zhaojun.

¹⁸ For a brief English-language introduction of *The Tale of Heike*, see Elizabeth Oyler’s entry on “*Heike monogatari*” in *Japan at War: An Encyclopedia*, edited by Louis G. Perez (Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2013), 115. For more English-language scholarships on the *Heike*, see Paul Varley, *Warriors of Japan as Portrayed in the War Tales* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994), Elizabeth Oyler, *Swords, Oaths, and Prophetic Visions: Authoring Warrior Rule in Medieval Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), 1-28, and Bialock, *Eccentric Spaces, Hidden Histories: Narrative, Ritual, and Royal Authority from The Chronicle of Japan to The Tale of the Heike*. For partial English translations of the *Heike*, see Helen McCullough, trans., *The Tale of the Heike* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988) and Burton Watson, trans., *The Tales of the Heike*, edited with an introduction by Haruo Shirane (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006). For a summary of contemporary commentaries on the *Tale of the Heike*, see Saeki Shin’ichi, “*Heike monogatari*’ no chūshakuteki kenkyū: kindai,” in *Heike monogatari: hihyō to bunkashi*, edited by Yamashita Hiroaki (Tōkyō: Kyūko shoin, 1998), 158-176.

¹⁹ See Elizabeth Oyler’s entry on “*Heike monogatari*” in *Japan at War: An Encyclopedia*, 115.

Heike to Yukinaga, the former governor of Shinano and a Buddhist monk, claiming that Yukinaga wrote the tale and showed it to a blind monk named Shōbutsu to chant it.²⁰ There might be some truth to this theory, as the tale was written in a mixed style of Japanese and Chinese writings (*wakan konkōbun*), a style that in the medieval period was only mastered by such educated monks as Yukinaga. However, given that *The Tales of the Heike* was also the result of a long oral tradition, it is perhaps more accurate to say that Yukinaga is just one – possibly the first – of the many authors and compilers of the tale.

There are approximately eighty variant texts of *The Tales of the Heike*, some differing tremendously from others in styles and references, depending on the time of their compositions and the audience they each are intended for. In general, these variants are divided into two lineages: the read-text lineage (*yomi-hon kei*) and the recited-text lineage (*katari-bon kei*).²¹ The read-text lineage, represented by the *Engyō* variant (ca. 1309), perhaps the earliest of all variants, tends to contain more direct textual references to Confucian classics, Chinese official histories, and Chinese poetry and prose, all written in literary Chinese. Its deep interest in citing directly from these canonical texts reveals that the target audience is already equipped with the necessary, text-based knowledge to appreciate the suggested meanings. In contrast, the recited-text lineage, represented by the popular *Kakuichi* variant (ca. 1371), a much later variant, significantly cuts down on direct textual references to Chinese poetry and prose, and makes more use of explanatory language and the vernacular when referencing Chinese names and anecdotes. Its preference for less direct use of Chinese poetry and prose may point to the fact that it is

²⁰ See *Tsurezuregusa*, edited by Kanda Hideo, et al. (Tōkyō: Shōgakkan, 1995), 257. Also see Kenneth Butler, “The Textual Evolution of The *Heike Monogatari*,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 26 (1966): 17-23 for a detailed examination of the authorship of the *Heike* and a translation of the relevant passage in *Tsurezuregusa*.

²¹ See Elizabeth Oyler’s entry on “*Heike monogatari*” in *Japan at War: An Encyclopedia*, 115.

composed for a larger and less educated audience who is equally interested in learning Chinese names and anecdotes but cannot read texts written in literary Chinese.

The popular Kakuichi variant of *The Tales of the Heike* contains eighty-three Chinese names, most of which are figures living in or before the Tang Dynasty (618-906). Given that the *Heike* was actually written in a time that was much later than the fall of the Tang Dynasty, corresponding to the Song Dynasty (960-1279), and the frequent exchange visits between China and Japan, mostly by highly educated Buddhist monks and Chinese exiles, also continued into this period, it is rather worth noting that the refusal to include any Chinese figures who were born after the Tang Dynasty might be a clear indication of the *Heike*'s attempts to associate itself with high classical culture. After all, the classical knowledge of China, formed in the Heian aristocratic culture, would never have included a Chinese figure born after the Tang Dynasty. In fact, almost all the Chinese names in the *Heike* have already appeared in the Heian period literature and scholarship and become well known in some way or another. In this sense, the *Heike* may be seen as a compendium of Chinese names, transmitting the classical knowledge of China to a popular, less educated audience.²²

Among the eighty-three Chinese names referenced in the *Heike*, the most popular are those (twenty names in total) who fall into the category of loyal ministers. Notable is that, among these loyal ministers, nearly half of them (eight names) suffer a tragic ending. After loyal ministers, benevolent rulers (seven names) and bad rulers (six names) are the second largest category. Exiles (seven names) and beautiful women (eight names) respectively are the third largest categories.

The following anecdote, from the popular Kakuichi variant, is a representative case of

²² Here I am inspired by Ōsumi Kazuo's research on the use of Chinese names and anecdotes in the *Taiheiki*. See footnotes no. 2 in this chapter.

loyal ministers, the most popular character type to be associated with Chinese names and anecdotes. It concerns the suffering and loyalty of Su Wu (J. Sobu, 140-60 BCE), an exile and loyal minister in the Western Han Dynasty (206 BCE-8 CE). The tale reads:

After Kiyomori's show of sympathy, high and low and old and young in the capital recited Yasuyori's lines, saying, "This is a poem composed by the Kikai-ga-shima exile." When we consider that the stupas must certainly have been quite small (because there were a thousand of them), it is strange, in deed, that one should have traveled the great distance from Satsuma Bay to the capital. Might such be the rewards of heartfelt emotion?

Long ago, when the Han ruler attacked the land of the Xiongnu people, he began by sending out three Xiongnudred thousand mounted men under the command of Li Xiaoqing. But the Han force was weak and the Xiongnu were strong; the Chinese were annihilated. Furthermore, the general, Xiaoqing, was captured by the Xiongnu ruler. The Chinese next dispatched five Xiongnudred thousand men under the command of Su Wu, but again the Han force was weak, the barbarians were strong, and the Chinese were annihilated. More than six thousand men were taken prisoner. From among the captives, the Xiongnu picked out the general, Su Wu, and more than six Xiongnudred and thirty other military chiefs, cut off one leg from each, and drove them away. Some of the mutilated men died immediately and some succumbed after lingering awhile, but Su Wu survived. A one-legged cripple, he preserved his dewlike life by climbing hills to gather fruits and nuts, picking parsley from springtime marshes, and combing autumn paddies for fallen ears of rice.

The wild geese who flocked to the paddies saw Su Wu too often to fear him. One day, moved to nostalgia by the thought that all those birds would be going to his old home, he set down his feelings in a few lines and attached the message to a goose's wing. "Take good care of this," he admonished. "Give it to the Han sovereign."

Wild geese may be trusted to fly from the northern regions to the capital in autumn. At twilight one day, a line of them passed through the lightly overcast skies above the Shanglin Park, where Han Zhaodi was listening to music with a feeling of vague melancholy. A bird dipped down, bit off a message tied to its wing, and dropped it. A functionary picked it up for the Emperor. Upon opening it, Zhaodi saw that it said, "Earlier, I spent three miserable years shut in a mountain cave; now I am cast onto vast fields, a one-legged cripple among barbarians. Although my corpse may lie exposed in barbarian lands, my spirit will return to serve the Emperor." It is because of that incident that letters are sometimes called "goose writings" or "goose notes."

"How pitiful!" the Emperor said. "This is Su Wu's famous calligraphy; there can be no doubt that he is still alive in the barbarian land." He issued a command to another general, Li Guang, and dispatched a force of a million cavalry.

That time, the Han force was the stronger and the Xiongnu were defeated. Su Wu came crawling out of the wide plain upon hearing of the Chinese victory. "I am Su Wu of old." So after nineteen years, and despite the loss of a leg, Wu returned to the

capital in a palanquin.

When Su Wu had been sent to face the Xiongnu at the age of sixteen, he had received an imperial gift of a banner, which he had somehow contrived to hid in such a way that it never left his person. Now he took it out for the Emperor to behold, and the ruler and his ministers were profoundly impressed. It is said that Wu received many large provinces because of his unparalleled service to the throne, and that he was also appointed head of the office in charge of vassal states.

Li Xiaoqing stayed on in the land of the Xiongnu, unable to go home at last. He uttered constant laments. "If only I could return to China!" But the Xiongnu chieftain was an adamant; there was nothing Xiaoqing could do about it. Unaware of his situation, the Han sovereign concluded that Xiaoqing had turned traitor: he ordered the bodies of the general's dead parents exhumed and beaten, and punished all his close relatives. Xiaoqing's resentment was deep, indeed, when he heard the news. But his longing for home persisted. He wrote out a statement in a single scroll, a protestation of loyalty, and sent it to the court. "Poor fellow!" the Emperor said. He regretted the exhumation and flogging of the parents.

Su Wu of China sent home a letter by attaching it to a wild goose's wing; Yasuyori of Japan transmitted poems to the capital by entrusting them to the waves. The one sought comfort in straightforward expressions; the other composed two poems. The one lived in ancient times, the other in the latter days of the Law. The places were far apart – Xiongnu territory and Kikai-ga-shima – and the ages were different. But the two were the same in sensibility. Theirs were admirable histories.²³

The earliest account of Su Wu was contained in “The Biographies of Li Guang and Su Jian” in *The Official History of the Han Dynasty*. The plot is as follows. Su Wu was the second son of Su Jian. During the reign of Emperor Wu of Han (156-87 BCE, r. 141-87 BCE), Wu was commissioned to serve as an ambassador to the Xiongnu, but was detained and forced to capitulate. Wu refused to surrender, so he was tortured and starved, even exiled to Lake Baikal to herd a flock of sheep, being told that he would be allowed to go home only when a male sheep produced milk. The Xiongnu then faked Wu’s death to the Han court. Despite all the persecution, Wu remained unyielding and always stayed true to the imperial banner (marked by a yak’s tail). It was only until many years later, during the reign of Emperor Zhao (94-74 BCE, r. 87-74 BCE), that another ambassador from the Han court happened to know that Wu’s death was a lie. In

²³ Translation from Helen McCullough, trans., *The Tale of the Heike* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988), 94-95.

order to extricate Wu, he made up a story to the chief of Xiongnu, claiming that Emperor Zhao of Han had shot down a wild goose in his garden to whose foot a letter from Wu was tied and thus realized that Wu was still alive. As a result, the Xiongnu released Wu; he was able to return to the Han capital after nineteen years of detention.

Two major elements figured in the tale of Su Wu. One was his unyielding loyalty to the Han court despite all the torture and exile, and one was the story of the wild goose carrying Wu's message back to the Han court. While the former enjoyed more popularity in *kanji*-based genres (such as Japanese *kanshi* poetry and anecdotal literature) than in *kana*-based genres (such as *waka* poetry and court tales), the latter was frequently referenced in almost all Japanese genres, widely known as the *gansho* (message carried by the wild goose) anecdote. The oldest anthology of poetry in Japan, *The Collection of Myriad Leaves (Man'yōshū, ca. 785)*, for instance, contains a love poem (no. 1614) that alludes to the *gansho* anecdote.

九月のその初雁の便りにも思ふ心は聞こえ来ぬかも²⁴

I wonder if the first wild geese in this Ninth Month have come here carrying a message of your yearning for me.

The poem was included in the “autumn love poems” (*aki no sōmon*) in Book XIII. While the association between letter and wild goose clearly derives from the tale of Su Wu, the poem itself has nothing to do with him or with exile or loyalty. It is a poem on the longing for the beloved to send a letter, in which the “message carried by the wild goose” becomes the metonymy for letter. In *waka* poetry, the metonymical use of the “message carried by the wild goose” is quite common. It is often associated with the season and imageries of autumn, for the wild goose, a

²⁴ Volume 2 of *Man'yōshū*, edited by Kojima Noriyuki, et al. (Tōkyō: Shōgakkān, 1995), 360.

migratory bird, annually flies south in the autumn, and the south is where the capital locates. The message that the wild goose carries thus bears the implication that it is a long-awaited message from someone afar, probably in exile, to convey the longing for return to the capital or for the beloved who lives in the capital. Another example of the “message carried by the wild goose” trope is the following poem (no. 207) on “wild geese (with returning wild geese appended)” (*gan, kigan tsuketari*) in the *Collection of Ancient and Modern Poems (Kokin wakashū, ca. 905-917)*.

秋風にはつかりがねぞ聞ゆる誰が玉梓をかけて来つらむ²⁵

I seem to hear the cries of the first wild geese on the autumn wind. Whose message, I wonder, have they come here carrying?

Similarly, in the poem, the cries of the first wild geese become the metonymy for letters from people afar. Su Wu’s name appears in the commentary to provide the source for the association between letter and wild goose, but his tale is not the concern of the poem. As was revealed by the association between letter and wild goose in the two poems, Chinese official histories served as an important source for the discovery of new literary themes in early Japan, especially in vernacular Japanese literature.

The association between letter and wild goose can be found in *kanshi* poetry as well, as indicated in Ki no Arimasa’s poem (no. 694) on “singing of history” (*eishi*) in the *Wakan rōeishū*.

賓雁繫書秋葉落 牡羊期乳歲華空

²⁵ *Kokin wakashū*, edited by Ozawa Masao and Matsuda Shigeo (Tōkyō: Shōgakkan, 1994), 101.

紀在昌²⁶

The journeying goose had a letter attached –
Autumn leaves were falling;
waiting for male sheep to produce some milk –
the years passed into void.

Ki no Arimasa²⁷

The couplet above relates two anecdote of Su Wu. The first centers on the made-up story of the wild goose carrying Wu's letter to the emperor, though here it seems that the story actually happened in history. The autumn leaves might refer specifically to the leaves in the imperial garden, where Emperor Zhao of Han was said to have shot down the wild goose, to whose foot a letter from Wu was tied. It is worth noting that the story of the wild goose carrying Wu's letter to the emperor seems to be treated as true history in the poem. The second anecdote concerns Wu's exile to Lake Baikal to herd a flock of sheep, where he suffered hunger and cold for years, being told that he would be released only when a male sheep produced milk. Although Su Wu's name does not appear in the couplet or in the poetic topic, no one would fail to recognize that the poem was composed on the topic of Su Wu. Another unmistakable association with Su Wu is the upholding of the integrity of one's mission, as in the following poem (no. 389) on "ice (with spring ice appended)" (*kōri, haru no kōri tsuketari*) in the *Wakan rōeishū*, the commentary to which I have discussed earlier in this chapter.

胡塞誰能全使節 呼沱還恐失臣忠

相規²⁸

²⁶ *Wakan rōeishū*, 363.

²⁷ Translation from Rimer and Chaves, trans., *Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing*, 208.

²⁸ *Wakan rōeishū*, 206.

At the barbarian frontier, who was it
that was able to uphold the integrity of his mission?
At Hu-tuo River, one was afraid of failing
in a subject's loyalty.

(Minamoto no) Sukenori²⁹

The couplet asks two rhetorical questions, the answers to which are Su Wu and Wang Ba (?-59), both involved, though in different time periods, in the conflict and communication between the Han dynasty and the Xiongnu. Again, Su Wu's name does not appear. Unlike the *waka* poem, where Wu's name is not mentioned because his tale is not the concern of the poem, the trope of upholding of the integrity of one's mission indicates that this is a poem on Wu's tale. In some sense, the name of Su Wu has become a metonymy for loyalty.

Whereas the tale of Su Wu in *The Tales of the Heike* in general inherits two major elements figured in that in *The Official History of the Han Dynasty*, that is, the unyielding loyalty to the Han court and the made-up story of the wild goose, the description of these elements is rather poetic, suggesting an effort to associate with the classical culture. It uses, for example, the dew as a metaphor for one's transient life, focuses on the description of spring and autumn, and depicts the activities that are usually associated with the two seasons. All of these figures are *topoi* in *waka* poetry.

At the same time, the *Heike* tale also makes subtle or significant changes to the tale, many of which can only be attributed to the transformation of Wu's tale in Japan. For instance, in the *Heike*, Su Wu was dispatched as a general – instead of as an ambassador – to attack the Xiongnu, which is due to the fact that Wu is often portrayed as a general or vice general in Japanese warrior chronicles and sometimes as a warrior (*musha*) in anecdotal literature (*setsuwa*),

²⁹ Translation from Rimer and Chaves, trans., *Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing*, 120, adjusted for consistent pinyin spelling.

such as in the *Collection of Annotation on Properness* (*Chūkōsen*, ca. 1152).³⁰ Moreover, the *Heike* notes that when Wu was captured, he had one leg cut off and was driven away. While Wu's exile and suffering was recounted time and again in various Chinese and Japanese texts, that he had one leg cut off could only be found in the commentaries on the *Wakan rōeishū*. A good example is the following entry (no. 547) from the Kokkai-bon variant (a variant conserved in the National Diet Library) of the *Commentary on the Wakan rōeishū* (*Waka rōeichū*, late Heian period) for Arimasa's poem (no. 694) discussed earlier.

賓鴈_ト者、賦蘇武詩也。蘇武、漢王_ヲ使_トシテ、向胡国打手。被虜、巖穴被込、三年_ヲ後、取出_{シテ}、切一手一足、嵒田_ニ被放、及十九年、作一首詩、鴈_ヲ翅_ニ結ヒ付ク。鴈、漢_ヲ武帝_ヲ上林苑_ニ落ス。帝、見之、為迎蘇武、永利_ヲ大將、責故国、十九年_{ト云々}。胡国_ヲ責_メ落_シ、召返蘇武。秋葉落_ト者、送春秋意也。牧羊_ト者、雄羊也。蘇武、漢国_ニ帰ラント、胡王_ニ暇乞、雄羊、出乳時、汝_ヲ本国_ニ可帰云事。歳花_ト者、空_ク歳月_ヲ送_ル意也。³¹

The poem starting with the journeying goose is a poem on Su Wu. Su Wu was sent as an ambassador to attack the land of the Xiongnu, yet was captured and put into a deep cave. After three years, he was taken out, cut off one arm and one leg, and exiled to Mount Ji. On the nineteenth year, he composed a poem, and attached it to a goose's wing. The wild goose dipped down in the Shanglin Park of Emperor Wu. Having seen the poem, the Emperor, in order to extricate Su Wu, appointed Yongli as the general and ordered him to attack the land of the Xiongnu. At this point, nineteen years had passed (after Wu's first arrival at the land of the Xiongnu). The Han defeated the Xiongnu and extricated Su Wu. The falling of autumn leaves refers to the passing of springs and autumns. The herding of sheep refers to the herding of male sheep. Yearning for return, Su Wu begged the chief of the Xiongnu for time, but was told that he would be allowed to return to his homeland only when a male sheep produced milk. The emphasis on years means that the years Wu spent in exile were in vain.

The entry above is not the only one concerning the cutting off of Wu's arm and leg. There are

³⁰ See *Chūkōsen* from *Sanbōe*, *Chūkōsen*, edited by Mabuchi Kazuo, et al. (Tōkyō: Iwanami shoten, 1997), 265.

³¹ Volume 2 of *Wakan rōeishū kochūshaku shūsei*, 282-283, with *kaeriten* (return points) and *furigana* (Japanese reading aid) omitted.

many other entries from different commentaries on the *Wakan rōeishū* all containing the same account, which may suggest the popularity of this detail in the time when these commentaries were compiled, and explain why the *Heike* tale would incorporate this detail in Wu’s tale.

On the other hand, the *Engyō* variant of the *Heike* portrays a similar scene, but with more details of Su Wu’s exile and more allusion to *kanshi* and the Chinese Confucian classics. This variant depicts Wu’s yearning for his wife in the capital, and portrays his life through allusions to two Chinese characters, Yen Yuan (J. Gan’en) and Yuan Xian (J. Genken, both of whom were Confucius’s disciples and famous for preserving their moral integrity despite deep poverty: “His gourd and rice dish are often empty, and grasses flourish in the lane where Yen Yuan lives. He resides deep among the weeds and brambles, and rain moistens the doorposts of Yuan Xian’s hut!” Moreover, in another variant, *The Rise and Fall of the Genji and the Heike* (*Genpei seisuiiki*, fourteenth century), the description of Su Wu’s life in exile – how he survived Xiongnu– is rather realistic, without particular emphasis on nature or poetic metaphors.³²

The popular *gansho* (message carried by the wild goose) anecdote is also crucial and distinctive in the *Heike*. First, the reason why Su Wu decided to send his message by the wild goose is clearly explained: this migratory bird aroused his longing for his old home. The association of the migratory goose with nostalgia is even reinforced by a *waka* poem in the *Engyō* variant: “Returning goose. It keeps on yearning for the same track, even for the traces of the separated clouds.”³³ However, a unique characteristic of the text above is that it considers the message to be attached to the wing, instead of to the foot of the wild goose; in fact, many

³² See *Genpei seisuiiki*, edited by Ichiko Teiji, et al. (Tōkyō: Miyai shoten, 1991), 43-47.

³³ 帰ル鴈 (かり) 隔ル雲ノ余波 (なごり) マデ同ジ跡ヲソ思 (おもひ) ツラネシ
See Volume 2 of *Kōtei Enkyō-bon Heike monogatari*, edited by Tochigi Yoshitada and Taniguchi Kōichi (Tōkyō: Kyūko shoin, 2000), 134. I am indebted to Kuroda Akira’s notes and annotations on the tale of Su Wu (see footnotes nos. 1 and 17 in this chapter). I have also consulted *Enkyō-bon Heike monogatari zenchūshaku*, edited by Enkyō-bon Chūshaku no Kai (Tōkyō: Kyūko shoin, 2005-2019) for notes and annotations.

variants of the *Heike* follow the same pattern. Saeki Shin'ichi argues that since this discrepancy occurs only among the different variants of the *Heike*, it should be understood within the larger process through which the tale of Su Wu was incorporated into the *Heike*. As Saeki argues, the mentioning of the “wing” echoes the description of the image of the “flying wild goose,” and matches the gradual “factualization” and “marvelization” of the *gansho* anecdote.³⁴ Second, the *Heike* tale narrates in depth how the wild goose handed over the message to the emperor. It begins by creating a rather melancholy atmosphere: the tale takes place during twilight when the skies appear lightly overcast, and music arises in the distance. The wild goose suddenly appears, delivering the message to the emperor. Imanari Genshō argues that in *The Tales of the Heike*, both the emphases on the description of Su Wu's nostalgia and on the recounting of the miraculous *gansho* episode indicate that it belongs to the "new form" category in the representation of Su Wu in Japanese literature.³⁵

Another key element of the narrative in the *Heike* concerns Su Wu's return. Here the disparity of the military strength between the Han and the Xiongnu is emphasized; Su Wu's return was directly determined by the rise of the Han's military power. The *Engyō* variant of the *Heike*, however, provides a very poetic description of Wu's return:

蘇武、十九年之間、胡国北海之辺（ほとり）ニ栖（すみ）シカバ、万里遼海（リヤウかい）ノ波ノ音ヲ聞テハ、遺愛寺ノ暁ノ鐘ニナヅラヘ、四五朶山（しごださん）ノ冬ノ梢ヲ見テハ、香爐峯ノ雪カト誤タル。飛花落葉ノ転反（てんべん）ヲ見テハ、春秋ノ遷（うつ）リ替ル事ヲ知（しる）ト云（いへ）ドモ、博士（はかせ）陰陽（おんやう）ノ仁ニモ近付ザレバ、日月ノ行途（かうト）ヲ不知（しらず）。故郷ニ帰り、旧宅ニ行タレバ、蘇武去（さり）シ年ヨリ帰京ノ今ノ年マ

³⁴ Saeki Shin'ichi, “Heike monogatari Sobu-dan no seiritu to tenkai: on'ai to jisetsu to,” *Kokugo to Kokubungaku* 55, no. 4 (1978): 23.

³⁵ Imanari Genshō, *Heike monogatari ruden kō* (Tōkyō: Kazama shobō, 1971), 126.

デ、旧妻愁（うれひ）ノ余ニヤ、毎年一ノ衾ヲ調（ととのへ）テ、棹ニ並テ懸（かけ）ヲケリ。細（こまか）ニ是ヲ算（かぞふ）レバ、十九ニテゾ有ケル。是ヨリシテゾ、蘇武去テ十九年トハ知ニケル。³⁶

Su Wu, for nineteen years, lived by the North Sea of the land of Hu. Hearing the sound of the waves from the thousand-*li*-spread sea, he compared it with the sound of the bell of the Temple of Bequeathed Love. Watching the mountain peak in the winters, he mistook it with the snow on top of Incense Burner Peak. Although he were able to sense the alternation of the spring and autumn by viewing the change between the scattering flowers and the falling leaves, he could neither approach the act of the *yin* and *yang* nor know the route of the sun and moon. He returned to the old village and went to the old house. From the year he left until this year he returned, his wife, deeply in grief, every year prepared a robe for him and hung it to the rack. Carefully counted, there were nineteen of them in total. Thus we know that Su Wu had left for nineteen years.

Both the expressions – “the bell of the Temple of Bequeathed Love” and “the snow on top of Incense Burner Peak” – refer to a couplet by the Chinese poet Bai Juyi: “The bell of the Temple of Bequeathed Love – I hear it striking against my pillow; the snow on top of Incense Burner Peak – I see it through the rolled-up blind.” This couplet too was included in the *Wakan rōeishū*. By visually transposing the landscape of the Bai Juyi poem – which represents the life in the Han capital – into the “barbarian” land, the *Engyō* text documents and imagines Su Wu’s nostalgia in a rather poetic fashion. The *Engyō* text also mentions Su Wu’s wife, the description of whose conduct can be seen as an indirect reference to a poem (no. 347) on “washing clothes” in the *Wakan rōeishū*.

擣処曉愁閨月冷 裁将秋寄塞雲寒

篤茂³⁷

³⁶ Volume 2 of *Kōtei Enkyō-bon Heike monogatari*, 138-139, with *kaeriten* (return points) omitted.

³⁷ *Wakan rōeishū*, 185-186.

Where clothes are fulled, at dawn they grieve
the boudoir moon is chilly;
They cut and sew, and send them this autumn
where frontier clouds are cold.

(Fujiwara no) Atsumochi³⁸

The topic “washing clothes” is conventionally associated with the wives of the frontier soldiers who longs for their husbands and are busy preparing winter clothes for them. In the poem, the boudoir moon serves as a foil to the wife’s yearning, while the sequential actions – cutting, sewing, and sending – emphasizes her caring for her husband. While the moon is often related to psychological yearning and longing in *kanshi* poetry, clouds are often used to represent physical distance, and thus appear frequently in poems that deal with people and events at the frontier. The poem does not itself concern the tale of Su Wu. In the *Eisai Commentary* on the *Wakan rōeishū*, however, the entry for this poem introduces the connection with Su Wu. It reads,

[...] 下句ハ、蘇武、漢ノ使トシテ、胡国ニアリテ、年ヲヘシアヒタ、ソノ妻、秋コトニ、衣ヲウチテ、カヘリキタラハ、キセムトマチシ心ナリ。 [...] ³⁹

...The lower verse is on Su Wu, who, as an ambassador of the Han, spent many years in the land of the barbarians. When he was away, his wife prepared and washed his clothes every autumn, and waited for him to return and wear them.

In the *Heike*, the reason why Su Wu was sent to the barbarian land was because of the ongoing war between the Han and the Xiongnu; he was dispatched after the failure of Li Ling. The Engyō variant of the *Heike*, however, associates the exile of Su Wu with that of Wang Zhaojun’s exile. It states that, during the reign of Emperor Wu of the Han, the barbarian made

³⁸ Translation from Rimer and Chaves, trans., *Japanese and Chinese Poems to Sing*, 109.

³⁹ Volume 3 of *Wakan rōeishū kochūshaku shūsei*, 121, with *kaeriten* (return points) and *furigana* (Japanese reading aid) omitted.

the following request to the emperor:

「我等（われら）胡国ノ狄ト申ナガラ、嵒田（ケイでん）ノ畝（ウネ）ニ生ヲ稟（ウケ）テ、朝夕聞ユル物トテハ、旅鴈（りよがん）哀猿（あいゑん）之（の）夜ノ声、憂（うき）ナガラ、スゴキ庵（いほり）ノ軒バニナル、物トテハ、黄蘆（くわうろ）苦行（くぎやう）之（の）風ノ音。適（たまたま）賢王ノ聖主ニ合（あひ）奉テ、帰国ノ思（おもひ）出（で）ナニカセム。願（ねがはく）ハ、君三千ノ后ヲ持給ヘリ。一人ヲ給（たまはり）テ胡城ニ帰ラム」⁴⁰

“We are called the *ebisu* (barbarian) of the land of Hu. Born on the ridge of the rice field, those we hear in the mornings and evenings are the cries of the journeying goose and the sorrowful ape at night. In grief, those that can be heard beside the eaves of the hut are the sounds of the wind passing through the yellow weed and the bitter bamboo. By chance we meet the sage king – the emperor, what should we take as a memory when we return? My wish is that, among the three thousand consorts you have, I could be given one of them to return together to the land of Hu.”

What is notable in the barbarian’s request is the many references to Bai Juyi’s poem – “The Song of the Lute” (Ch. *Pipa xing*, J. *Biwakō*) – when narrating the life in the barbarian land. The subsequent narration, though written in *kanbun*, resembles that in *The Tales of China*, yet also with more extensive references to Bai Juyi’s poem, “The Song of the Lute.” Refining the barbarian’s language by making allusions to Bo Juyi’s poem, the *Engyō* variant attempts to build a literary persona even for those with strong military power but no literacy. Again, as mentioned above, this approach reveals the ideal of the *Heike*: the combination of both military and literary talents. The *Engyō* variant concludes Zhaojun’s tale by referring to a *waka* poem, which is a variation of the poem (no. 1018) in the *Later Collection of Gleanings of Japanese Poems* discussed earlier. The poem in the *Engyō* variant reads,

⁴⁰ Volume 2 of *Kōtei Enkyō-bon Heike monogatari*, 131.

見ル度ニ鏡ノカゲノツラキカナカ、ラザリセバカ、ラマシヤハ⁴¹

Every time I look at my image in the mirror I feel pain. Would I have appeared like this, if I had not come to this barbarian land?

Historically, Su Wu and Wang Zhaojun lived in different reigns of the Han, and served different emperors. There was no real connection between the two in Chinese history. In the *Engyō* text, however, the emperor first married Wang off to the chief of the barbarian land but he soon regretted it, so he dispatched Li Ling and sent Su Wu to attack the Xiongnu. The convergence of the representations of Su and Wang in this text is worth noticing. Imanari Genshō and Saeki Shin'ichi both emphasize that this convergence takes place because of a common motif – the yearning for the old home (*bōkyō*) – shared between the two tales.⁴² Kuroda Akira points out that as early as in the *Wakan rōeishū*, the poem that refers to Su Wu's *gansho* (message carried by the wild goose) anecdote (no. 694) was juxtaposed with the poetic category “Wang Zhaojun,” and that the tales were already linked in some commentaries of the *Wakan rōeishū*.⁴³ Also, in the *Collection of Treasures* (*Hōbutsushū*, ca. 1179), the tale of Wang Zhaojun was arranged so as to appear physically close to that of Su Wu. Both appeared in the same section – “The Anguish of Parting from One's Loved Ones” (*Aibetsuriku*).⁴⁴

In this way, the tale of Su Wu and Wang Zhaojun in the *Engyō* variant of the *Heike* was reconstructed according to Japanese imaginative understandings of these two figures and Japanese cultural perceptions of Chinese history, which Kuroda describes as “the world of the

⁴¹ Volume 2 of *Kōtei Enkyō-bon Heike monogatari*, 132.

⁴² Imanari, *Heike monogatari ruden kō*, 188-194. Saeki, “Heike monogatari Sobu-dan no seiritsu to tenkai,” 21-22.

⁴³ Kuroda, *Chūsei setsuwa no bungakushiteki kankyō*, 156.

⁴⁴ See *Hōbutsushū*, from *Hōbutsushū, Kankyo no tomo, Hirasana kojiri reitaku*, edited by Koizumi Hiroshi, et al. (Tōkyō: Iwanami shoten, 1993), 116-121.

Records of the Grand Historian (Ch. *Shi ji*, J. *Shiki*) in the medieval period” (*chūsei Shiki no sekai*).⁴⁵ Additionally, the *Heike*'s representation of Su Wu, particularly the anecdote concerning the wild goose, became a popular reference for later texts and genres such as Muromachi tales (*otogi-zōshi*), which suggests the ongoing evolution of Su Wu's presence in Japanese culture into a new stage.

Conclusion

Scholarship in the late Heian and Kamakura periods (12th-14th centuries) were characterized by the rising interests in compiling intermediaries – dictionaries, encyclopedias, and commentaries, which had a profound impact on poetic and literary compositions, particularly in the contexts of popular literature and culture. Whereas earlier, classical texts, canonized in the Myōgyōdō and Kidendō traditions, continued to remain authoritative and widely referenced, even in many cases referred to as the original source for some names and anecdotes which were in actuality taken from other intermediary and non-canonical texts, these intermediaries became both the more handy and direct source for knowledge and inspiration and the hidden and open source for literary imagination and adaptation.

The compilation of these intermediaries also stimulated the compilation of anecdotal literature, as the former provided new way of organizing and reconstruction Chinese names and anecdotes, as well as the themes and evaluations that had been associated with them, which was reflected in the latter. As shown in the cases of *Kara monogatari* and *Heike monogatari*, the Chinese references were derived from a variety of texts and genres, both Chinese and Japanese, and had much to do with contemporary poetic commentaries and encyclopedias as well as earlier

⁴⁵ Kuroda, *Chūsei setsuwa no bungakushiteki kankyō*, 151-172.

canonical texts and literary representations. In this regard, the intermediaries were not just a new, complementary source for literary composition, but became the shadows of canonical texts and knowledge, drawing a much more wider contour and providing unnamed clues and inspirations.

Chapter 3 An Emerging Interest in the Song Culture in the 14th – 15th Centuries: The Zen Monks and the *Taiheiki* (*A Chronicle of Great Peace*)

The previous chapters have explored the varied and ongoing understanding of Chinese history and culture in the late Heian and early medieval period, focusing on the tension and negotiation among the three modes of receiving and constructing Chinese culture – the text-based, the name-based, and the term-based. We have seen the formation and continued importance of classical texts and knowledge in representing China, the rise of and gradual reliance on intermediary texts in reimagining China, and the appearance of interests in new interpretations, new editions, and new inventions of older tales and manuscripts that resulted in the new construction of Chinese culture in Japan. In this chapter, I turn to a key and highly influential text that acts as a nexus for many themes of this dissertation, *Taiheiki* 太平記, or *A Chronicle of Great Peace* (1340s-1371), which marks a major entry into the world of late medieval constructions of Chinese culture.

The Zen Monks and the Song Culture

Although the official dispatches of Japanese diplomatic envoys to the Chinese Tang (618-907) court were suddenly ceased in the late ninth century, the commercial exchange between Japan and the continent remained vigorous. The merchant fleets from China and Korean peninsula brought to Japan the most contemporary goods and information, which also made it possible for Japanese Buddhist monks to continue their frequent visits to Tang, Song (960-1279), and Yuan (1271-1368) China in the late Heian (794-1185), Kamakura (1185-1333), and Muromachi (1336-1573) periods. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, commercial publications

started to appear and flourish in Song China. A large number of Song dynasty woodblock-print (Ch. Song-ban, J. Sōhan 宋版) books were published in China and were soon imported to Japan by merchants as well as by Buddhist monks.

As early as in the eleventh century, Song dynasty woodblock-print books, including Buddhist sutras and non-Buddhist texts, had been imported to Japan and had become accessible to Buddhist monks and aristocratic scholar families. They were written in the most contemporary Chinese language, and contained the newest information, tales, interpretations, as well as poetic and literary knowledge. While the Tang dynasty culture and manuscripts still dominated the study of Chinese culture in the Kamakura period, at the same time the new cultures of the Song and Yuan dynasties had already started to draw more scholarly, literary, and artistic attention in Japan and stimulated new study, understanding, and imagination of China. Confucian scholars (especially the Zen monks) were probably the first to incorporate the new knowledge and theories into their studies, whereas the literary manifestation of these new knowledge and approaches would have to wait until the thirteenth century.

The incorporation of Song dynasty culture into Japanese literary culture was largely accomplished at the same time as the introduction of Chinese Chan Buddhism to Japan. Up until the mid-Kamakura period, *kangaku*, or the study of writings in literary Sinitic, was carried out primarily by two groups: Buddhist monks, who belonged to either the Tendai or the Shingon schools and specialized in Buddhist texts, and scholar families (*hakase-ke*), who were middle-rank aristocrats and concentrated on Confucian and literary texts. From the mid-Kamakura period onwards, however, along with the introduction of Chinese Chan (J. Zen) Buddhism to Japan as a separate school, there emerged a new and rising group of scholar and writer, Zen monks, who studied and produced both Buddhist and literary texts, and gradually

began to have more exchanges of texts and knowledge with other groups, particularly the aristocratic scholar families. The Zen Monasteries thus became another center of scholarship outside the court, with the Zen monks (particularly the Gozan, or Five Mountains, Zen monks) assuming a central role in absorbing these new cultures and reworking them into Japanese culture. I will come back to elaborate on this point in Chapter 4.

The introduction of Chinese Chan Buddhism to Japan was stimulated by the ongoing cultural exchange between Japan and China. Although the official dispatch of Japanese envoys to the Tang court ended in 894, Japanese monks continued to set off on their trips to Song (960-1279) and Yuan (1271-1368) China in the late Heian (794-1185), Kamakura (1185-1333), and Muromachi (1336-1573) periods to learn Chinese Buddhist culture. Myōan Eisai 明菴栄西 (1141-1215), a Buddhist priest, for instance, traveled twice to Song China, brought back with him Zen scriptures, and later founded the Shōfukuji, Japan's first Zen temple. Dōgen Kigen 道元希玄 (1200-1253) traveled to and studied in Song China, and founded the Zen monastery Eiheiji upon his return to Japan. Chūgan Engetsu 中巖円月 (1300-1375) traveled to and studied in Yuan China, and became the head of one Zen monastery after another after he returned to Japan. At the same time, Chinese Chan (J. Zen) monks also visited and taught Chinese Chan Buddhism in Japan. Lanxi Daolong 蘭溪道隆 (J. Rankei Dōryū, 1213-1278), for instance, visited Japan in 1246 and was invited by the Kamakura shogunate Hōjō Tokiyori (1227-1263) to become the founding priest of Kenchōji.¹

What the Japanese and Chinese monks brought to Japan was not just Chan Buddhism

¹ For an extensive research on the literature and scholarship of the Zen monks in the medieval period as well as the development of Japanese Zen culture, see Haga Kōshirō, *Chūsei zenrin no gakumon oyobi bungaku ni kansuru kenkyū* (1956; Tōkyō: Shibunkaku shuppan, 1981) and *Chūsei bunka to sono kiban* (Kyōto: Shibunkaku shuppan, 1981). Also see his *Higashiyama bunka no kenkyū* (1945; Kyōto: Shibunkaku shuppan, 1981). I am deeply indebted to and relying on Haga's research on the Japanese Zen culture.

but a wide range of contemporary Chinese culture – Song poetry and poetic theory, calligraphy, painting, and drama, to name just a few. After the fall of the Song court in the late thirteenth century, a large number of Song exiles, most of whom were of rather high literacy, migrated to Japan. Like the Chan monks, they too helped with the promotion of Chan Buddhism and A in Japan. Their arrival also stimulated new interest among Japanese scholars in contemporary Chinese language, particularly the vernacular, and Song dynasty print culture, particularly commercial publications, paved the way for the publication of encyclopedias and literary anthologies, not to mention Zen scriptures, in Japan.²

Chinese Tales, Chinese Maxims and Proverbs, and Chinese Poetry in the *Taiheiki* (太平記)

We have seen, in Chapter 2, that the “*Chūsei Shiki*” (understanding and interpretation of such Chinese official histories as the *Records of the Grand Historian* in the medieval period Japan) complex is not simply a pool of intermediary texts that were held at least in equally importance to the original, canonical ones. Nor was it just a type of historiography that viewed what was named “Chinese history” through the lens of earlier texts and contemporary imagination. It was also a type of scholarship and learning, which places the same, if not more, emphasis on derivatives than the original, and in many cases mixes the two in order to formulate a larger, more inclusive pool of text and knowledge, shared among different social groups and scholarly lineages. Starting from the mid-Kamakura period, however, we find running parallel to the continued popularity of the “*Chūsei Shiki*” complex, a reverse tendency towards the “return

² For an introduction to the transmission of Chan Buddhism in Japan, see Tamamura Takeji, *Gozan bungaku: tairiku bunka shōkaisha to shite no gozan zensō no katsudō* (Tōkyō: Shibundō, 1955), 22-50. Also see Wajima Yoshio, *Nihon Sōgakushi no kenkyū* (Tōkyō: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1988), 85-125 for an introduction to the transmission of Song learning (Sōgaku) in Japan.

to the original source texts” (*genten fukki* 原典復歸), as Masuda Motomu has named it.³ While the former was characterized by the rise of and gradual reliance on intermediary texts in the Japanese reimagining China, the latter featured a concern with new interpretations, new editions, and new inventions of older tales and manuscripts that resulted in yet another new construction of Chinese culture in Japan.

If the appearance of “*Chūsei Shiki*” had much to do with the popularization of Chinese classics for those who could not read the original texts in literary Chinese or did not have access to these texts, then the tendency towards the “return to the original source texts,” for instance, to the *Records of the Grand Historian*, implied a revived concern with the original Chinese source texts. “*Chūsei Shiki*,” the medieval Japanese reconstruction of the *Records of the Grand Historian*, was part of the compilation of knowledge necessary for the education of the elites; “*Chūsei Shiki*” also reflected the textual preferences and literary invention of the scholars and intellectuals who took part in re-shaping the cultural imagination of China. By contrast, the tendency towards the “return to the original source texts” was probably stimulated by the importation and supply of Song dynasty woodblock-printed books (Ch. Songban, J. Sōhan 宋版), and complicated by the exposure to new information, new language, and new tales regarding China. In particular, the importation of woodblock-printed books raises a concern with the “original source text” (*honmon* 本文) of Chinese literary classics, a concern that existed in the Nara and Heian periods but became quite prominent in the late Kamakura period. In this sense, the coexistence of the “*Chūsei Shiki*” complex and the tendency towards the “return to the

³ See Masuda Motomu, “*Taiheiki*” *no hikaku-bungakuteki kenkyū* (Tōkyō: Kadokawa shoten, 1976) for an in-depth, fundamental research on the Chinese references in the *Taiheiki*. I am deeply indebted to Masuda’s work on the *Taiheiki*. Also see Ōsumi Kazuo, *Chūsei Rekishi to bungaku no aida* (1993; Tōkyō: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2011), 198-211 for a discussion of the encyclopedic character of the *Taiheiki* in organizing these Chinese references.

original source texts” is clearly a reflection of the Japanese medieval multi-layered reception of Chinese literary classics.

One good example of this multi-layered reception of Chinese literary classics and contemporary Chinese texts is the *Taiheiki* 太平記, or *Chronicle of Great Peace* (1340s-1371), which belongs to the same genre of warrior tales (*gunki monogatari*), or chronicles, as the *Tale of the Heike*. In contrast to the *Heike*, which concentrates on late 13th century military conflict, the *Taiheiki* describes a turbulent fifty-year period of the Northern and Southern Courts (Nanboku-chō, 1336-1392), starting with the accession of Emperor GoDaigo (r. 1318-1339) in 1318. Like most warrior chronicles, the authorship of the *Taiheiki* is uncertain. A 1374 entry in the *Tōin Kinsada Diary* (*Tōin Kinsada nikki*) describes Priest Kojima (d. 1374), whose identity is unknown, as the author, while Imagawa Ryōshun’s *A Critique of the Taiheiki* (*Nantaiheiki*, 1402) notes that Echin, a priest at the Hosshō-ji temple showed the first thirty or so books to Ashikaga Tadayoshi, who had the Tendai priest Gen’e (d. 1350) read the text and then revise and rewrite it. As Echin and Gen’e were both Buddhist priests and scholars well educated in Confucian studies, it is safe to say that a combination of writers and editors of this type of background probably compiled the *Taiheiki* over a period of time.⁴

A natural result of this type of communal complication is that, as in the case of the *Tales of the Heike*, there are many variant texts and editions of the *Taiheiki* – approximately fifty. These variants are roughly divided into four lineages: 1) old format texts (kotaibon 古態本), represented by the Kanda-bon, Saigen’in-bon, Genkyū-bon, and Jingūchōkokan-bon editions, which do not include volume twenty-two, 2) editions that rewrite volumes twenty-three and

⁴ Hasegawa Tadashi, “*Taiheiki* no seiritsu to sakusha-zō,” in *Taiheiki no seiritsu*, edited by Hasegawa Tadashi (Tōkyō: Kyūko shoin, 1998), 45-60.

twenty-four in the old format and make them into volumes twenty-two and twenty-three, 3) editions that contain volumes twenty-two and twenty-three in the Tenshō-bon edition, and 4) the popular (vulgate) text (rufubon 流布本).⁵

In many senses, the *Taiheiki* can be regarded as a comprehensive encyclopedia of Chinese culture and a textbook for the education of samurai and commoners in learning Chinese history. It contains a fairly large number of Chinese references – names, anecdotes, and maxims, providing standard of judgment, types, models, and values for the audience. According to Masuda Motomu, there are sixty-two self-contained Chinese tales, not to mention those that appear only as topics or names without details. Of these tales, half are taken from the *Records of the Grand Historian* (Ch. *Shi ji*, J. *Shiki* 史記), one of the three most renowned Chinese histories (*sanshi* 三史) in premodern period Japan.⁶ Ōsumi Kazuo further calculated that among the names of actual persons and names of fictitious figures such as deities and Buddhas in the *Taiheiki*, Chinese names takes up a significant proportion – 385 out of 4073, that is, nearly ten percent.⁷ Ranging from the most legendary to the most contemporary, some of these names and anecdotes were already popular in earlier Japanese texts and represents the classical knowledge of China formed in the Heian aristocratic society, whereas some of them only came to the foreground in the medieval period and bear heavy influence from contemporary Gozan Zen culture.

⁵ See Suzuki Tomie, “*Taiheiki* shohon no bunrui: kansū oyobi maki no wakekata o kijun to shite,” *Kokubun* 18 (1963) and “‘*Taiheiki*’ no shohon kenkyū,” *Bungaku* 38, no. 8 (1970) for a brief introduction of the many variants of the *Taiheiki* and the categorization of them. Also see Takahashi Sadaichi, *Taiheiki shohon no kenkyū* (Kyōto: Shibunkaku shuppan, 1980) for more details.

⁶ Masuda, “*Taiheiki*” no hikaku-bungakuteki kenkyū, 113. The three most renowned Chinese histories in premodern period Japan (*sanshi* 三史) refer to the *Records of the Grand Historian* (Ch. *Shi ji*, J. *Shiki* 史記), the *Official History of the Han Dynasty* (Ch. *Han shu*, J. *Kanjo* 漢書), and the *Official History of the Later Han Dynasty* (Ch. *Hou Han shu*, J. *Go-Kanjo* 後漢書).

⁷ Ōsumi, “‘*Taiheiki*’ to ōraimono,” 200.

Both Masuda's and Ōsumi's calculations were based on their research on the old format editions (*kotaibon*) of the *Taiheiki*. In fact, most scholarship of Chinese references centers on their representations in the old format texts. Despite the many differences between the old format and the popular *rufubon* texts of the *Taiheiki*, when it comes to referencing Chinese texts, such as the use of maxims, the selection of details, the allusion to Chinese verses, and the sixty-two Chinese tales narrated as historical events, all of these also appear in the popular *rufubon* texts of the *Taiheiki*.

The following section takes up the popular *rufubon* texts⁸ of the *Taiheiki* in order to compare the popular *rufubon* text with the old format texts and illustrate how Chinese tales and names were selected, transformed, and typologized, how Confucian values were conceptualized and conveyed through the use of these tales and names, and what implications this has for the literary (re)construction of China during the late medieval period. I start with a brief overview of the knowledge of China in the time of the *Taiheiki*, focusing on both the continued tendency to rely on intermediaries and the increasing interest in revisiting the original source texts. I then consider some longer anecdotes that concern and re-conceptualize the themes of loyalty, wisdom, righteousness, and filial piety.

One good example of the “*Chūsei Shiki*” complex in the *Taiheiki* is the opening passage of the preface, which discusses the importance of adhering to the ideal (or avoiding the evil) way of a monarch or a minister, the overarching concern of the authors and compilers of the

⁸ A variant circulated in the sixteenth century. See the *kaisetsu* to *Taiheiki* (Nihon koten bungaku taikai; hereafter NKBT), edited by Gotō Tanji and Kamada Kisaburō (Tōkyō: Iwanami shoten, 1960-1962). In this project, I am relying on the text and annotations from this NKBT edition. I have also consulted *Taiheiki* (Iwanami bunko) edited by Hyōdō Hiromi (Tōkyō: Iwanami shoten 2014-2016), a very recent edition, for its text, and *Taiheiki* (Shinpen Nihon koten bungaku zenshū), edited by Hasegawa Tadashi (Tōkyō: Shōgakkan, 1994-1998) for annotations. I am also indebted to Suzuki Akira for comments on the themes, values, and inner logic within the *Taiheiki*.

Taiheiki.

蒙竊採古今之變化、察安危之來由、覆而無外天之德也。明君體之保國家。載而無棄地之道也。良臣則之守社稷。若夫其德缺則雖有位不持。所謂夏桀走南巢、殷紂敗牧野。其道違則雖有威不久。曾聽趙高刑咸陽、祿山亡鳳翔。是以前聖慎而得垂法於將來也。後昆顧而不取誠於既往乎。⁹

I privately look into the change from the ancient period to the present and observe the reason of peace and danger. That which covers everything without leaving out any is the Heavenly Virtue, to which the wise monarch adheres to secure the nation. That which supports everything without abandoning any is the Earthly Way, which the good minister follows to defend the country. If the monarch lacks such Virtue, he cannot maintain his position. This is why Jie of Xia ran to Nanciao, and Zhou of Ying suffered defeat at Muye. If a minister deviates from the Way, he cannot hold onto power for long. I heard that Zhao Gao was executed in Xianyang, and Lushan perished in Huangxiang. Therefore, the ancient sages were discreet and thus able to set out principles for future generations. Shouldn't we descendants reflect on history and draw lessons from it?

Two elements figure prominently here. First is the definition of “Heavenly Virtue” (天之德) and “Earthly Way” (地之道): the former “covers everything without leaving out any,” while the latter “supports everything without abandoning any.” Originally appearing in the commentary on the old-script edition (Ch. *guwen*, J. *kobu* 古文) of the *Classic of Filial Piety* (Ch. *Xiaojing*, J. *Kōkyō* 孝經), one of the most important Confucian classics in premodern China and Japan, this definition can also be found in the *Collection of Enlightened Writings* (*Meibunshō* 明文抄) and the *Secret Collection of Jade Case* (*Gyokkan hishō* 玉函秘抄), both of which are Japanese collections of Chinese maxims and proverbs (*kingenshū* 金言集). The definition of “Heavenly Virtue” and “Earthly Way” thus carries a strong Confucian flavor. Notably, there is no further exploration or explanation of these two concepts other than these two lines. They were either

⁹ *Taiheiki* (NKBT 34), 34.

extremely familiar to the contemporary Japanese readers – at least to scholars and intellectuals, or characteristically exotic, simply placed here as a cultural sign to associate the inner logic and concept of the *Taiheiki* with the high culture.

As represented by the preface, a large proportion of Chinese maxims and proverbs cited in the *Taiheiki* can be found in this type of collection, all of which were compiled in Japan from the mid-Heian to the early Kamakura period. The four most prominent are: the *Collection of Enlightened Writings* (*Meibunshō* 明文抄), the *Secret Collection of Jade Case* (*Gyokkan hishō* 玉函秘抄), the *Worldly Phrases* (*Sezoku genbun* 世俗諺文), and the *Collection of Limited Visions* (*Kanreishō* 管蠡抄). They represent not only the transmission of Chinese culture; they also reveal medieval attitudes on learning as well as the medieval knowledge of China. On the one hand, all the original Chinese sources for the compilation of these collections are manuscripts produced during the Tang dynasty in China and imported to Japan during the Nara and Heian periods. On the other hand, the selection and organization of these maxims and proverbs represent the views and concerns of contemporary Japanese scholars and intellectuals about the existing knowledge on China. Although it is impossible to determine whether the four Japanese collections of maxims and proverbs or the original Chinese manuscripts is the direct source for the author of the *Taiheiki* –, the overlap between the *Taiheiki* and these collections of Chinese maxims and proverbs bear significant implications for the understanding of the position of the *Taiheiki* in the history of the reception of Chinese culture in Japan.

The second element figuring in the preface is the description of wise monarchs 明君 (literally, enlightened monarchs) and good ministers 良臣. Again, the narrator provides no further exploration or explanation of what exactly constitutes a wise monarch or a good minister

inherently, but simply notes that the former adheres to the Heavenly Virtue and the latter follow the Earthly Way. Interestingly, in what follows, the narrator immediately brings to the fore a few Chinese examples of those who lack such Virtue or deviate from the Way and thus perish shortly. The emphasis is thus placed not so much in theoretically providing historical models of virtue as in pragmatically conveying didactic messages for the present. In this sense, the use of Chinese figures and events in the *Taiheiki* represents not so much a coherent attitude toward Chinese history in the late medieval period as multiple – and sometimes even contradictory – imaginations of what is known as “China.”

In the *Taiheiki*, along with the continued popularity of the “*Chūsei Shiki*” complex, there is also a tendency towards the “return to the original source texts” (*genten fukki* 原典復帰), as Masuda Motomu has named it. Masuda compares the Chinese references in the *Taiheiki* with their Chinese source texts and their Japanese representations prior to the *Taiheiki*, and points out that the Chinese references in the *Taiheiki* bear more resemblance to the original text of the *Records of the Grand Historian* than to other intermediaries or representations.¹⁰

Notable here is the implication of the parallel between the “*Chūsei Shiki*” complex and the “return to the original source texts.” The appearance of “*Chūsei Shiki*” has much to do with the popularization of Chinese classics for those who cannot read the original texts in literary Chinese or do not have access to these texts. It also has to do with the compilation of knowledge necessary for the education of the elites. The preferences of the scholars and intellectuals who take part in such process clearly play an important role in shaping the cultural imagination of China. On the other hand, the tendency towards the “return to the original source texts,” for instance, to the *Records of the Grand Historian*, implies a reviving concern with the original

¹⁰ See Masuda, “*Taiheiki*” *no hikaku-bungakuteki kenkyū*.

Chinese source texts at the time of the compilation, *Taiheiki*, which was probably stimulated by the importation and supply of Song dynasty woodblock-printed books (Ch. Songban, J. Sōhan 宋版), and complicated by the exposure to new information, new language, and new tales regarding China. In particular, the importation of woodblock-printed books raises a concern with the “original source text” (*honmon* 本文) of Chinese literary classics, which appeared in the Nara and Heian periods, but becomes quite prominent in the late medieval period. In this sense, the coexistence of the “*Chūsei Shiki*” complex and the tendency towards the “return to the original source texts” is clearly a reflection of the multi-layered reception of Chinese literary classics.

A good example of this type of coexistence can be found in the tale of King Zhou (J. Chū) of Ying (J. In) 殷紂, one of the most notorious rulers in Chinese history. In the preface, King Zhou is listed along with King Jie (J. Ketsu) of Xia (J. Ka) 夏桀 as typical models of bad monarchs lacking in Heavenly Virtue. Later in the *Taiheiki*, in Volume 30, his tale is narrated in more detail and contains some revealing comments on bad monarchs. In what follows, I list both the passage in the *Taiheiki* and that in the *Records of the Grand Historian*, and underline the differences between the two. This passage is actually just part of a larger passage spoken by a Buddhist Zen priest and Confucian scholar (Fujiwara, Shōnagon, Arinori 有範) as advice to Ashikaga Naoyoshi 直義 (brother of Ashikaga Takauji, one of the most powerful men in the country at the time). In other words, this is a quotation from a speech.

『太平記』

紂王長リ給テ後、智ハ諫ヲ拒、是非ノ端ヲ餽ルニ足レリ。勇ハ人ニ過テ、手ヅカラ猛獸ヲ格ニ難シトセズ。人臣ニ矜ルニ能ヲ以テシ、天下ニタカブルニ聲ヲ以テセシカバ、人皆己ガ下ヨリ出タリトテ、諫諍ノ臣ヲモ不被置、先王ノ法ニ

モ不順。姐己ト云美人ヲ愛シテ、萬事只是ガ申俣ニ付給ヒシカバ、罪無シテ死ヲ賜フ者多ク只積惡ノミアリ。¹¹

Taiheiki: When King Zhou had grown up, he had cunning enough to evade reproofs, and was voluble enough to distinguish between right and wrong. His courage was extraordinary, his physical strength equal to that of a wild beast. He boasted that he was above his ministers on the ground of ability, and that he surpassed the people of the empire on account of his reputation. He did not assign positions to expostulatory ministers. Nor did he follow the laws of ancient kings. His partiality for Daji caused him to carry out whatever she desired, and accumulate such evil deeds as the frequent execution of the innocent.

『史記』

帝紂資辨捷疾，聞見甚敏；材力過人，手格猛獸；知足以距諫，言足以飾非；矜人臣以能，高天下以聲，以為皆出己之下。好酒淫樂，嬖於婦人。愛姐己，姐己之言是從。¹²

Records: Emperor Zhou's discrimination was acute, his hearing and sight particularly good, his natural abilities extraordinary, and his physical strength equal to that of a wild beast. He had cunning enough to evade reproofs, and volubility enough to gloss over his faults. He boasted that he was above his ministers on the ground of ability, and that he surpassed the people of the empire on account of his reputation. He indulged in wine, women, and lusts of all sorts. His partiality for Daji caused him to carry out whatever she desired.

As can be seen from the comparison, the passage in the *Taiheiki* is largely identical with that in the *Records of the Grand Historian*. Some lines are simply translations of the original literary Chinese into a mixed style of *kanji* (Chinese graphs) and *katakana*. Others are faithful explanation of the original. The only differences lie in King Zhou's displacement of expostulatory ministers, his disobedience of the laws of ancient kings, and his accumulated evil deeds of executing the innocent. As the narration in the *Taiheiki* largely remains faithful to that in the *Records of the Grand Historian*, these differences might reveal what are the *Taiheiki*'s

¹¹ *Taiheiki* (NKBT 36), 152.

¹² *Shi ji* (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1982), 105. The passage is from the "Annals of Ying" (Ch. *Ying Benji*, J. *Inhongi* 殷本紀).

authors greatest concerns. (*Taiheiki* is multi-authored.) The first is a reiteration of the earlier statement “智ハ諫ヲ拒 (he had cunning enough to evade reproofs)” added by the author of the *Taiheiki*, an indication of the particular importance of the issue of expostulation. Notable here is the recurrent association between the refusal of expostulation and the eventual downfall of the monarch. Indeed, bad monarchs are always characterized as self-conceited and egocentric, oftentimes born evil and licentious. The second and the third differences are inventions in the *Taiheiki*, suggestive of the associations often made with bad monarchs in this *Taiheiki*, particularly the executing of innocent people, in which proper judgment in deciding awards and punishments on the basis of merit and demerit is an important aspect of good monarchs.

In this story, the tale of King Wen (J. Bun) of Zhou (J. Shū) 周文王, is narrated along with that of King Zhou of Ying, forms a sharp contrast. As the counter of bad monarchs who do not accept expostulation, King Wen studies under his good minister Taigong Wang (J. Taikōbō 太公望), and becomes the model of wise monarchs.

則武成王ト仰テ、文王是ヲ師トシ仕フル事不疎、逐ニ太公望ガ謀ニ依テ西伯徳ヲ行ヒシカバ、其子武王ノ世ニ當テ、天下ノ人皆殷ヲ背テ周二歸セシカバ、武王逐ニ天下ヲ執テ永ク八百餘年ヲ保チキ。¹³

Then he (Taigong Wang) was named as Prince Wucheng. King Wen took him as his preceptor and served him attentively. In the end, by following Taigong Wang's strategy, King Wen was able to perform his virtue. Until the age of his son, King Wu, all under heaven turned against Yin and paid allegiance to Zhou. In the end, King Wu wielded the power of all under heaven and safeguarded the peace for eight hundred years and more.

Notable here is the emphasis on “following Taigong Wang's strategy” (太公望ガ謀ニ

¹³ *Taiheiki* (NKBT 36), 154.

依テ) and “performing his virtue” (徳ヲ行ヒシカバ). The virtue 徳 of a wise monarch is thus connected to the strategy 謀 of a good minister. A wise monarch is made possible by his willingness to accept the remonstrance 諫 and strategy 謀 of good ministers. In other words, in the *Taiheiki*, whether a monarch is wise or not is largely defined not so much by his own quality as by his acceptance of the remonstrance and strategy of good ministers. These Chinese stories are cited in the context of different retainers (subordinates) giving advice to their powerful superiors (in this passage, Ashikaga Naoyoshi, younger brother of Ashikaga Takauji). At the end of this section, after the telling of the Chinese story, the narrator compares the Zen priest (the first narrator) to King Wen (Bun’ō) and himself to Taikōbō (Taigong Wang, the good minister).

First brought up in the Preface, the ideas of “wise monarchs” and “good ministers” were then reiterated time and again throughout the *Taiheiki*. The conceptualization and specification of “wise monarchs” and “good ministers” seems to be the overarching concern of the *Taiheiki*. In fact, a substantial proportion of Chinese tales referenced in the *Taiheiki* are tales of monarchs and ministers. In order to explore these two ideas, the authors and compilers, as well as the narrators, made extensive references to Chinese figures and events.

These Chinese tales of monarchs and ministers are mainly drawn from the *Records of the Grand Historian*, particularly in terms of content and expressions. Yet there are also extensive references to other Chinese literary and historical classics, which are largely made possible through such intermediaries as Chinese and Japanese encyclopedias, commentaries, and dictionaries, most of which are imported to Japan or compiled in Japan during the Kamakura period. In other words, the references to these Chinese tales not only show close connection with the classical knowledge of China inherited from the Nara and Heian periods, which centers on

the reception of Tang culture, but also reflects the contemporary, newly formed knowledge of China characteristic of the Muromachi period, which is largely influenced by the importation of Song and Yuan culture. These two types of knowledge of China thus mix and interact with each other in the *Taiheiki*, which in turn creates a third type of knowledge and understanding of China. The themes and values of these Chinese tales in the *Taiheiki* become both inherited and quite distinctive from those in earlier texts. In short, the *Taiheiki* became an encyclopedic representation of multiple understandings and imaginations of China that are characteristic of the times.

Recurring Themes and Core Values in the *Taiheiki*

As discussed in Chapter Two, a prominent feature of Chinese references in medieval Japanese warrior tales, or chronicles, is that they rely heavily on character types and gravitate towards a number of recurrent themes. This typological interest can be found in the *Taiheiki* as well. Among the sixty-two Chinese tales, the four lengthiest are all concerned with monarch-minister relations: 1) tales of the warfare between Wu 吳 (J. Go) and Yue 越 (J. Etsu), 2) the warfare between Han 漢 (J. Kan) and Chu 楚 (J. So), 3) Yang Guozhong 楊国忠 (J. Yōkokuchū), and 4) the warfare between Song 宋 (J. Sō) and Yuan 元 (J. Gen). With the exception of the last one, the other three all center on one or some of the four most prominent themes – tragic love, political exile, loyalty, and filial piety.

The tale of the warfare between Wu and Yue, for instance, is largely a tale of loyalty, but also concerns themes of political exile, filial piety, and tragic love. It centers on two loyal figures, Fan Li 范蠡 (J. Hanrei, 536-448 BCE) and Wu Zixu 伍子胥 (J. Goshisho). While Fan

Li is characterized more as a figure of intelligence (*ken* 賢), who remonstrates with his lord King Goujian 勾踐 (J. Kōsen, 496-465 BCE) of Yue and helps him redeem himself. Wu Zixu is portrayed more as a figure of loyalty (*kō* 孝), who risks his life to remonstrate against the wrong doings of his lord King Fuchai 夫差 (J. Fusa, 495-473 BCE) of Wu. King Goujian of Yue is captured and made a servant of his enemy King Fuchai of Wu for three years until he is eventually allowed to return to his native state. During his exile, Goujian accomplishes the transition from a bad to a good monarch. Finally, filial piety is brought to the fore in Goujian's initial intention to attack the state of Yue, while tragic love is manifested in Goujian's parting with his beloved consort Xi Shi 西施 (J. Seishi, 506 BCE-?), who is forcibly taken away by his enemy Fuchai. Similarly, the tale of the warfare between Han and Chu centers on loyalty, but at the same time it also concerns themes of intelligence, military cunning, and righteousness. The tale of Yang Guozhong, the brother of Consort Yang (Yōkihi 楊貴妃), centers on tragic love, which is represented by the famous love story between Emperor Xuanzong of Tang (J. Tō no Gensō 唐玄宗, 685-762) and Consort Yang (Ch. Yang Guifei, J. Yōkihi 楊貴妃, 719-756). Emperor Xuanzong is forced to leave the capital because of the An Lushan (J. Anrokuzan 安祿山) rebellion (755-763) and have his beloved lady executed during his exile, a story that involves reconciling with the demands of his loyal warriors. Although the tale of the warfare between Song and Yuan is not concerned directly with any of these four themes, it centers on intelligence, military strategy, and military cunning, which, together with righteousness, are often related to the theme of loyalty and of the ideal way of being a minister.

In tales other than the four major ones above, these four themes – tragic love, political exile, loyalty, and filial piety – also show a strong presence. Tales of tragic love, for instance,

include that between Xiang Yu 項羽 (J. Kōu, 232-202 BCE), a prominent warlord in the late Qin dynasty and one of the most famous Chinese figures in the *Taiheiki*, and his beloved concubine Consort Yu 虞姬 (Ch. Yu Ji, J. Guki, ?-202 BCE), and that between Emperor Wu of Han 漢武帝 (J. Kan no Butei, 156-87 BCE) and his beloved concubine Lady Li 李夫人 (J. Rifujin, 141-87 BCE). The theme of tragic love is always portrayed with luxuriant imagery and abundant allusions to classical poetry and prose, and referenced times and again throughout the *Taiheiki*. Moreover, in the *Taiheiki*, the theme tragic love is often represented in the context of military defeat and political exile, and connected with such issues as good/bad rulership and the magic power of immortals.

Tales of political exile include that of Han Changli 韓昌黎 (J. Kanshōrei, 768-824), original name Han Yu 韓愈 (J. Kanyu), a Chinese essayist and poet in the Tang dynasty, whose exile is foretold by his nephew Han Xiang 韓湘 (J. Kanshō, b. 794) in an early poem; that of Bao Shuya 鮑叔牙 (J. Hōshukuga, d. 644 BCE), who accompanies his lord into exile and eventually helps his lord avenge his disgrace; that of Ci Tong 慈童 (J. Jidō, ?-?), a young boy who is sent to exile because he is extremely favored by Emperor Mu of Zhou 周穆王 (J. Shū no Bokuō, d. 922 BCE), but later becomes a recluse and eventually an immortal; and that of Qu Yuan 屈原 (J. Kutsugen, 343-278 BCE), a Chinese poet and minister who lived in the Warring State period, is slandered by Prime Minister Zilan and sent to exile. Notably, the focus is not on the sentiment of exile – sadness or loneliness, which is often the case in classical poetry – but rather on the reason or result for exile, which is often related to good/bad governance, to the ideal way of a monarch or a minister. It may also be connected with issues of reclusion and immortality.

Tales of loyalty include that of Ji Xin 紀信 (J. Kishin, d. 204 BCE), a general who volunteered to act as a decoy to help his lord Emperor Gaozu of Han escape from a desperate situation; and that of Hong Yan 弘演 (J. Kōen, ?-?), a minister in the state of Wei 衛 (J. Ei) in the Spring and Autumn period (770-476 BCE), who cuts open his own belly and puts in the liver of his lord, the only physical remains of his lord, making his own body the coffin of his lord in order to repay the kindness of his lord; that of Bian He 卞和 (J. Benwa, ?-?), who finds a piece of jade stone and presents it insistently to three kings until the value of it is finally recognized; that of Lin Xiangru 藺相如 (J. Rinshōjō, 329-259 BCE) and Lian Po 廉頗 (J. Renpa, ?-?), a politician and a military general respectively, serving in the State of Zhao 趙 (J. Chō) during the Warring States period (476-221 BCE), both playing a significant role in protecting the dignity of their state from the high-handed approach of the King of Qin 秦 (J. Shin); and that of a few official historiographers during the reign of Emperor Xuanzong of Tang who sacrifice their lives to record the true history of Emperor Xuanzong's forcibly taking the consort-to-be of his brother to be his own consort. As indicated by these tales, the theme loyalty is often manifested in such actions as remonstrating to one's lord, sacrificing one's life for the ruler, and distinguishing between right and wrong.

Tales of loyalty include that of Prince Shen Sheng 申生 (J. Shinsei, ?-?), who is framed by his stepmother Concubine Li 驪姬 (Ch. Li Ji, J. Riki, d. 651 BCE) and sacrifices his life to show filial piety to his father; that of Mikenjaku 眉間尺, who assassinates the king in order to fulfill filial duties to his parents; that of the legendary Emperor Shun 舜 (J. Shun), who ascends the throne because his filial piety and gains the favor of Emperor Yao 堯 (J. Gyō); that of Cao E 曹娥 (J. Sōga, 130-143), a filial daughter whose filial heart moves deities and

Buddhas to take revenge for her and help her get back of her father's remains; and that of Jing Wei 精衛 (J. Seiei), a filial bird who makes efforts to fill up the ocean in order to avenge his father's drowning. Notably, filial piety is often represented through avenging one's parents, even to the extreme of assassinating the king. Filial piety is a value considered to be the very basis of a human being, beyond all other values.

These four themes – tragic love, political exile, loyalty, and filial piety – are also intertwined with other important themes in this tale such as vengeance, cunning, and reclusion. Vengeance is often related to political exile, loyalty, and filial piety. The tale of the warfare between Wu and Yue, for instance, starts with a popular phrase originating from the *Heike*, “to avenge the disgrace at Mount Kuaiji (*kaikei no haji wo kiyomu* 会稽ノ恥ヲ雪ム),” which comes straight to the point that this is a tale of vengeance, and is referenced in other chapters as well, indicating the popularity of vengeance as a theme in the *Taiheiki*. Cunning is a theme represented by Fan Li 范蠡 and Official Zhong 大夫種, both of whom play an important role in helping Goujian 勾踐 out after his defeat. Reclusion is a theme often related to intelligence, immortality, and detachment. Though in most part of the tale Fan Li is characterized as a loyal and intelligent figure, in the end he becomes the prototype of a recluse, detached from worldly affairs – an aspect that is often emphasized in classical poetry.

What I aim to explore here are the ideas of “wise monarchs” and “good ministers” as emphasized in the preface of the *Taiheiki*. The idea of “wise monarchs” is always defined in relation to “good ministers,” and the “virtue” of wise monarchs is only made possible by following the “remonstrations” of good ministers. On the other hand, the idea of “good ministers” is mainly represented by three key values – “loyalty 忠,” “wisdom 賢,” and “righteousness 義.”

With “loyalty” placed in the center, these three values distinguish themselves from but also interact and overlap each other. Together they end up producing a new value system characteristic of the world of the *Taiheiki*.

The idea “loyalty” in the *Taiheiki* is often manifested in the act of “remonstration 諫,” marked by the act of not considering the gain and loss of the self, and thus often associated with the act of risking one’s life for one’s monarch. In contrast, the idea of “intelligence” is twofold. One type of intelligence means assisting the monarch through “resourcefulness 智” and “cunning 謀” and correcting the wrong doings of the monarch through “remonstration.” By adding the act of not considering the gain and loss of the self, this type of intelligence would become “loyalty.” Another type of intelligence has nothing to do with political affairs. It refers to the life style of living in reclusion deep in the mountains or by the water. On the other hand, the idea of “righteousness” could either mean performing deeds of merit as good ministers yet not pursuing power and position, or it could refer to the inner quality necessary for good monarchs.

Although the idea of “loyalty” is extremely important, emphasized time and again in the *Taiheiki*, the authors of the *Taiheiki* place the idea of “filial piety” as the starting foundation, probably an indication of the extent to which this idea has been assimilated into medieval Japanese culture. Also notable is that the ideas of “loyal ministers” and “filial sons” are often reminiscent of each other, and when it comes to these two ideas, it often becomes natural to reference Chinese figures and tales.

In what follows, I aim to provide more concrete examination of the ideas of loyalty 忠, wisdom 賢, righteousness 義, and filial piety 孝 in the world of the *Taiheiki* by focusing on four Chinese tales – the warfare between Wu and Yue 吳越軍事, the tale of Lian Po and Lin

Xiangru 廉頗藺相如事, the warfare between Han and Chu 漢楚合戰事, and the filial tale of Shun 虞舜孝高事. Since Masuda Motomu has already done elaborate research on the Chinese and Japanese source texts for these tales, I do not intend to repeat it in this chapter. Instead, I look into the concrete ways in which these three values, all carrying a strong Confucian flavor, are conceptualized and conveyed in detail.

Loyalty (忠) and Wisdom (賢) in *The Warfare Between Wu and Yue* 吳越軍事¹⁴

The tale of the warfare between Wu 吳 and Yue 越 centers on the continuous fight between two rulers, King Goujian 勾踐 (J. Kōsen, 496-465 BCE) of Yue and King Fuchai 夫差 (J. Fusa, 495-473 BCE) of Wu. Given that much emphasis is placed on the loyal subjects who played a vital role in advising the rulers, and that the two rulers' temporary, alternant wins and defeats were largely decided by their relationship with these subjects, the tale is not just a tale of warfare, or of good and bad rulers. It is also a tale of loyal subjects, and of ruler-subject relations.

Wu and Yue were enemy states for generations. The tale starts with Goujian's insistence in attacking Wu, which he justifies as revenging his dead father and ancestors, as the proper duty of a son.

「吳ハ是父祖ノ敵也。我是ヲ不討、徒ニ送年事、嘲ヲ天下ノ人ニ取ノミニ非ズ。兼テハ父祖ノ尸ヲ九泉ノ苔ノ下ニ羞シムル恨アリ。然レバ我今國ノ兵ヲ召集テ、自ラ吳國ヘ打超、吳王夫差ヲ亡シテ父祖ノ恨ヲ散ゼント思也。」¹⁵

¹⁴ See *Taiheiki* (NKBT 34), 138-156.

¹⁵ *Taiheiki* (NKBT 34), 140.

“The state of Wu is the enemy of my father and ancestors. It is not the right thing for me to spend years in vain without attacking it and bear the scorn from people under the Heaven. I also feel ashamed that the corpse of my father and ancestors would suffer humiliation under the moss of Nine Springs in the nether world. Therefore, I intend to gather the warriors of our state and attack the state of Wu, to destroy King Fuchai of Wu and vent the regret of my father and ancestors.”

Although the narrator makes no clear statement of whether revenging one’s dead father and ancestors is considered an act of filial piety or not, the justification of war is made from a private than public perspective. Goujian, in other words, considered himself first as a son and then as a ruler.

It is no surprise that this very private justification of war met objections from his subjects. In order to remonstrate, Fan Li 范蠡 (J. Hanrei, 536-448 BCE), a loyal subject of Goujian, presented three reasons.

「臣竊ニ事ノ子細ヲ計ルニ、今越ノカヲ以テ吳ヲ亡サン事ハ頗以可難ル。其故ハ先兩國ノ兵ヲ數フルニ吳ハ二十萬騎越ハ纔ニ十萬騎也。誠ニ以小ヲ、大ニ不敵、是吳ヲ難亡其一也。次ニハ以時計ルニ、春夏ハ陽ノ時ニテ忠賞ヲ行ヒ秋冬ハ陰ノ時ニテ刑罰ヲ專ニス。時今春ノ始也。是征伐ヲ可致時ニ非ズ。是吳ヲ難滅其二也。次ニ賢人所歸則其國強、臣聞吳王夫差ノ臣下ニ伍子胥ト云者アリ。智深シテ人ヲナツケ、慮遠クシテ主ヲ諫ム。渠儂吳國ニ有ン程ハ吳ヲ亡ス事可難。是其三也。」¹⁶

“Privately I thought over the particulars of this matter, and found that, judging from the current strength of Yue, it would be extremely hard to destroy Wu. For the reasons, firstly, if we count the numbers of the soldiers of the two states, there are two hundred thousand cavalrymen in Wu, but only one hundred thousand in Yue. Indeed, a small state cannot contend with a great. This is the first reason why it is hard to destroy Wu. Moreover, to take into account the timing, spring and summer are the time of *yang*, during which the ruler should reward the loyal, while autumn and winter are the time of *yin*, during which the ruler should concentrate on punishment. Now it is the beginning of spring; it is not the time for a punitive expedition. This is the second reason why it is hard to destroy Wu. Furthermore, a state will become powerful if wise

¹⁶ *Taiheiki* (NKBT 34), 140-141.

men are willing to come over and pledge allegiance. I heard that, among the subjects of King Fuchai of Wu, there is a man named Wu Zixu, who is exceptionally intelligent in approaching people, and foresighted in remonstrating the ruler. As long as he is in the state of Wu, it would be hard to destroy Wu. This is the third reason.

The first reason is that “a small country cannot contend with a great,” which is a saying from the Confucian classic *Mencius* 孟子. The second concerns the season and timing, the original source for which is the *Zuo Commentary* (Ch. *Zuo zhuan*, J. *Saden* 左伝) on the ancient Chinese chronicle *Spring and Autumn Annals* (Ch. *Chunqiu*, J. *Shunjū* 春秋), but which also appears in the *Collection of Enlightened Writings* (*Meibunshō* 明文抄), a topical encyclopedia of Chinese maxims and proverbs. Lastly, Fan Li pointed to the significance of wise men, which might be an allusion to a saying in the *Annals of Master Yan* (Ch. *Yanzi chunqiu*, J. *Anshi shunjū* 晏子春秋) and the *Han Feizi* (J. *Kanpishi* 韓非子) – “the presence of wise men in the neighboring state is the worry for its enemy state.”¹⁷ The same saying also appears in the popular edition of the *Tale of Heiji* (*Heiji monogatari*), indicating its popularity in Japanese warrior tales or chronicles. Here the idea of wisdom, or intelligence (*ken* 賢), is explained as “deep in resourcefulness (智深)” and “careful in thinking (慮遠ク),” and connected to the act of “remonstrating the ruler (主ヲ諫ム).”

Unfortunately, Goujian was stubborn in his decision. Instead of arguing from the perspective of the potential success or failure of the war, as Fan Li did, Goujian argued for the justification of the war. As he claims, there should be a war because “it is stated in the *Book of Rites* that one cannot live under the same sky with the enemy of one’s father,”¹⁸ another saying

¹⁷ 隣国有聖人敵国之憂也 I am indebted to the notes and annotations in the *Taiheiki* (NKBT).

¹⁸ 礼記ニ、父ノ讎ニハ共ニ不戴天イヘリ。See *Taiheiki* (NKBT 34), 141.

that can be found in the topical encyclopedia *Collection of Enlightened Writings*. Again, he attributed the reason for the war to filial duty to his father. In other words, Fan Li remonstrated from the perspective of a loyal minister, while Goujian held that his role as a son should take priority over his role as a ruler. They both turned to Chinese classics for justification, yet these justifications are nowhere to be found in the *Records of the Grand Historian*, the Chinese source text for this tale. In other words, the relation of this tale in the *Taiheiki* to various Chinese sources reveals a process of recompiling and reorganizing relevant sayings and passages that is much similar to the compilation of topical encyclopedias, which bring together information from various sources in compact form. This is also true for many other Chinese tales in the *Taiheiki*.

Despite the remonstrations and objections raised by Fan Li, Goujian insisted on his plan and attacked the Wu, and unsurprisingly ended up with a crushing defeat at Mount Kuaiji. In retrospect, however, he did not regret his failure or his refusal of foresighted advice, but instead lamented his unwillingness to give up on revenging his dead father, on the affection between father and son. Following the advice of Official Zhong 大夫種 (Ch. Dafu Zhong, J. Taifushō), another loyal subject, he surrendered to Wu in order to preserve his state and save his life. He was then put in jail, living in exile in Wu.

Although Goujian was not yet characterized as a good ruler up to this point, his exile became a dramatic turning point in his transformation. It started with Fan Li's agony at seeing his ruler in jail and his attempt to comfort Goujian. Unable to meet him in person, Fan Li sent Goujian a message by putting it in the belly of a fish. In the message, Fan Li pointed to the experience of two sage rulers, King Wen of Zhou and Duke Wen of Jin (name Chong'er), to persuade Goujian to endure the hardships and humiliations and to wait for the proper time to restore his state and power. Both King Wen and Duke Wen were forced to live in exile for many

years before ascending to power, their tales were recorded in the *Records of the Grand Historians* and then related time and again in the *Taiheiki*. It seems, in short, that there is a hidden connection between political exile and good rulership, a connection with which the authors of the *Taiheiki* were deeply concerned.

The chance for return soon came when Fuchai fell ill and needed someone to taste his calculus for a diagnosis. In order to gain Fuchai's trust, Goujian volunteered to taste it. His devotion moved Fuchai, who, after his recovery, decided to release Goujian as a reward. Notably, this anecdote regarding the taste of the calculus was not related in the *Records*; it can only be found in the *Spring and Autumn Annals of Wu and Yue* (Ch. *Wu Yue Chunqiu*, J. *Go-Etsu shunjū* 吳越春秋), an unofficial history compiled in the Later Han dynasty (25-220) China. As I mentioned earlier, in general the language and content of the Chinese tales narrated in the *Taiheiki* bears more resemblances to the *Records* than to other Chinese and Japanese source texts. Yet as can be seen from this tale, the understanding and imagination of these Chinese tales – both language and content – still reflect the huge influence of anecdotes and unofficial histories.

After Goujian's return to his home, Fuchai made a further request – to present him with Xi Shi (J. *Seishi* 西施, 506 BCE-?), Goujian's beloved consort. Sorrowful and enraged, Goujian wanted to reject the offer, but Fan Li remonstrated in tears and with reason. Goujian reluctantly agreed, giving up his beloved consort, following the advice of Fan Li, for the sake of his state, a further indication of his gradual transformation into a good ruler. Xi Shi soon gained the favor of Fuchai, who became less and less interested in managing state affairs. Seeing this, Wu Zixu (J. *Goshisho* 伍子胥), a loyal subject of Fuchai, who may be seen as the counterpart of Fan Li, severely remonstrated his lord. He brought up examples of King Zhou of Yin and King You of Zhou, both of whom had been bad rulers infatuated with beautiful women and eventually

suffered the destruction of their states, yet Fuchai rejected his advice and, enraged by his harsh criticism, ordered him executed. If Goujian's rejection of Fan Li's initial remonstrance can be seen as foreshadowing his future defeat and his acceptance of Official Zhong's advice to surrender marks a turning point in his transformation to good ruler, Fuchai's rejection of Wu Zixu's remonstrance clearly foreshadows his subsequent demise.

Right before his execution, Wu Zixu lamented and made a prediction of Fuchai's dark future.

争イ諫メテ死節是臣下ノ則也。我正ニ越ノ兵ノ手ニ死ナンヨリハ、寧君王ノ手ニ死事恨ノ中ノ悦也。但シ君王臣ガ忠諫ヲ忿テ吾ニ賜死事、是天已ニ棄君也。¹⁹

It is the norm of the subjects to dispute and remonstrate and die for integrity. I'd rather die at the hands of you (the King) than at the hands of the warriors of Yue, the former being the most joyful regret. However, if you are angry at my loyal remonstrance and bestow upon me death, then it means that the Heaven has already abandoned you.

The emphasis here is the connection between loyalty and remonstrance. As “the norm of the subjects (臣下ノ則)” is considered lying in the act of “disputing and remonstrating and dieing for integrity (争イ諫メテ死節),” the destruction of a bad ruler is regarded as the natural result of rejecting the loyal remonstrance of his loyal subjects.

The tale ends with Goujian's success in destroying Wu and Fan Li's retreat from court. At a proper time proposed by Fan Li, Goujian attacked Wu for the second time and won a resounding victory. Fuchai tried to sue for peace, but Fan Li warned Goujian about the danger of letting Fuchai live. Following Fan Li's advice, Goujian completely destroyed Wu, “wiping off

¹⁹ *Taiheiki* (NKBT 34), 152-153.

the disgrace he suffered at Mount Kuaiji.”²⁰ As his state Yue ascended in power, Goujian decided to reward Fan Li with a noble title and make him a lord of ten thousand households. Fan Li, however, rejected it. He resigned from political life, and became a recluse. It is said that people had seen him traveling around the Five Lakes by boat and calling himself Taozhu Gong 陶朱公 (literally, “Lord Taozhu,” J. Tōshukō).

Although the tale focuses on the continuous struggle between Goujian and Fuchai, the emphasis is constantly placed on their respective relationships to their subjects. Goujian closed his ears to Fan Li’s remonstrations, so he met a crushing defeat. When he started to follow his advice, he was able to endure the hardships and humiliations and eventually restore his state and power. Similarly, Fuchai closed his ears from Wu Zixu’s remonstrations and even executed him. His rejection of his loyal subjects foreshadowed his future fall. In this sense, Fan Li and Wu Zixu are counterparts of each other. They are both examples of good subjects, typically characterized as people of wisdom (賢), “deep in resourcefulness (智深)” and “careful in thinking (慮遠).” Yet they were of different characters, had different relationships with their rulers, and suffered different fates. When Goujian was planning his attack on Wu and rejected Fan Li’s remonstrations, Fan Li did not risk his life to try a second remonstrations. In contrast, when Fuchai indulged himself in Xi Shi’s beauty and lost his interest in state affairs, Wu Zixu remonstrated time and again, to the extent that Fuchai was furiously enraged and decided to execute him. Perhaps due to their difference in “remonstrating the rulers (主ヲ諫ム),” Fan Li and Wu Zixu were labeled differently in the *Taiheiki*. Wu Zixu was appraised as “the loyal subject Wu Zixu (忠臣伍子胥),” while Fan Li never received such an evaluation – not even once was he labeled

²⁰ 会稽ノ恥ヲ雪ムル See *Taiheiki* (NKBT 34), 154.

“a loyal subject.” In other words, while “wisdom (賢)” and “loyalty (忠)” are both illustrated by the act of “remonstration (J. *isame* 諫),” they differ in that the connotation of loyalty often involves a risk of death for the sake of integrity.

The same labeling of Wu Zixu as a loyal subject also appears in the *Annals of Wu and Yue* and *The Glory of Yue* (Ch. *Yuejue Shu*, J. *Etsuzetsusho* 越絶書), from which the *Taiheiki* draws reference, but not in the *Shi ji*, or the *Records of the Grand Historian*. In fact, in the *Shi ji*, it is very rare for a person to be labeled “a loyal subject.” It might be due to the fact that the labeling of “a loyal subject” is a very late attempt in historiography, later than the compilation of the *Shi ji*, and has some to do with commentaries and unofficial histories, but it also raises such questions as exactly what constitutes the idea of “loyalty” and “loyal subjects” in the *Shi ji*, what makes the transformation of this idea from the *Shi ji* to the *Taiheiki*, and what implications it bears for the understanding of the reconstruction of Chinese tales and history in the *Taiheiki*.

The following two extracts are also taken from the tale, providing some hint of the understanding of the idea of “loyalty” in the *Taiheiki*. Again, neither of them appears in the Chinese source texts.

為君王ノ、天下ノ太平ヲ謀ランニ、豈一日モ盡忠不傾心ヤ。²¹

In order to plot for the ruler and for the peace of the world, there is not a single day that I do not exhaust my loyalty and put my heart and soul into it.

君行非時不顧臣ノ忠也。²²

When the King is to conduct wrongdoings, he neglects the loyalty of the subjects.

²¹ *Taiheiki* (NKBT 34), 146.

²² *Taiheiki* (NKBT 34), 154.

The first extract reveals that the idea of loyalty is connected to the act of “plotting (J. *haka-ran* 謀ラン)” for the ruler and the peace of the world. The second hints at the connection between loyalty and remonstrance, as the duty of the loyal subjects is to prevent the King from conducting wrongdoing. Although Fan Li, like Wu Zixu, served his ruler wholeheartedly and provided insightful remonstrances, his attempt to remonstrate against his ruler did not go so far as to risk his life, and thus he was never labeled a loyal subject, but instead was considered a wise man. After completing all his accomplishments, he retired from the court and started a new life as a recluse.

「大名ノ下ニハ久ク不可居ル、功成名遂而身退ハ天ノ道也」トテ、遂ニ姓名ヲ替ヘ陶朱公ト呼レテ、五湖ト云所ニ身ヲ隠シ、世ヲ遁テゾ居タリケル。釣シテ芦花ノ岸ニ宿スレバ、半蓑ニ雪ヲ止メ、歌テ楓葉ノ陰ヲ過レバ、孤舟ニ秋ヲ載タリ。一蓬ノ月萬頃ノ天、紅塵ノ外ニ遊デ、白頭ノ翁ト成ニケリ。²³

“One ought not to stay long under a great name. When the work is done, and one’s name has become accomplished, to withdraw into obscurity is the Way of Heaven.” Saying so, Fan Li changed his name and called himself Lord Taozhu. Hiding himself in a place named Five Lakes, he lived a life of recluse. He once went fishing, and resided at the shore with bulrush flowers, his straw rain cape covered by bulrush flowers as if covered by snow. Singing songs, he passed the shadow of maple leaves, his lonely boat carrying the maple leaves as if carrying autumn. Traveling freely in the moonlight and under the vast heaven, he seemed to enjoy himself outside the world of mortals, and eventually became a hoary-headed man.

In the *Shi ji*, Fan Li’s retirement from the court was largely based on his understanding of Goujian as the kind of ruler who could not remain on good terms with his subjects in peacetime. In the *Taiheiki*, however, there are only two related sentences. The first, “one ought not to stay long under a great name,” is Fan Li’s own words, taken from the *Shi ji*. The second, “when the work is done, and one’s name has become accomplished, to withdraw into obscurity is

²³ *Taiheiki* (NKBT 34), 156.

the Way of Heaven,” is a saying from the *Dao De Jing* (*The Classic on the Way and Its Virtue*), a classic Chinese philosophical text, which does not appear in the *Shi ji*. It is, however, one of the many sayings collected in the topical encyclopedia *Collection of Enlightened Writings*, from which the *Taiheiki* has drawn references times and again. It is also a saying that has long been associated with the kind of people, particularly Fan Li, who retire from political life after making their many accomplishments – an idea found in the *Wakan rōeishū* commentaries. In fact, in the *Wakan rōeishū* commentaries, Fan Li enjoys great popularity. He is the very representative of wise men, who are not simply intelligent or concerned with political affairs, but know when to withdraw to live a life of recluse.

The term “wise officials (賢才),” “wise ministers (賢臣),” or “wise men (賢人),” appears nineteen times in the *Taiheiki*, out of which eleven are in Chinese tales. These figures include both those who serve the monarch as good ministers and those who resign from political life and live in seclusion. The former is represented by Lin Xiangru and the latter by Xu You (J. Kyoyu 許由) and Cao Fu (J. Sōfu 巢父). There are also figures who transform from the former to the latter, as represented by the case of Fan Li, and vice versa, as represented by the case of Zhuge Kongming (J. Shokatsukōmei 諸葛孔明) and Taigong Wang (J. Taikōbō 太公望). What can be inferred here is that the idea of “wisdom (賢)” in the *Taiheiki* is at least twofold. On the one hand, it overlaps with the idea of “loyalty (忠),” and is represented by the act of “remonstration (諫).” It is sometimes used interchangeably with such word as “resourcefulness (智)” and “cunning (謀).” On the other hand, it is unrelated to the idea of “loyalty (忠)” but is rather connected with the idea of seclusion.

By comparison, the term “loyal minister 忠臣” appears nineteen times in the *Taiheiki*,

seven times of which – more than one third – are in Chinese tales. Moreover, there are some words often associated with “loyal ministers.” The first is “remonstration 諫,” which appears five times alongside “loyal ministers,” three times of which are in Chinese tales. The second is “filial son 孝子,” which appears four times along with “loyal ministers,” once of which is in Chinese tales. Finally, “intelligent officials 賢士,” “resourceful ministers 智臣,” and “righteous warriors 義士” all appear once alongside “loyal ministers,” yet none of them is in Chinese tales. In summary, the idea of “loyal ministers” in the *Taiheiki* is often associated with the act of “remonstrating,” and the authors of the *Taiheiki* are inclined to reference Chinese tales when it comes to the theme of loyal ministers who provide remonstrations, often at the cost of their lives, as in the case of Wu Zixu. Furthermore, to understand the idea of “loyal ministers,” it is also necessary to examine the idea of “filial sons.” Finally, the idea of “loyalty 忠” in the *Taiheiki* is complicated and reconstructed by such interrelated ideas as “intelligence 賢,” “resourcefulness 智,” and “righteousness 義,” each of which represent a particular aspect of the Way of being a good minister even as they interact with and redefine each other.

Loyalty and Wisdom in *The Tale of Lian Po and Lin Xiangru* 廉頗藺相如事²⁴

To further explore the ideas of “loyalty (忠),” “wisdom (賢),” “resourcefulness (智),” and “righteousness (義),” it might be helpful to look into the tale of Lian Po (J. Renpa 廉頗, ?-?) and Lin Xiangru (J. Rinshōjō 藺相如, 329-259 BCE) in Volume 36 in the *Taiheiki*. Lian Po was a military general, Lin Xiangru a politician. They both served the state of Zhao. Although they

²⁴ See *Taiheiki* (NKBT 36), 36-43.

were not on very good terms at first and their relationship became even worse when the King of Zhao put Lin Xiangru in a high position, they were able to reconcile in the end, and their working together played a decisive role in preserving their state against the hegemony of the state of Qin. It is undoubtedly a tale of loyalty and wisdom. However, the tale does not start directly with the introduction of the two protagonists, but rather with a seemingly irrelevant anecdote, that of Bian He (J. Benwa 卞和, ?-?), a humble villager, and his invaluable jade.

Bian He lived in a mountain village in the state of Chu (J. So 楚, ca. 1030-223 BCE). One day when he was plowing the field, he found a piece of jade stone. Believing that the jade stone, if correctly cut and polished, would be an invaluable treasure, he tried to present it to King Wu of Chu. King Wu ordered a craftsman to cut and polish the stone, but the craftsman could not find the jade. Disappointed and enraged, King Wu thought that Bian He was a fraud, so he had Bian He's left leg cut off and exiled him. A few years later, when King Wen replaced his father and ascended the throne, he happened to pass by the mountain where Bian He lived and heard Bian He's cry. He asked Bian He why he was so heartbroken, so Bian He told him his story and said that he would like to present the jade stone to King Wen. Joyfully accepting it, King Wen too ordered a craftsman to cut and polish the stone, but the craftsman again could not find the jade. Acting like his father, King Wen had Bian He's right leg cut off. Lamenting that the two rulers both failed to recognize the true value of the stone, Bian He shed tears of blood, but he never gave up. Another few years later, when King Cheng, the son of King Wen, ascended the throne and happened to pass by the same mountain, Bian He told his story to King Cheng and presented the jade stone to him. This time, finally, the stone was beautifully cut and polished, and the craftsman found a large, invaluable pure jade nestling inside. The jade was then handed down as a royal treasure for generations, until it finally came into the hands of the King of Zhao

(403-222 BCE).

At first glance, the Bian He anecdote seems irrelevant to the tale, which is about the wisdom and loyalty of two good ministers, Lin Xiangru and Lian Po. Masuda Motomu argues that the purpose of referencing this anecdote is to introduce the origin of the jade and enrich the tale that follows, which is a common practice in the *Taiheiki*, aiming at the expansion of a particular tale or theme, and conducted through the aggregation and interconnection of anecdotes.²⁵ However, taking into consideration the larger context of this tale, it might be safer to say that the referencing of the Bian He anecdote is precisely because Bian's actions bears a close resemblance with that of a good minister and thus echoes the central theme of loyalty and wisdom. In other words, the *Taiheiki* prepares for the subsequent discussion of the talents of the ministers by providing a conceptual framework about the ideas of loyalty and wisdom.

夫天下ヲ取テ、世ヲ治ル人ニハ、必賢才輔弼ノ臣下有テ、國ノ亂ヲ鎮メ君ノ誤ヲ正ス者也。所謂堯ノ八元・舜ノ八凱・周ノ十亂・漢ノ三傑・世祖ノ二十八將・太宗ノ十八學士皆祿厚ク官高シトイヘ共、諸ニ有テ争フ心口無リシカバ、互ニ非ヲ諫メ國ヲシヅメテ、只天下ノ無爲ナラン事ヲノミ思ヘリ。是ヲコソ呼デ忠臣トハ申ニ、今高・上杉ノ兩家中惡クシテ、動モスレバ得失ヲ差テ其權ヲ奪ハント、心ニ插テ思ヘル事、豈忠烈ヲ存ズル人トセンヤ。²⁶

For those who take over the throne and govern the world, they surely have wise and talented men as well as adjuvant ministers who can pacify the riot of the state and correct the wrongdoings of the ruler. To name just a few, Yao had the eight talents, Shun the eight wits, King Wu of Zhou the ten renowned ministers, Emperor Gaozu of Han the three heroes, Emperor Guangwu of Han the twenty-eight generals, and Emperor Taizong of Tang the eighteen scholars. Although they were all entrenched in high positions and receive privileged treatment, none of them had any intention of competing with each other. Rather, they remonstrated against the faults and brought stability to the state, and they only thought about the peace of the world. They are the

²⁵ 関連説話の連鎖的集合によって説話が長大化している See Masuda, "*Taiheiki*" no hikaku-bungakuteki kenkyū, 305-306.

²⁶ *Taiheiki* (NKBT 36), 37.

ones who can be named loyal ministers. Now the Kō and the Uesugi clans are on bad terms now. Whatever they do, they only care about gains and losses, and put their hearts into the fight for powers. How can they be regarded as people who have loyalty and faith?

The passage emphasizes the necessity for the ruler to have “wise and talented men (賢才)” and “adjuvant ministers (輔弼ノ臣下),” who are expected to help the ruler pacify the riots of the state and correct his wrongdoings. Only when they have no intention of competing with each other and think only about the peace of the world can they be named “loyal ministers (忠臣).” In other words, a “wise and talented man” must not only distinguish between the good and the evil; he must be unselfishness: a loyal minister is expected not to think about his own gains and losses. Although both a wise man and a loyal minister might remonstrate with the ruler, only the loyal minister would risk his life for remonstrating. There is also another term in the *Taiheiki* implying such an association – “loyal remonstrating (忠諫),” which appears twice in the *Taiheiki*, and each time foreshadows the death of the minister who made such remonstrating.

As narrated in the *Taiheiki* tale, the reason Bian He never gave up in presenting the jade stone to his King was that “it is not an object that I can use for myself.”²⁷ It is because of this reason, for the good of the King, that Bian He risked his life several times. Moreover, when Kings Wu and Wen successively had his two legs cut off, Bian He only grieved for the bad eyes of the Kings.²⁸ His continuous attempts to present the jade bears much resemblance to that of a “wise man (賢人)” in constantly remonstrating against the wrongdoings of the King, not to mention that in anecdotal literature the contrast between a person’s humble birth and loyal behavior is often a sign of the person’s qualification as a “wise man (賢人).”

²⁷ 是私ニ可用物ニ非ズ See *Taiheiki* (NKBT 36), 37.

²⁸ 只二代ノ君ノ眼拙キ事ヲノミ悲 See *Taiheiki* (NKBT 36), 38.

Bian He's jade finally came into the hands of the King of Zhao. When the King of Qin heard about it, he made several attempts to seize it. At first he tried to humiliate the King of Zhao in a banquet, in front of many other Kings, in order to claim Qin's dominance over Zhao, but he failed because of Lin Xiangru, who, with his wisdom and bravery, helped the King of Zhao out of the dilemma. The King of Qin then came up with a second plot, saying that he would like to trade the jade for fifteen cities. Knowing that it might be a trap, however, the King of Zhao hesitated, for the state of Qin was much more powerful than the state of Zhao. Lin Xiangru then volunteered to be the diplomat to bring the jade to Qin, promising that he would be back either with the fifteen cities or with the jade. After confirming that it was indeed a trap, Lin Xiangru demanded that the King of Qin fast for three days and receive proper ceremonies before the trade. In secret, however, he ordered his henchman to take the jade back to Zhao. Three days later, after knowing the truth, the King of Qin was furious but he could do nothing except to let Lin Xiangru leave. Because of his role in protecting the jade and saving Zhao from disgrace, the King of Zhao made Lin Xiangru the chief minister. Yet this appointment enraged Lian Po, who tried to humiliate Lin Xiangru, but soon recognized his own fault.

The tale ends with the narrator's comment on Lian Po and Lin Xiangru, which echoes the opening discussion of loyalty and wisdom. It reads: "These two people each perform their duties with civil or military talent, and thus Zhao is not extinguished by Qin or Chu, but remains secured for a long time. There should be such persons who forget about their selves and remain loyal."²⁹ Here the idea of "loyalty (忠)" is specified as "performing their duties with civil or military talent," and emphasized as the opposite of "the self (私)." As Lin Xiangru does not take

²⁹ 此二人文ヲ以テ行ヒ、武ヲ以テ專ニセシカバ、秦ニモ楚ニモ不被傾、國家ヲ持ツ事長久也。誠ニ私ヲ忘テ忠ヲ存スル人ハ加様ニコソ可有 See *Taiheiki* (NKBT 36), 43.

into account the gains and losses of himself, in addition to being a “wise and talented man (賢才),” he also qualifies for a “loyal minister (忠臣)” in the eyes of the narrator.

Loyalty (忠) and Righteousness (義) in *The Warfare between Han and Chu* 漢楚合戰事³⁰

Although the two terms of “loyalty (忠) and “righteousness (義)” often appear in Chinese tales and seem to become one of the filters to select Chinese names and anecdotes, this is not the case for the combination of these two terms. The term “*chūgi* 忠義,” “loyalty and righteousness,” or “loyal righteousness,” appears fifteen times in the *Taiheiki*, yet only once of which is in relation to Chinese tales. In other words, it might be safe to say that *chūgi* had already been assimilated into medieval Japanese culture, much more than the separate notions of “loyalty” and “righteousness.” Then what is it that constitutes the notion of “righteousness”? How is it related to, and how does it revise, the notion of “loyalty”?

The tale of the warfare between Han 漢 and Chu 楚 is a good example to explore the relationship between “loyalty (忠)” and “righteousness (義).” After the downfall of the Qin dynasty (221-206 BCE), the first dynasty of Imperial China, Duke of Pei (Ch. Pei Gong, J. Haikō 沛公), or Liu Bang (J. Ryūhō 劉邦, 256-195 BCE), who later became the first emperor of the Han dynasty (202 BCE – 220), competed with Xiang Yu (J. Kōu 項羽, 232-202 BCE) for dominance. They first fought together to completely erase the residual force of the Qin dynasty, including the capturing of the capital and the burning of the Xianyang Palace. Yet they soon had disagreements on the governing of the country. Advised by Fan Zeng (J. Hanzō 范增, 227-204 BCE), an intelligent official, Xiang Yu invited Duke of Pei to a banquet, later known as the

³⁰ See *Taiheiki* (NKBT 36), 92-109.

Banquet at Hongmen 鴻門ノ会, secretly aiming to assassinate him. The plan, however, met opposition from Xiang Bo (J. Kōhaku 項伯, d. 192 BCE) and Fan Kuai (J. Hankai 樊噲, 242-189 BCE). As a result, Xiang Yu abandoned his plan at the banquet, and after that gradually lost his military advantage. Because of the failure of this plan, and because of his own arrogance, Xiang Yu eventually was defeated by Duke of Pei and committed suicide. On the other hand, following the advice given by his wise and loyal subjects, particularly by Chen Ping 陳平 (J. Chinpei, d. 178 BCE) and Zhang Liang (J. Chōryō 張良, 250-186 BCE), Duke of Pei in the end succeeded in dominating the country and became the first emperor of the Han dynasty (220 BCE-220).

What is emphasized in the tale is the idea of “*gi*,” or “righteousness (義).” Out of friendship, Xiang Bo secretly informed Zhang Liang of the plan to kill Duke of Pei, aiming to save Zhang Liang’s life. Although he was the uncle and subject of Xiang Yu, he seemed to place his friendship with Zhang Liang above his kinship and loyal duty to Xiang Yu. Later on in the tale, he justified his behavior in his remonstrance against Xiang Yu by calling on the notion of righteousness.

今天下ノ大功ハ沛公ニアリ。而ルヲ小人ノ讒ヲ信ジテ有功人ヲ討ン事大ナル不義也。³¹

Now that the great merit of all under heaven is on the side of Duke of Pei, it is an act of great unrighteousness to believe the slander of the small men and attack those who are meritorious.

The citation above is taken directly from *Shi ji, The Records of Grand Historian*. As he claimed,

³¹ *Taiheiki* (NKBT 36), 97.

the notion of “righteousness” is what prevents him from performing loyal duty to Xiang Yu.

Zhang Liang was a subject of Duke of Pei. When hearing about the plan, he did not escape alone. Yet the narrator did not attribute his behavior to loyalty but rather to righteousness.

張良元來義ヲ重ジテ、節ニ臨ム時命ヲ思フ事塵芥ヨリモ輕セシ者也ケレバ、何故カ事ノ急ナルニ當テ、高祖ヲ捨テ可逃去トテ、項伯ガ云處ヲ沛公ニ告グ。³²

Zhang Liang was the kind of person who valued righteousness and who treated his own life lighter than dust when he needed to preserve his moral integrity, so there was no reason why he should abandon Duke of Pei at the crisis. He went and told Duke of Pei what Xiang Bo had informed him of.

Although the evaluation of Zhang Liang as the kind of person who “valued righteousness (義ヲ重ジテ)” is taken directly from *Shi ji*, the further explanation of it, as one “who treated his own life lighter than dust when he needed to preserve his moral integrity (節ニ臨ム時命ヲ思フ事塵芥ヨリモ輕セシ)” is the invention of the *Taiheiki* authors. Like the notion of loyalty, the notion of righteousness is also related to life and death. But unlike loyalty, which emphasizes ruler-subject relations, righteousness seems to have more to do with one’s own moral integrity and agency, regardless of one’s political stance.

In contrast with Xiang Yu’s act of unrighteousness (不義), Duke of Pei’s act is characterized as an act of “humanity and righteousness (仁義),” which appeared in Fan Kuai’s protest against Xiang Yu’s intention to kill Duke of Pei.

宮室ヲ封閉シテ以テ項王ノ來給ハン事ヲ待、是豈沛公ノ非仁義乎。³³

³² Ibid.

³³ *Taiheiki* (NKBT 36), 100.

Sealing off all the rooms in the palace and waiting for the coming of Lord Xiang, isn't it the result of the humanity and righteousness of Duke of Pei?

Fan Kuai offered several examples of why Duke of Pei was humane and righteous. For instance, although it was Duke of Pei who first captured the capital, he did not take the merit alone but rather waited for the coming of Xiang Yu. The idea of “humanity and righteousness (仁義)” is thus specified as performing deeds of merit yet not pursuing power and position corresponding to that.

It is narrated in the *Taiheiki* that, a few years after the Banquet at Hongmen, Duke of Pei declared war against Xiang Yu. His justification of the war and of his ascending to the throne was still related to the notion of righteousness.

夫項王自義無シテ天罰ヲ招ク事其罪非一。³⁴

The first crime that Lord Xiang has committed is that he lacks righteousness himself and accordingly invites punishment from the Heaven.

公ガ力山ヲ拔トイヘ共我義ノ天ニ合ルニハ如ジ。³⁵

Although you have the strength to lift a mountain, that cannot be compared to my having righteousness which is better fit for the Heaven.

Duke of Pei criticized Xiang Yu for not performing “righteousness (義)” towards the people, which he also related to the aftermath of “punishment from the Heaven (天罰),” and emphasized that he, unlike Xiang Yu, had “righteousness (義).” As discussed earlier, the “virtue (徳)” of the ruler is defined in their relations to good ministers. Here, however, “righteousness (義)” is held

³⁴ *Taiheiki* (NKBT 36), 103.

³⁵ *Taiheiki* (NKBT 36), 104.

as the necessary inner quality for a good ruler. The idea of “righteousness (義)” in the *Taiheiki* thus is twofold. It can be used to either refer to the inner quality of wise monarchs or point to the obligation of the good ministers to render outstanding services. With regard to this point, the idea of “righteousness (義)” is similar to that of “loyalty (忠),” with the difference that there is no emphasis on the act of “remonstration (諫).”

Loyalty (忠) and Filial Piety (孝) in *The Tales of India and China* 天竺震旦物語事³⁶

As I mentioned earlier, the idea of “loyal ministers 忠臣” in the *Taiheiki* is often connected to that of “filial sons 孝子.” Here I examine the idea of “loyalty and filial piety 忠孝” by focusing on the tale of Shun 舜 (J. Shun), a legendary leader of ancient China, and one of the mythological Three Sovereigns and Five Emperors (referenced in Volume 32).

As Masuda Motomu³⁷ and Kuroda Akira³⁸ has already done elaborate research on the Chinese and Japanese source texts for these tales, there is no necessity to repeat it in this paper. Instead, I look into the idea of “loyalty 忠” and filial piety 孝 (Ch. xiao, J. kō) as constructed in this tale. What follows are extracts from this tale with regards to this idea.

虞舜ハ孝行ノ心深シテ³⁹

Shun has a heart of deep filial piety.

³⁶ See *Taiheiki* (NKBT 36), 216-223.

³⁷ See Masuda, “*Taiheiki*” no hikaku bungaku teki kenkyū.

³⁸ See Kuroda Akira, *Kōshiden chūkai* (Tōkyō: Kyūko shoin, 2003), *Kōshiden no kenkyū* (Kyōto: Bukkyō daigaku tsūshin kyōikubu, 2001), and *Kōshiden-zu no kenkyū* (Tōkyō: Kyūko shoin, 2007).

³⁹ *Taiheiki* (NKBT 36), 221.

舜年二十ニシテ孝行天下ニ聞ヘシカバ、帝堯是ニ天下ヲ讓ラント覺ス心アリ。⁴⁰

When Shun was twenty, his filial conduct was already known throughout all under heaven. Therefore, Emperor Yao intended to abdicate and hand over the crown to him.

舜如斯聲譽上ニ達シ父母ニ孝有シカ共、繼母我子ノ象ヲ世ニ立バヤト猜ム心深ク有シカバ、瞽叟ト象ト三人相謀テ舜ヲ殺サントスル事度々也。舜是ヲシレ共父ヲモ不恨、母ヲモ弟ヲモ不嗔、孝悌ノ心彌慎テ、只父母ノ意ニ違ヘル事ヲノミ天ニ仰デゾ悲ミケル。⁴¹

Shun had a reputation that reached the ears of the emperor, and remained filial to his parents. However, his stepmother was desirous to make her own son Xiang better known around the world, and thus was deeply suspicious of him. There were many times when she conspired with Gusou (Shun's father) and Xiang, and the three of them intended to kill Shun. Although Shun was aware of it, he did not hate his father, or blamed his stepmother or stepbrother. Cautiously he maintained a filially pious heart. Looking up to heaven, he only lamented that he had gone against the will of his parents.

堅牢地神モ孝行ノ子ヲ哀ニヤ覺シケン、井ノ底ヨリ上ケル土ノ中ニ半バ金ゾ交リタリケル。⁴²

Perhaps it was because Prthivi also felt sympathy for this filial son, the ground from the bottom of the well to the top was made of half soil and half gold.

Whereas the first three citations were basically taken from the *Shi ji*, the last two were the creation of the author of the *Taiheiki*. In particular, the allusion to Buddha Kenrōjijin 堅牢地神 when narrating the Chinese filial tale is a clear indication of the characteristic “Three Countries” 三国 (J. Sankoku) – India, China, and Japan – worldview in the medieval period. Although there are many more Chinese tales than Indian tales references in the *Taiheiki*, what figures in the mind of the author of the *Taiheiki* is perhaps not, or at least not only, the simple parallel and contrast between China and Japan, but rather the triangular relationship among India,

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ *Taiheiki* (NKBT 36), 222.

⁴² Ibid.

China, and Japan.

Notable here is the relationship between “loyal ministers 忠臣” and “filial sons 孝子” as represented in the last citation. What is emphasized here is that “filial sons” can easily become “loyal ministers,” for unfilial sons can never be loyal to the monarch. Although the author of the *Taiheiki* places much more emphasis on the idea of “loyalty 忠,” he also makes “filial piety 孝” a prerequisite for loyalty.

The word “filial sons 孝子” appears five times in the *Taiheiki*, three times in Chinese tales. Furthermore, the word “filial sons” appears four times alongside the word “loyal ministers 忠臣.” Finally, the word “loyalty and filial piety 忠孝” appears five times in the *Taiheiki*, three times among which are in Chinese tales. It is evident that the author is inclined to reference Chinese tales when the ideas of “loyalty 忠” and “filial piety 孝” are taken together.

Conclusion

As shown in the *Taiheiki*, themes and values that were associated with a specific Chinese name or anecdote did not necessarily coincide with those in Chinese historiography, particularly the *Records of the Grand Historian* (Ch. *Shi ji*, J. *Shiki*). Similarly, the very familiar notions of “loyalty” and “filial piety” might have different implications between a Japanese text and its Chinese source text. The importation of Song and Yuan dynasties cultures was clearly manifested here. While the print and reprint of Song dynasty woodblock-print books first in China and then in Japan became more and more popular, it made available a vast number of Chinese literary classics (in Song or Yuan editions), and thus triggered a new concern with the “original” and the “contemporaneous.”

Chapter 4 The Expansion of Knowledge and Audience in the 15th – 16th Centuries: New Printed Editions, New Vernacular Commentaries, and New Imaginations

Since its first establishment in Japan in the twelfth century, the development of Japanese Zen culture continued to be the gradual, ongoing process of incorporating contemporaneous Chinese Chan culture. Particularly, in Song (960-1279) and Yuan (1271-1368) China, Chan Buddhism was not simply a religious practice or tradition but in fact represented a new integrated form of culture, emphasizing both Buddhist and non-Buddhist traditions, including Chinese arts, Song poetry, and the study of Confucian classics. The same feature characterized Japanese Zen culture in the late medieval period as well.

By the Southern Song (1127-1279) dynasty, Chan Buddhism had become the dominant sect among various schools of Buddhism. Chan monks established a network of five state-sponsored Chan Buddhist temples, reflecting imperial patronage and power and meant to imitate the structure of the Five Monasteries in India (Tenjiku goshōja 天竺五精舍). Since these temples were often built on isolated mountains, they were then named the Five Mountains (Ch. Wushan, J. Gozan 五山).¹

The state-sponsored “Five Mountains” system was transmitted to Japan during the late Kamakura period (1185-1333). Initially there were only temples known as the Gozan (Five Mountains), mostly in the city of Kamakura. During the brief Kenmu Restoration (1333-1336), Emperor Go-Daigo added the Kyoto Gozan and, for the first time, officially established a system and hierarchical order of temples. The system was modified time and again in the following

¹ The Five Mountain temples as designated in Southern Song China were Jingshan 徑山寺, Lingyin 靈隱寺, and Jingci Temples 淨慈寺 in Lin'an (modern Hangzhou), and Tiantong 天童寺 and Ayuwang Temples 阿育王寺 in Qingyuan area (modern Ningbo). See Tamamura, *Gozan bungaku*, 2-5.

decades. In the final configuration, under the third shogun, Ashikaga Yoshimitsu 足利義満 (1358-1408), who unified the Northern and Southern courts (1392), the system expanded to include Kamakura's Five Mountains (Kenchō-ji 建長寺, Engaku-ji 円覚寺, Jufuku-ji 寿福寺, Jōchi-ji 浄智寺, and Jōmyō-ji 浄妙寺) and Kyoto's Five Mountains (Tenryū-ji 天龍寺, Shōkoku-ji 相国寺, Kennin-ji 建仁寺, Tōfuku-ji 東福寺, and Manju-ji 万寿寺), with Nanzen-ji 南禅寺 in Kyoto at the apex as a supervising temple.²

For Ashikaga Yoshimitsu, his support of the Gozan system and his contacts with the Zen monks were not just a way to stabilize the country but also the way to obtain the latest information about China, given that those who went to study in Song (960-1279) and Yuan (1271-1368) China were mostly Japanese monks. Indeed, the Gozan Zen monks were the most knowledgeable about contemporary China. They were copious writers, skilled in Chinese verse and prose, and productive in writing commentaries. Notably, these commentaries were not just written for Buddhist texts but for a wide range of genres: Confucian, historical, literary, military, philosophical, and educational.³

Confucian Studies, History Studies, and the Emergence of Vernacular Commentary

(*Shōmono* 抄物)

The study of Confucian classics in the late medieval period (late fourteenth through sixteenth centuries) differed from that in earlier times first in the sense of reflecting the most

² Tamamura Takeji, *Gozan bungaku*, 9-12.

³ I am deeply indebted to Haga's and Horikawa's extensive, in-depth research on the literature and scholarship of the Zen monks. For the former, see footnote no. 1 in Chapter 3. For the latter, see Horikawa Takashi, *Gozan bungaku kenkyū: shiryō to ronkō* (Tōkyō: Kasama shoin, 2011) and *Gozan bungaku kenkyū. Zōku: shiryō to ronkō* (Tōkyō: Kasama shoin, 2015).

recent Confucian hermeneutic tradition from Song (960-1279) and Yuan (1271-1368) China. Particularly in the Muromachi period (1336-1573), when the importation of Song and Yuan dynasties woodblock-print (宋元版) books really flourished, providing more varied and accessible texts for Japanese scholars, the study of Confucian classics increasingly caught up with and became contemporaneous with that in Song and Yuan China.

In Song China (960-1279), Chan Buddhism was the dominant among various schools of Buddhism; at the same time, a new movement in Confucianism was also taking place, which is now often named Neo-Confucianism. Neo-Confucianists, while harshly criticizing Chan, integrated Buddhist and Daoist terminology and concepts into their own world view. Similarly, Chan Buddhists reacted by integrating elements of both Daoist and Confucian culture into their framework. Both Chan Buddhism and Neo-Confucianism represented syntheses of Buddhist, Daoist, and Confucian teachings.⁴ When it was imported to Japan, Chan, or Zen, Buddhism inherited this integration of different cultural and religious traditions. The transmission of Confucianism was thus affected by this integration, as the Zen monks, particularly the Gozan Zen monks, were one of the two main groups specializing in the study of Confucian classics during this period.

Since the decline of the state university (*daigaku-ryō*) system from the mid-Heian period (794-1185), the study of Confucian classics in Japan had become the specialty of the aristocratic scholar families (such as the Kiyohara) and the Buddhist monks.⁵ The former

⁴ See William Bodiford, "The Rhetoric of Chinese Language in Japanese Zen," in *Zen Buddhist Rhetoric in China, Korea, and Japan*, edited by Christoph Anderl (Boston: Brill, 2012), 285-314, and Martin Collcutt, *Five Mountains: The Rinzaï Zen Monastic Institution in Medieval Japan* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981).

⁵ For more recent English-language scholarship on the development of Confucianism in Japan, see Kiri Paramore, *Japanese Confucianism: A Cultural History* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

traditionally tended to preserve family learnings, which were based on *shōhon* 証本 (literally, “evidential texts”), or Japanese editions of Chinese texts – mostly Tang dynasty manuscripts – which were annotated and handed down as privatized textbooks for learning or teaching. In contrast, the latter were more inclined to catch up with the newest scholarly trends in contemporary China: what they used as target texts for commentaries or lectures were no longer Tang dynasty manuscripts but Song or Yuan dynasty woodblock-print editions, which could be quite different from older manuscripts, in wording or in philosophy. They represented the most up-to-date knowledge and interpretations currently prevailing in China. One good example is Gidō Shūshin’s 義堂周信 (1325-1388) lecture on *Mencius* in 1382, which was based on *Sishu jishi dacheng* 四書輯積大成 (*Great Compendium of the Collected Commentaries on the Four Books*, printed 1342), compiled by Ni Shiyi 倪士毅, a Yuan dynasty Neo-Confucian scholar.⁶

In fifteenth century Japan, similar to the relationship in Song China between Neo-Confucianists and Chan Buddhists, Confucian scholars from traditional aristocratic scholar families and Gozan Zen monks, while still competing with each other in terms of approach and theory, started to embrace each other’s concepts and terminology. The Gozan Zen monks in Kyoto, for instance, became advocates of the Song Confucian scholar Zhu Xi’s 朱熹 (J. Shuki, 1130-1200) “New Commentaries (新注学),” which was named “new” to distinguish it from and argue against the “Old Commentaries (古注学)” as traditionally taught by the Kiyohara family.

In reaction to this kind of “new” commentary, Kiyohara Nobukata 清原宣賢 (1475-1550) established a new type of Confucian scholarship that combined both Old and New Commentaries

⁶ Recorded in Shūshin’s diary *Kūge nichiyō kufū ryakushū* 空華日用工夫略集 (*Excerpt of Kūge’s Daily Studies*), an entry under Eitoku 1/12/2. I am indebted to Machi Senjurō for pointing it out; see Machi’s “The Evolution of ‘Learning’ in Early Modern Japanese Medicine,” in *Listen, Copy Read: Popular Learning in Early Modern Japan*, edited by Matthias Hayek and Annick Horiuchi (Boston: Brill, 2014), 163-164.

as well as absorbing from other literary and religious cultures such as Shintō and Zen.

The second new feature of the study of Confucian classics in the late medieval Japan was the gradual collapse of boundaries among different scholarly lineages, within which knowledge and texts were privatized and specifically interpreted. What makes this new feature possible was the suddenly intensified scholarly exchange among different intellectual groups – the Zen monks, the Shintō priests, warriors, and court aristocrats – that took place in the early fifteenth century. A good example is the scholarship on the *Yijing* 易經 (J. *Ekikyō*, *Book of Changes*). Traditionally, as a Confucian classic, it was the family learning of the Kiyohara and the Sugawara families. In the fifteenth century, Kiyohara Naritada 清原業忠 (1409-1467) introduced Song commentaries into his family tradition and lectured to both courtiers and Zen monks. His lecture on Zhu Xi's *Yixue qimeng* 易学啓蒙, published as the *Ekigaku keimō kōgi* 易学啓蒙講義 (Lectures on the *Yixue qimeng*), was so famous that even the Rinzaï Zen priest Tōgen Zuisen 桃源瑞仙 (1430-1489) came to study under him.⁷

As scholars from different social and intellectual groups started to give lectures to and study under each other, the audience also expanded from aristocrats and priests to influential military families and wealthy commoners, that is, to those who were relatively less educated, particularly in literary Sinitic. The contents of the lectures given by the Gozan Zen monks included Chinese poetry and prose, *Collected Sayings* (*Goroku* 語録) of Zen masters, and Confucian texts such as *The Doctrine of the Mean*, (Ch. *Zhongyong*, J. *Chūyō* 中庸) and *Mencius* (Ch. *Mengzi*, J. *Mōshi* 孟子).⁸ In particular, the Gozan Zen monks played a leading

⁷ For more on the development of the study of *Yi jing* in Japan, see Wai-ming Ng, *The I Ching in Tokugawa Thought and Culture* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000).

⁸ See Harada Masatoshi, "Nihon chūsei ni okeru zensō no kōgi to Muromachi bunka," *Higashi Ajia bunka kōshō*

role in the study of Chinese history and Song dynasty poetry, manifested in the regularly conducted lectures from the capital to the provinces.

In the late medieval period, the warrior leaders were eager to associate with Chinese and Japanese classical culture and scholarship. Not only did they support the establishment of Zen monasteries, they also constructed private classrooms and libraries, where they invited eminent scholars and monks to give lectures on Confucian classics (such as the *Analects*), Japanese court tales (such as *The Tale of Genji*), and Buddhist texts.⁹

A result of the regularly conducted lectures was the emergence of a large number of commentaries, including lecture notes, on the classic texts of Buddhism, Confucianism, Chinese medicine, and Japanese history – namely, texts in literary Sinitic. Significantly, these commentaries were not written in pure literary Sinitic but often in vernacular Japanese, and thus were specifically labeled as *shōmono* (抄物) – a combination of extracts and explanatory notes that were not necessarily literary Sinitic – to emphasize the difference from other forms of commentaries. The court noble (*kugyō*) Ichijō Kaneyoshi 一条兼良 (1402-1481), for instance, who studied with the Zen monk Giyō Hōshū 岐陽方秀 (1363-1424), a disciple from Gidō's school, authored a vernacular commentary on the *Four Books* (Ch. Sishu, J. Shisho 四書) in Confucian classics, entitled *Shisho dōji kun* 四書童子訓 (*The Four Books Explained for Boys*).¹⁰ In his vernacular commentary, Kaneyoshi revealed his profound knowledge of the new Song dynasty commentaries by Neo-Confucianists (particularly Zhu Xi's "New Commentaries")

kenkyū 2 (2009): 31-45 for an overview of the lectures given by the Gozan Zen monks in relation to the formation of Muromachi culture. It also contains a list of the lectures, including the dates and places.

⁹ Shirane, "Curriculum and Competing Canons," 220-250.

¹⁰ For an introduction to the *Shishō dōji kun*, see Sumiyoshi Tomohiko, "Shishō dōji kun hon'in narabi ni kaidai," *Nihon kangaku kenkyū* 3(2001): 25-139.

and his attempt to combine Buddhist and Confucian cultures, both of which ran parallel to the work of the Gozan Zen priests.¹¹

The appearance of Japanese vernacular commentaries (*shōmono* 抄物) did not just occur in the study of Confucian classics but also in that of Chinese history and poetry. Tōgen Zuisen 桃源瑞仙 (1430-1489), for instance, wrote vernacular commentaries on the *Shi ji* 史記 (*Records of the Grand Historian*) and the *Santi shi* 三体詩 (*Poems in Three Styles*). The Rinzai Zen priest Ten'in Ryōtaku 天隱龍沢 (1422-1500), who studied the *Analects* with Naritada, authored a textbook on how to write Chinese poetry entitled *Kinshūdan* 錦繡段 (1456). In the first half of the sixteenth century, these scholarly achievements were combined into one grand synthesis by Kiyohara Nobukata 清原宣賢 (1475-1550).¹² As Tanaka Naoko points out, the Muromachi period witnessed an increasing concern with Chinese histories, the study of which was intertwined with that of Confucian classics and constituted an essential part of academic learning (*gakumon*) in this period.¹³

In addition to Confucian classics, Chinese histories, and poetry, other genres or texts that were written in literary Sinitic also became the target for *shōmono* writing. They included military treatises (such as the *Sun-zi* 孫子), philosophical texts (such as the *Zhuang-zi* 莊子), elementary textbooks (such as the *Mengqiu* 蒙求, or *Inquiry of the Youth*), and collections and anthologies compiled in Japan. For the famous texts, there were more than one commentary editions, written by different commentators, such as the commentaries on *The Poems in Three*

¹¹ Machi, “The Evolution of ‘Learning’ in Early Modern Japanese Medicine,” 163-167.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Tanaka Naoki, *Muromachi no gakumon to chi no keishō: ikōki ni okeru seitō e no shikō* (Tōkyō: Bensei shuppan, 2017), 172-173.

Styles, indicating how popular and widely read they had been in the medieval times.¹⁴

These *shōmono* had a clear educational function: some of them could be used as elementary textbooks, while others could serve as handy dictionaries and encyclopedias. As the labeling suggests, they had a close connection with texts written in literary Sinitic, which in most cases were texts imported from China. In fact, the target texts of most *shōmono* were those that had long been commented on in China. Therefore, some explanatory notes in the *shōmono* were quite reminiscent of those found in Chinese commentaries on the same target text. But in most cases, the compilers of the Japanese *shōmono* tended to cite more extensively from new types of texts or genres, particularly those that had never been cited in earlier commentaries, such as rhyme dictionaries, encyclopedias, remarks on poetry (Ch. *shihua*, J. *shiwa* 詩話), biographies, and geographies that had been newly compiled in the Song or Yuan dynasty China. In this sense, the compilation of these *shōmono* was quite representative of the scholarship of the late medieval period Japan, which featured the discovery of new knowledge and new texts and the concern for the most up-to-date, contemporaneous literature and culture of China. Among those new sources, Chinese dictionaries on rhymes and poetic dictions were particularly worth noting. The former (dictionaries on rhymes) was represented by *The Essential Dictionary of Ancient and Contemporary Rhymes* (Ch. *Gujin yunhui juyao*, J. *Kokon inkai kyoyō* 古今韻會舉要, 1297) by Xiong Zhong (熊忠) of the Yuan dynasty and *The Gem Dictionary of Rhymes* (Ch. *Yunfu qunyu*, J. *Inpu gungyoku* 韻府群玉, 1307) by Yin Shifu (陰時夫) at the turn of the Song and Yuan dynasties, and the latter (poetic diction) by *The Comprehensive Collection of Poetics* (Ch. *Shi xue da cheng*, J. *Shigaku taisei* 詩学大成) compiled in the Yuan dynasty.

¹⁴ See Horikawa Takashi, *Gozan bungaku kenkyū: shiryō to ronkō* (Tōkyō: Kasama shoin, 2011), 2-23, 164-171.

Perhaps stimulated by the successive importation and transmission of Song and Yuan dynasties woodblock-print books and by the new interest in contemporary Chinese language, literature, and scholarship, in the Muromachi period there emerged a new concern with what was considered “original” Chinese source texts, an emphasis was not so much on existing annotations or interpretations but rather on the authenticity and originality of the “original source text” (*honmon* 本文).

New Editions for Commoners: The *Twenty-Four Filial Exemplars* (*Nijūshikō* 二十四孝)

The idea of filial piety, an essential component of Confucian political and ethical theory, was introduced to Japan during the Nara period when the study of Chinese classics flourished in the Japanese court. For those in the imperial and aristocratic families, *Xiaojing* (J. *Kōkyō* 孝經), or *The Classic of Filial Piety*, one of the Confucian classics, constituted an important part in their curriculum and in the high education. In fact, this situation has continued until the modern era.¹⁵

Yet the *Classic of Filial Piety* was not the single important text in the promotion of filial piety. Buddhism, in which filial piety was considered to be one of the “Four Indebtedness,” also played a vital role. For instance, in the late Heian and medieval periods, although Confucianism played a dominant role in the transmission of high culture and high education, Buddhism was probably more important in the popularization of the idea of filial piety among

¹⁵ Tokuda Susumu has provided an extensive, fundamental study on the discourse and tales of filial piety, especially that of the *Twenty Four Filial Exemplars* (*Nijūshikō*); see Tokuda Susumu, *Kōshi setsuwashū no kenkyū: Nijūshikō o chūshin ni* (Tōkyō: Inoue shobō, 1963-1964). I am deeply indebted to and relying on this study. Other studies that I have consulted include Kuroda Akira’s and Tokuda Kazuo’s. For the former, see footnote no. 37 in Chapter 3. For the latter, see Tokuda Kazuo, “‘Nijūshikō’ tanjō zenya,” in his *Otogi-zōshi kenkyū* (Tōkyō: Miyai shoten, 1988), and “Kōshi setsuwa o meguru shōdō to etoki: shūkyō bunka kenkyū to setsuwa no ba,” *Setsuwa bungaku kenkyū* 39 (2004): 15-28. Also see Tanaka Norisada, *Kōshisō no juyō to kodai chūsei bungaku* (Tōkyō: Shintensha, 2007). I am also indebted to Komine Kazuaki’s and Kuroda Akira’s comments.

the samurai and the commoners.

This being said, the filial piety as proposed in Confucianism does not necessarily coincide with filial piety in Buddhism, not to mention that filial piety in Confucianism and filial piety in Buddhism evolved with time. A prominent distinction between the two is that Confucian filial piety is highly hierarchical, having different implications for different social classes. It requires, for instance, the court nobles and the samurai to maintain their family reputations and carry forward family traditions, which is not necessarily true for the commoners.

As a very effective way of explaining and transmitting the idea of filial piety, the tales of filial piety, which usually praise the filial emotion and/or act of a particular filial figure who is eventually rewarded for his fulfilling of filial duties, were imported from China along with the introduction of Confucian classics, and soon became very popular in Japan. As early as in the *Man'yōshū* there appears a poem regarding the Chinese filial figure Yuan Gu (J. Genkoku) who persuades his father to fulfill filial duties properly.

Two terms are often used to label filial piety stories: one is *kōshiden* 孝子伝 (biographies of filial figures) – sometimes even named *kōshi jitsuden* 孝子実伝 (authentic biographies of filial figures) – and *kōshitan* 孝子譚 (tales of filial figures). There is certainly much overlapping between them, and many scholars including Tokuda Susumu sometimes use them interchangeably. Further examined, however, the distinction between these two terms seems quite significant. The former, *kōshiden*, derives from historical writings. As a means of recording historical events and figures, it constitutes part of the official/local/family histories or historiographies. As a means of transmitting Confucian values, it is part of the classics, almost always written in kanbun. Moreover, as a genre of historical writings, it runs parallel with the biographies of women (*retsujoden* 列女伝) – and in fact, many of these tales do converge in

later times, making gender another important aspect in researching the circulation and reception of filial piety stories. On the other hand, the latter, *kōshitan* 孝子譚, has a more literary flavor – the character *tan* in particular indicates its strong connection with setsuwa tales. Often combined with folkloric tales and even fairy tales, it is generally more entertaining than didactic, more popular than classical, more often written in a mixed style of vernacular and literary languages than exclusively in kanbun.¹⁶

These tales of filial piety originally came from Chinese official dynastic histories and Confucian classics, and were considered authentic biographies of filial figures. They were not only the essential part of the education for Japanese aristocrats, but also frequently referenced by Buddhist priests in their preaching. The Buddhist priests might or might not have used vernacular Japanese to explain these Chinese filial tales, but the texts they were reading and relied on were written in pure literary Chinese. Gradually these tales were collected into setsuwa collections and became part of the popular culture, but the fact that these setsuwa tales were written in a mixed style of Chinese and Japanese – and particularly the use of katakana rather than hiragana – still suggests a strong connection with Chinese and kanbun literature, for katakana is itself the writing style to annotate kanbun texts.

During the Nara and the early Heian period, Chinese tales of filial piety appear most in kanshi and kanbun texts, and sometimes in court tales such as the *Utsubo monogatari* and the *Uji shūi monogatari*. What is notable at this point is that these Chinese tales often run in parallel with Japanese filial figures and stories. Not only are there similar types of filial figures or stories, but sometimes a stable connection is established between a Chinese filial figure and his/her corresponding Japanese filial figure.

¹⁶ For more on *kōshiden* and *kōshitan*, see Kuroda, *Kōshiden no kenkyū* and Tokuda, *Kōshi setsuwashū no kenkyū*.

From the late Heian period onward, there appeared more and more Buddhist setsuwa of filial piety with new themes and content, such as filial piety in the afterworld and the religious punishment for failing to fulfill filial duties. Some of the stories have their roots in China, yet now they are associated with more Buddhist values. The *Konjaku monogatari shū*, for example, contains many such tales.

As the samurai began to replace the aristocrats and take a lead in political activities, there emerged more and more tales that combined or juxtaposed bravery and loyalty with filial piety. In the *Taiheiki*, for example, sometimes bravery/loyalty and filial piety become one in the protagonist, while at other times he is placed in the dilemma of choosing between loyalty and filial piety.

The introduction of the *Quanxiang ershisi xiao shixuan* (*Illustrated Poetry Collection of the Twenty-Four Filial Exemplars*) to Japan during the Nanboku-chō period (1336-1392) dramatically changed the nature and function of filial piety stories in Japan. A Chinese classic text of Confucian filial piety, written by Guo Jujing, a scholar of the Yuan Dynasty (1260-1368), it consists of 24 tales, each starting with a five-syllable poem, followed by a brief explanation written in prose, some of them already appearing in Japan for a long while.

The Gozan Zen priests were the first to really translate Chinese filial tales into Japanese, to make these tales part of the vernacular literature. The result was the appearance of *Nijūshikō* 二十四孝 in the Muromachi period, during the Tenshō era (1573-1592). The *Nijūshikō*, or *The Twenty Four Filial Exemplars*, is an *otogi-zōshi* adaptation of the Chinese classic text *Illustrated Poetry Collection of the Twenty-Four Filial Exemplars* (ca. 13th-14th centuries), written by Guo Jujing, a scholar of the Yuan Dynasty (1260-1368), and introduced via Korea to Japan in 1381. The *Nijūshikō* recounts in twenty-four tales the self-sacrificing

behavior of twenty-seven filial figures who go to extreme lengths to honor their parents, stepparents, grandparents, or parents-in-law. Each tale starts with a five-syllable kanshi poem, taken from the Chinese source text, which is then followed by a brief prose account written in vernacular Japanese. Written in a mixed style of registers – kanshi and wabun, the *Nijūshikō* stands between high Confucian culture and popular culture of the late medieval period. As a result of this text, Chinese filial tales were no longer circulated as pure kanbun texts, but emerged more within a mixed style of registers – kanshi, kanbun, wabun, and even waka in later variations. Their readers were no longer confined to scholars who could read literary Chinese, but began to include those with limited education, particularly children.

Most of the filial tales in the *Nijūshikō* derive from earlier biographies of Chinese filial figures that appeared early in Japan. In addition to the stylistic difference, the *Nijūshikō* also differs from earlier filial tales in that it stresses less on the hierarchical and didactic aspect of Confucian filial duties but more on the extremity of filial emotions and filial conducts. Except for the first two filial figures, Emperor Shun, a legendary sage ruler, and Emperor Wen of the Han dynasty (206 BCE – 220), all the other protagonists of the *Nijūshikō* are from the commoner class, particularly those who live in poverty. The fathers either die early or treat the child unfairly due to the work of the stepmother, while the mother, if still alive, is often old or sick in bed. Therefore, the only way for these filial figures to fulfill their filial duties is by self-sacrifice. Yang Xiang, for example, is willing to give up his life to a tiger in exchange for his father's life. Dong Yong attempts to sell himself to get the funds necessary to bury his father. Wu Meng sleeps naked so that mosquitoes will consume his blood rather than that of his parents'. The most extreme case is Guo Ju, who persuades his wife to bury their son on behalf of his mother. Interestingly, even the narrator acknowledges that these are extreme cases. The tale of Ding Lan,

who carved a wood statue of his parents and served it as if it were his real parents, ends with the line: “this is indeed a rare case of fulfilling filial duties by doing surprising things.” Similarly, the tale of Wu Meng ends with the line: “this kind of filial act is truly surprising.” These endings suggest that the narrator’s intention is not to teach a didactic message about how one should behave to be filial so much as to promote the omnipotent power of filial emotions.¹⁷ At the same time, they also raise the question about the extent to which the *Nijūshikō* can be read as an educational text and to what extent it can be read as an entertainment.

The *Nijūshikō* differs from earlier Chinese filial tales used in Buddhist preaching in that many of the filial acts are not intended to become models for the readers to imitate but rather for the readers to marvel about. This being said, there is also a very practical side of the *Nijūshikō*. Many protagonists are rewarded with material goods or secular benefits in this life, sometimes miraculously. Meng Zong weeps because he is not able to find a bamboo sprout in winter for his sick mother, and then the bamboo sprouted in the snow as a reward for his filial emotion. Dong Yong attempts to sell himself to bury his father, and he is stopped by a beautiful lady who then marries him, helps him to pay the bill, and eventually turns out to be a heavenly maiden. Guo Ju persuades his wife to bury their son to save his mother, and he discovers a great pot of gold when digging the hole. The overarching theme is that all these miraculous efficacies are made possible because the protagonists’ filial emotions are so deep as to be able to move the heavens.

This combination of miraculous efficacy and secular benefits, of entertainment and practicality, is perhaps the very reason why Guo Jujing’s version of *The Twenty-Four Filial Exemplars*, not the other earlier or contemporary Chinese filial tales, was eventually translated

¹⁷ For a study of the religious aspect of the *Nijūshikō*, see Tanaka Norisada, “‘Otogi-zōshi ‘Nijūshikō’: ‘kō’ no shūkyōsei to iu kanten kara,” *Ajia yūgaku* 112 (2008): 64-71.

into a Muromachi otogi-zōshi vernacular tale.

The Twenty-Four Filial Exemplars had many variants in China. After it was imported to Korea, Korean versions of *The Twenty-Four Filial Exemplars* appeared, containing either Chinese or the Korean filial figures or both, depending on the texts. These Chinese and Korean texts were then introduced to Japan. The most important of the variants are the *Riji gushi* (J. Nikki koji), or *Diary Tales*, and *Kōkōroku*, or *Records of Filial Conduct*. The former was compiled in China during the Ming Dynasty, in the Wanli era (1563-1620), and introduced to Japan during the Muromachi period, while the latter was compiled in Korea in 1347, and introduced to Japan during the Ōei era (1394-1428). Both already existed in Japan when Guo Jujing's version of *The Twenty-Four Filial Exemplars* started to interest the Gozan Zen priests, yet only Guo's version was eventually adapted into an otogi-zōshi tale. The reason perhaps lies in the many similarities between Guo's version and the literary convention of the otogi-zōshi genre, particularly the celebratory part (*shukugen*) and the combination of supernatural and secular benefits.

Tokuda Susumu in his extensive works on the *Nijūshikō*, *Kōshi setsuwashū no kenkyū: Nijūshikō o chūshin ni*, proposes three major factors for the appearance of the otogizōshi. First is the educational function of otogi-zōshi, particularly for women and children, which is also true of Guo's *Twenty-Four Filial Exemplars*. Second is the emphasis on family and parent-child relationship in otogi-zōshi tales, particularly the already established otogi-zōshi tales of filial piety, such as *Karaito sōshi*, which narrates the child's attachment to the parents and the faith in the good results brought about by filial acts, and *Koatsumori* (*Little Atsumori*, translated in Kimbrough and Shirane, ed. *Monsters, Animals, and Other Worlds*) which displays the respect for deceased parents. Finally, the source tales of the *Nijūshikō*, which appeared early in Japan,

had already been adapted into various Japanese literary and visual genres in one way or another.¹⁸

In addition to these three factors, however, it is also worth noticing that Guo Jujing's *Twenty-Four Filial Exemplars* is an illustrated collection, which is very important for *otogi-zōshi*, which often combined text and illustrations, adding entertainment value and making a very suitable textbook for beginning education.¹⁹

The *Nijūshikō* continued to enjoy great popularity in the Edo period, which certainly has to do with this visual and entertainment aspect. At the same time, it was also due to the support of Tokugawa shogunate. In the fifth month of 1682, Tokugawa Tsunayoshi, the fifth shogun, proclaimed, “The following decree has been sent to the provinces: Encourage loyalty and filial piety. Husbands, wives, and siblings, endear yourselves to your relatives. You must be benevolent, even to servants. Disloyal or unfilial people will be severely punished.” With these words, Tsunayoshi initiated a long-lasting program of pro-Confucian legislation that made unfilial behavior a crime punishable by law, which soon became a stimulus for the already thriving market for filial tales.

The *Nijūshikō* even became the template for a new genre that flourished throughout the Edo period and persisted even into the modern era, with *The Twenty-Four Filial Exemplars of Japan* consisting of tales of Japanese figures rather than Chinese figures and *The Twenty-Four Filial Daughters* emphasizing women's filial piety, each of which then generates even more variants. At the same time, the Japanese illustrations of the *Nijūshikō* also enjoyed great

¹⁸ Tokuda, Kōshi setsuwashū no kenkyū.

¹⁹ For a case study of the educational function of *otogi-zōshi*, see Jamie Newhard, “Genre, Secrecy, and the Book: A History of Late Medieval and Early Modern Literary Scholarship on ‘*Ise monogatari*’” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2005).

popularity. They appeared in paintings, picture books, picture scrolls, folding-screen paintings, and fan paintings, to name only the most popular. There is, for example, a pair of folding-screen paintings by Kano Mitsunobu in the early seventeenth century titled “The Twenty-Four Paragons of Filial Piety.” Each of them consists of six panels, painted with ink, color, gold, silver, and gold leaf on paper. All twenty-four exemplars are depicted together. Those associated with the celestial realm are placed high, like the heavenly maiden, who married Dong Yong because of his filial act of selling himself to bury his father, while earth-oriented and heavy objects are placed low, like the elephant who helped Shun, a filial man, plough his field. Other examples include a series of prints published in the first half of the 19th century, which illustrates the tales of Meng Zong, who wept till the bamboo sprouted, of Wang Xiang, who lies on ice seeking carp, of Shun, a legendary leader of ancient China, whose feeling of filial piety moved heaven and therefore elephants and birds come to help him plough his field, of Zeng Shen, whose mother bit her fingers and pained his heart, of Guo Ju, who intended to bury his son on behalf of his mother, and of Ding Lan, who carved wood statues to serve as parents.²⁰

These images convey an idea of how popular the *Nijūshikō* was during the Edo period. Emerging alongside this *Nijūshikō* boom, however, is a new trend to reevaluate these *Nijūshikō* filial figures according to contemporary commoner values. The best example is that of Guo Ju, a poor commoner who tried to bury his son to save his mother, but ended up discovering a kettle of gold, which allowed him and his family to live happily thereafter. Guo, however, is severely criticized in the Edo period: the critics argue that Guo’s attempt to bury his son is in fact extremely undutiful. This serious debate suggests that the *Nijūshikō* was not just easy consumption for entertainment and exoticism, but often used to reinforce key values. The

²⁰ For illustrations of filial tales in China, see Kuroda, *Kōshiden-zu no kenkyū*.

vernacularization and popularization of texts in literary Sinitic, similarly, was by no means a simple expansion of readership and commercialization.

New Books and New Types of Knowledge:

Kiyohana Nobukata (清原宣賢) and His Lecture Notes on the *Inquiry of the Youth* (蒙求)

Kiyohara Nobukata 清原宣賢 (1475-1550) is a well-known scholar in Shintō and Confucian studies in the Muromachi period. He took an active part in to and benefited from the newly intensified communications among different intellectual groups occurring in the fifteenth century and, like the Gozan Zen monks, also contributed to the vernacularization and popularization of texts in literary Sinitic, including both classical and contemporary texts. Born as the third son of Yoshida Kanetomo 吉田兼俱 (1435-1511), a shrine priest and the founder of Yoshida Shintō, Nobukata was adopted by Kiyohara Munekata 清原宗賢, a Myōgyō *hakase* (Professor of Confucian Studies), to be a heir to the Kiyohara family, which had been traditionally in charge of Confucian learning (Myōgyōdō 明經道) at the court since the tenth century.

As a Shintō scholar, Nobukata followed Kanetomo's tradition of lecturing and writing commentaries (*shō* 抄) on the *Nihon shoki* 日本書紀 (*The Chronicles of Japan*, 720) and *Nakatomi no harae* 中臣祓²¹ (*Nakatomi Ritual of Purification*). As a Confucian scholar, he inherited the family learning of Confucian classics from the Kiyohara, and was assigned the post of *jidoku* 侍読 (imperial tutor) at the court. He thus was well versed in a broad range of subjects, including Confucian classics, Chinese history and literature, Japanese classics, linguistics, and

²¹ Included in the *Engishiki* 延喜式 (*Procedures of the Engi Era*, 927).

the Yoshida Shintō of his birth family.²²

In the fifteenth century, scholarship increasingly spread across the provinces. Nobukata often traveled to the Hokuriku region and gave lectures to samurai elites. His audience thus ranged from aristocrats and courtiers to warriors, domain lords (*daimyō*), and monks. The texts he lectured on showed a wide variety of his specializations, which included the *Nakatomi no harae* 中臣祓 (*Purification Ritual of the Nakatomi*), the *Nihon shoki jindai no maki* 日本書紀神代卷 (*The Chronicles of Japan, Volume on the Age of the Gods*), the *Guwen xiaojing* 古文孝經 (*Old Text of the Classic of Filial Piety*), the *Mengqiu* 蒙求 (*Inquiry of the Youth*), the *Zhongyong zhangju* 中庸章句 (*The Book of the Mean, Divided into Chapters and Verses*), and the *Mengzi Zhao zhu* 孟子趙注 (*Mencius with Zhao's Commentary*).²³

Of all the Sinitic texts that Nobukata had lectured on, the *Mengqiu* 蒙求 (J. *Mōgyū*, mid-eighth century), or *Inquiry of the Youth*, bore particular importance. It was one of the most commonly used primers in China from the mid-Tang (618-907) through the end of the Song (960-1279) era,²⁴ and its popularity and influence extended to Japan, Korea, Vietnam, and elsewhere, from the time of its composition up until the modern era.²⁵ Nobukata's reading and learning of the *Mengqiu*, however, was different from his predecessors. Not only did he promote the use of the most up-to-date commentary editions, but he also added new layers to the

²² Machi, "The Evolution of 'Learning' in Early Modern Japanese Medicine," 163-167.

²³ See Ōto Yasuhiro, *Nihon chūsei kyōikushi no kenkyū: Yūreki keikō no tenkai* (Matsudo-shi: Azusa shuppansha, 1998).

²⁴ For an English-language overview of literacy education in traditional China, see Thomas Lee, *Education in Traditional China: A History* (Boston: Brill, 2000), 431-477.

²⁵ Imre Galambos, "Confucian Education in a Buddhist Environment: Medieval Manuscripts and Imprints of the *Mengqiu*," *Studies in Chinese Religions* 1, no. 3 (2015): 161-174. For more English-language scholarships on the transmission and reception of the *Mengqiu* in Japan, see Guest, "Primers, Commentaries, and Kanbun Literacy in Japanese Literary Culture, 950-1250CE), 39-44, and Steininger, "Glosses and Primers, Heian Education and Literacy," in *Chinese Literary Forms in Heian Japan*, 125-172.

commentary tradition. His lecture on the *Mengqiu* thus provided a window into his own scholarly pursuits and interests as well as into the world of texts, knowledge, and learning that surrounded him and his contemporaries.²⁶

The *Mengqiu* was compiled by Li Han 李瀚 of the Tang dynasty, who also added his own commentary.²⁷ Most manuscripts consisted of two parts: the headlines and the commentary.²⁸ The headlines were probably for recitation and memorization, as they were composed of four-character rhyming segments, with every segment referencing an anecdote about a famous person from history or legend. Explanatory notes were added after each headline, briefly introducing the anecdote and the figure, pointing to its source, and specifying particular themes or values. In China, Li's commentary was widely circulated and part of classical learning until the Southern Song dynasty (1127-1279), when Xu Ziguang 徐子光 wrote a more comprehensive commentary, which replaced it.²⁹ The new commentary was entitled *Biaoti Xu Zhuangyuan buzhu Mengqiu* 標題徐狀元補注蒙求 (*Mengqiu with Additional Notes and Headlines by Principal Graduate Xu*, 1189). Here Xu confirmed the sources that had been cited in the "old commentaries (古注)," revised some of the headlines, and added more details from

²⁶ Regarding Nobukata's lecture and research on the *Mengqiu*, I am deeply indebted to Kōno Kimiko's lectures and seminar discussions.

²⁷ There are competing theories about the identity of Li Han, the character for his personal name, the period he lived in, and the date of the text. For a brief English-language summary of these theories, see Galambos, "Confucian Education in a Buddhist Environment," 270-271. For a partial English translation of the *Mengqiu*, see Burton Watson, trans. *Meng ch'iu: Famous Episodes from Chinese History and Legend* (New York: Kodansha International, 1979). Also see *Mōgyū kochū shūsei*, edited by Ikeda Toshio, et al. (Tōkyō: Kyūko shoin, 1988-90) for a collection of early manuscripts and prints of the *Mengqiu* in facsimile copies.

²⁸ There are also manuscripts that consist of only the headlines. See Volume 1 of *Mōgyū kochū shūsei*, 235-269 for example.

²⁹ As Galambos points out, early copies of the *Mengqiu* with Tang dynasty commentaries survive in Japan, in regions that were at the margins of Chinese civilization, such as Dunhuang, Khara-khoto, and the old Khitan state, but remarkably none in Central China where the book remained popular until at least the end of the Song dynasty; see Galambos, "Confucian Education in a Buddhist Environment," 270. Also see Volume 3 of Yang Shoujing, *Riben fang shu zhi* (Taipei Shi: Guang wen shu ju, 1967), 721-731, and the *kaisetsu* to *Mōgyū kochū shūsei*.

official histories. There were cases where Xu simply duplicated the old commentaries, but in most cases his notes were far more extensive, as in the following example.

古注蒙求：蘇武持節
漢書蘇武字子卿使在匈奴中十九年不改漢節後得歸朝³⁰

補註蒙求：蘇武持節
前漢蘇武字子卿杜陵人武帝時以中郎將持節使匈奴單于欲降之乃幽武置大窖中絕不飲食天雨雪武卧齧雪與旃毛并咽之數月不死匈奴以為神乃徙武北海無人處使牧羴羴乳乃得歸武杖漢節牧羊卧起操持節旄盡落昭帝立匈奴與漢和親漢求武等匈奴詭言武死常惠教漢使者言天子射上林中得雁足有係帛書言在某澤中由是得還拜為典屬國秩中二千石賜錢二百万公田二頃宅一区武留匈奴十九歲始以強壯出及還鬢髮尽白至宣帝時以武著節老臣令朝朔望号称祭酒年八十余卒後因画於麒麟閣法其形貌署其官爵姓名³¹

Mengqiu with Old Commentary: Su Wu Staying True to His Mission
[It is recorded in] *The Official History of the Han Dynasty* [that] Su Wu, style name Ziqing, was dispatched as an ambassador to the Xiongnu. He stayed for nineteen years and his loyalty to the Han did not change. He eventually made it to return.

Mengqiu with Additional Notes: Su Wu Staying True to His Mission
Su Wu of the Former Han Dynasty, style name Ziqing, was a native of Duling. During the reign of Emperor Wu, he was dispatched with the imperial banner as the General of the Gentlemen of the Household to the Xiongnu. Chanyu [the chief of the Xiong] intended to make Wu surrender, so he secretly had Wu put in a huge vault, allowing no food or drink to be provided to Wu. Because there were rain and snow, Wu bit off fur from the yak-tail that was attached to the banner, and, lying down, ate it along with snow. By doing so, Wu was able to survive for months. The Xiongnu took it as a miracle, and exiled Wu to the Northern Sea (Lake Baikal) to herd a flock of sheep, ordering that only when a male sheep produced milk would Wu be permitted to return. As Wu constantly held the imperial banner of Han, no matter awake or asleep, when he herded sheep, the yak-tail that was attached shed its fur completely. When Emperor Zhao ascended the throne, [the chief of] the Xiongnu asked to be an imperial son-in-law. The Han court took this opportunity to request the release of Wu and other ambassadors, yet the Xiongnu pretended that Wu had died already. Chang Hui taught the Han emissary to argue that the Han emperor had shot down a wild goose in the

³⁰ Volume 1 of *Mōgyū kochū shūsei*, 72. This is from the earliest extant annotated manuscript of the *Mengqiu*, now held in the National Palace Museum in Taipei, Taiwan.

³¹ Volume 2 of *Hyōdai Jo Jōgen hochū Mōgyū* (Kitamura shodō, 1682; Waseda University Library), image 21/56-22/56, http://archive.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kosho/nu08/nu08_01943/

Shanglin Garden and found a silk letter attached to its foot on which Su Wu wrote that he was detained somewhere by a lake. It was thanks to this that Wu was able to return. He was then appointed Supervisor of Dependent Counties, with a salary of two thousand *shi*, and bestowed two million copper coins, two *qing* (i.e. 12.29 hectare) of public fields, and one residency. Setting out as a vigorous man, Wu spent nineteen years in the land of the Xiongnu, and returned as a man whose hair had turned completely white. When Emperor Xuan ascended the throne, he ordered Wu to attend court only on the first and fifteenth days of the month, and bestowed Wu the title of *jijiu* (literally, libationer), for Wu's long service as a loyal, venerable minister. Wu died at his eighties. A portrait of him was then added to the Qilin Pavillion, which depicted his shape and appearance, and recorded his name, titles, and honors.

Citing the *Han shu* (*Official History of the Han Dynasty*), the old commentary simply explains that the headline “Su Wu Staying True to His Mission” alluded to the tale of Su Wu who, despite the lengthy detention by the Xiongnu, held true to his appointment to the Han court and finally was able to return. In the Xu commentary, by contrast, the tale of Su Wu is related in great detail, including how he was rewarded and honored after his return, which was an unusual account in comparison with the standard descriptions of how he was tortured by the Xiongnu and how he made it back. Xu did not name his source, but his notes are copied, almost line by line, from the *Han shu*.

The *Mengqiu* (J. *Mōgyū*), with Li's commentary, was transmitted to Japan some point before 878, and soon became widely used in beginning education for young aristocrats.³² There is no particular evidence showing exactly when the Xu commentary was transmitted to Japan, but when Minamoto no Mitsuyuki 源光行 (1163-1244) wrote the *Waka Poems on the Inquiry of the Youth* (*Mōgyū waka* 蒙求和歌, 1204), he made references to not just the old commentaries but also other sources, which could possibly include the Xu commentary. In either

³² As recorded in the *True History of Three Reigns of Japan* (*Nihon sandai jitsuroku* 日本三代実録, 901), the *Mengqiu* was used in the first-reading ceremony (*dokusho-hajime* 読書始) for Prince Sadayasu 貞保親王 (870-924) in 878. See the *kaisetsu* to *Mōgyū kochū shūsei*.

case, editions of the *Mengqiu* that combined the old (based on Li's commentary tradition) and the Xu commentaries already existed in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. In the sixteenth century the Xu commentary started to become the most popular and remained the standard in continuous use in Japan all the way through modern times.³³ This transition was certainly the result of a number of factors, but the most direct and decisive might be Nobukata's lecture series on the *Mengqiu*, which were based on the Xu commentary editions.

Among the surviving materials, two stand out and offer a rather clear picture of the actual form and content of Nobukata's lectures. One is a manuscript of the Xu commentary edition of the *Mengqiu* that contains annotations and *kundoku* (gloss-reading) marks written by Nobukata, entitled *Hyōdai hochū Mōgyū* 標題補注蒙求 (*Mengqiu with Additional Notes and Headlines*).³⁴ In particular, the *hochū Mōgyū* contains a postscript by Nobukata, in which he gave a list of the dates, the places, and the audience for his lectures.³⁵

上卷
史記前後漢書已下以本書校正之同又加首書訖
侍從三位清原宣賢
依三福寺長老裕翁發起每日講之 此卷 自十月二日始至同十八日

³³ See Ikeda's preface in Volume 1 of *Mōgyū kochū shūsei*; the earliest record of the use of the Xu commentary edition was an entry in 1504 in *Sanetaka koki* 実隆公記, the diary of the courtier Sanjōnishi Sanetaka 三条西実隆 (1455-1537).

³⁴ The manuscript was copied by Nobukata's son, Narikata, but the annotations and *kundoku* marks were done by Nobukata himself. It is now held by the Seike Collection (清家文庫), and can be accessed online through Kyoto University Rare Materials Digital Archive. The Seike Collection also contains another manuscript of the Xu commentary edition of the *Mengqiu* that was copied by Nobukata himself but without annotations, entitled *Hyōdai Jo Jōgen hochū Mōgyū* 標題徐状元補注蒙求 (*Mengqiu with Additional Notes and Headlines by Principal Graduate Xu*).

³⁵ See Tanaka Naoko, *Muromachi no gakumon to chi no keishō*, 160-161. I am also indebted to Kōno Kimiko, "Translingual Reading in Japan's Age of Civil War: Kiyohara Nobukata's *Mengqiu* Commentaries (Paper presentation, Association for Asian Studies 2015 Annual Conference, Chicago, IL, March 29, 2015) for the connection between Nobukata's annotations of the *Mengqiu* and the study of Chinese histories by the Gozan Zen monks.

終 但此内四ヶ日闕

皆大永四年 侍從三位清原宣賢

享祿二年於能州畠山左衛門佐義総亭講之 始六月廿七日終七月十八日十三ヶ度

36

Upper Volume

What follows have been emended according to the texts of the *Shi ji* and the *Hou Han shu*. Headnotes added as well.

By Chamberlain, the third rank, Kiyohara Nobukata.

Lectured on a daily base at the request of Hiroō, the patriarch of Sanpuku-ji Temple.

This volume was taught from the second day of the tenth month to the eighteenth day of the same month, yet with four days off.

In Daiei 4 (1524), by Chamberlain, the third rank, Kiyohara Nobukata.

Lectured at the residence of Hatakeyama Sakingo Yoshifusa in Nōshū (Noto Province) in Kyōroku (1529), from the twenty-seventh day of the sixth month to the eighteenth day of the seventh month, thirteen lectures in total.

中卷

享祿二年七月於能州畠山左金吾義総亭

講之 始十九日終八月朔十一ヶ度 環翠軒宗尤

天文十一年於私宅講之³⁷

Middle Volume

Lectured at the residence of Hatakeyama Sakingo Yoshifusa in Nōshū (Noto Province) in Kyōroku 2 (1529), from the nineteenth day of the seventh month to the first day of the eighth month, eleven lectures in total, by Kansuiken Sōyū (Nobukata).³⁸

Lectured at the private residence in Tenbun 11 (1542).

下卷

享祿三年三月於能州畠山左金吾義総亭講去

年下向之時下卷不及講之上洛依結約当年

亦北征終此卷 始十六日終廿二日十二ヶ度 環翠軒宗尤

天文十四年四月十四日於越州一乘谷慶隆院講始之 六月十四日

講終 三十七度全部相終 宗尤³⁹

³⁶ *Hyōdai hochū Mōgyū* (Kyoto University Rare Materials Digital Archive), image 89/249, <https://rmda.kulib.kyoto-u.ac.jp/item/rb00007932#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv=95&r=0&xywh=-737%2C526%2C4610%2C1402>

³⁷ *Hyōdai hochū Mōgyū*, image 169/249.

³⁸ Kansuiken is Nobukata's style name, Sōyū his Dharma name.

³⁹ *Hyōdai hochū Mōgyū*, image 249/249.

Lower Volume

Lectured at the residence of Hatakeyama Sakingo Yoshifusa in Nōshū (Noto Province) in the third month of Kyōroku 3 (1530).

Not able to finish the lecture on the Lower Volume as previously scheduled.

Having to end the lecture because of the expedition to the north. From the sixteenth day to the twenty-second day, twelve lectures in total, by Kansuiken Sōyū (Nobukata). Lectured at the Keiryūin treasure house in Ichijōdani in Etsushū (Echizen Province), from the fourteenth day of the fourth month to the fourteenth day of the sixth month in Tenbun 14 (1545). Lectures ended. Thirty-seven lectures all completed, by Sōyū (Nobukata).

In the tenth month of 1524, at the request of Hatakeyama Yoshifusa (1491-1545), the daimyo of Noto Province,⁴⁰ Nobukata visited his residence and taught him the upper (first) volume of the *hochū Mōgyū*. It was just the beginning. He came back in 1529 to finish the upper (first) volume, and continued to teach the middle and the lower (last) volumes in 1529 and 1530. Several years later, in 1545, Nobukata visited Echizen Province,⁴¹ and taught at the Keiryūin treasure house in Ichijōdani,⁴² lecturing on the last volume of the *hochū Mōgyū*.

As claimed in the postscript, Nobukata emended the *hochū Mōgyū* by comparing it with such texts as the *Shi ji (Records of the Grand Historian)*, the *Han shu (Official History of the Han Dynasty)*, and the *Hou Han shu (Official History of the Later Han Dynasty)*, namely, the official histories. In addition, he also added notes in the upper and lower margins to explicate a difficult word, using contemporary or vernacular language, made reference to other relevant texts, and commented on the content and language of the *Mengqiu*. This coincided with Xu's purpose to find reliable sources for the *Mengqiu*, but Nobukata's efforts also revealed his strong interest in associating the *Mengqiu*, a traditional textbook for beginning education, with more serious and recent scholarship and learning.

⁴⁰ Today the northern part of Ishikawa Prefecture.

⁴¹ Today the northern part of Fukui Prefecture.

⁴² The former capital of Echizen located in Fukui.

Nobukata, for instance, added extensive notes to the tale of Su Wu when emending the *hochū Mōgyū*. As he did for other tales, Nobukata first marked the character type of the tale above its headline as “*chūgi* 忠義 (Ch. *zhongyi*),” or “loyalty and righteousness.” The tale was clearly taken from the *Han shu*, or the *Official History of the Han Dynasty* (82). Nobukata wrote an interlinear note that the source was “Biography 24 (列二十四).” “Loyalty and righteousness” as a compound word, however, was never used in the *Han shu*. In China, it had appeared in literary anthologies and unofficial histories in the time of the *Han shu*, but its first appearance in official histories had to wait until the *Hou Han shu*, or the *Official History of the Later Han Dynasty* (445), and it was not until the Song dynasty that the usage of “loyalty and righteousness” suddenly increased in official histories. Perhaps due to this reason, in Japan, it had to wait until the time of the *Taiheiki* (1340s-1371), when people started to enjoy Song dynasty culture more thoroughly, that the notion of “loyalty and righteousness” suddenly became popular and continued to flourish in the Edo period.

Although “loyalty and righteousness” never appeared in the *Han shu*, there were certainly other referential marks in Nobukata’s annotations that could be found in the *Han shu*, such as “*junri* 循吏 (Ch. *xunli*, upright officials),” as in the “Biography of Upright Officials,” and “*neikō* 佞幸 (Ch. *ningxing*, flatterers),” as in the “Biography of Flatterers.” Unlike “loyalty and righteousness,” however, these two terms rarely appeared in Japanese histories as character types or evaluation categories.⁴³

For the tale of Su Wu cited above, Nobukata first explained difficult terms and phrases, and then added information that was included in the source but missing in the *hochū Mōgyū*.

⁴³ On this point, I am indebted to Kōno Kimiko’s seminar.

窖 師古曰、旧米粟之窖而空者也。音工孝反。

「本伝、徙武ヲ北海上無人処。」

飲食 師古曰飲音於禁反。食読曰飼。

咽 師古曰、咽吞也。音宴。

「節旄尽落ノ下ニ、積五六年。

「在某沢中ノ下ニ、使者大喜、如恵語以讓单于、々々視左右、而驚謝漢使曰、武等實在。

麒麟閣 張晏曰、武帝獲麒麟ヲ時、作此閣。図画其象於閣、遂以為名。師古曰、漢宮閣疏名云蕭何造。

署 師古曰、署、表也、題也。⁴⁴

窖 (vault): Shigu said, “It refers to the storage for rice and millet in old times. It is empty. The pronunciation is ‘*giao*.’”

“*Han shu*: exiled Wu to an uninhabited region by the Northern Sea (Lake Baikal)”

飲食 (bite and sup): Shigu said, “The pronunciation of ‘飲’ is ‘*yin*,’ that of ‘食’ ‘*si*.’”

咽 (to swallow): Shigu said, “‘咽’ means ‘to swallow.’ Its pronunciation is ‘*yan*.’”

What follows “the yak-tail that was attached shd its fur completely” is “five or six years has passed.”

What follows “somewhere by a lake” is “the Han emissary was much delighted, and reproved Chanyu (the chief of the Xiongnu) as instructed by Hui. Chanyu looked about, and apologized to the Han emissary, saying, ‘Wu is still alive indeed.’”

麒麟閣 (Qilin Pavillion): Zhang Yan said, “When Emperor Wu had captured a *qilin*, he built this pavillion. A painting of the *qilin* was drawn and stored there, and so is it named.” Shigu said, “According to the *Commentary on the Han Palace*, the pavilion was built by Xiao He.”

署 (to sign): Shigu said, “‘署’ means ‘to designate,’ ‘to sign.’”

The explanations of “窖 (vault),” “飲食 (bite and sup),” “咽 (to swallow),” “麒麟閣 (Qilin Pavillion),” and “署 (to sign),” including its meaning and pronunciation, were taken fully from the *Han shu*. Nobukata were very careful, even meticulous, about details in the *hochū Mōgyū* in comparison with his handing of *Han shu*. He noted that Su Wu was not just exiled to Lake

⁴⁴ *Hyōdai hochū Mōgyū*, image 116/249-117/249.

Baikal but exiled to Lake Baikal, “where there was no one residing,” that the detail, “five or six years passed (after all the yak-tail-hairs had fallen from the imperial banner),” was not mentioned in the *hochū Mōgyū*, and that neither was it mentioned in the *hochū Mōgyū*, which notes that “the Ambassador was greatly delighted and questioned Chanyu (the Chief of the Xiongnu) just as Hui had taught him. Chanyu looked around at his followers with astonishment, and apologized to the Han Ambassador, saying, ‘Wu is here indeed.’” All these notes were taken from the *Han shu* which had a commentary by Yan Shigu 顏師古 (J. Ganshiko, 581-645) of the Tang dynasty and had long been studied in Japan by scholars from the Kidendō (history and literary studies) tradition.

In Nobukata’s time, however, there were already Song editions of the *Han shu* with both Yan’s and Song scholars’ commentaries and they were available in Japan and studied by Gozan Zen monks. The same was true for the *Shi ji*, or *Records of the Grand Historian*. Having studied both *Han shu* and *Shi ji* with Gozan Zen monks,⁴⁵ Nobukata was eager to incorporate those Song dynasty scholarships into his lectures, as shown in the following notes.

𦍋 師古曰、羝、牡羊也。羝不當產乳、故設此言、示絕其事。若燕太子丹烏白頭、馬生角之比也。羝音丁奚反。乳音人喻反。 「宋祁曰、牧羝字下、疑有羊字。

「羝乳乃得婦ノ下ニ、別其官属常惠等（ラ）各置他所。武既至海上、稟食不_レ至、師古曰、無人給飼之掘野鼠ヲ去_レ中実ヲ而食_レ之。 「蘇林曰、取鼠所去草実而食之。張晏曰、取鼠及草実、并而食之。師古曰、蘇說是也。中草字、去謂藏之也。音丘呂反。 「刘攽曰、今北方、野鼠之類甚多、皆可食也。武掘野鼠得即食之、其草実乃頗去藏耳。陳遵伝亦有藏去二字。⁴⁶

羝 (male sheep): Shigu said, “‘羝’ means ‘male sheep.’ Male sheep cannot produce

⁴⁵ Kōno, “Translingual Reading in Japan’s Age of Civil War.”

⁴⁶ *Hyōdai hochū Mōgyū*, image 116/249-117/249.

milk, so the reason for this order is to prohibit Su Wu from returning. It is similar to the order made to the Crown Prince Dan of the Yan to have the head of a crow turn white or a horn be grown out of the head of a horse. The pronunciation of ‘羝’ is ‘di,’ that of ‘乳’ is ‘rū.’” Song Qi said, ‘There seems to be a character of ‘羊’ that follows the characters of ‘牧羝.’”

What follows “only when a male sheep produced milk would Wu be permitted to return” is “he was parted from his followers Chang Hui and others, they all exiled to different places.” When Wu had arrived the region by the sea, he was provided with no food or drink (Shigu said, “it means that there was no one to prepare food or drink for him.”), so he dug out wild rats, stored grass and fruits, and ate them. “Su Lin said, ‘Wu caught rats, stored grass and fruits, and ate them.’” “Zhang Yan said, ‘Wu caught rats, culled grass and fruits, and ate them together.’” “Shigu said, ‘Su’s interpretation is correct. ‘屮’ is the old character for ‘草’ (grass), and ‘去’ means ‘to store.’ The pronunciation of ‘去’ is ‘qū.’” “Liu Ban said, ‘Nowadays in the north, wild rats and those alike are many and they all can be ate. Wu ate wild rats as soon as he dug them out, and stored grass and fruits for later on.’” *The Biography of Chen Zun* (in the *Han shu*) also contains the two characters “藏去” (to store).

Yan Shigu was a Tang dynasty linguist and historian, whose commentary on the *Han shu* had enjoyed long prestige since the Nara and Heian periods and was constantly referred to by Japanese scholars. Here, in addition to the commentary by Shigu, the explanation of “羝” also included a note by Song Qi 宋祁 (J. Sōki, 998-1061), a historian, essayist, and poet of the Northern Song dynasty (960-1127), who emended the particular line in the *Han shu*. Nobukata here was drawing from a much more recent edition of the *Han shu* than the one traditionally circulated, either a Song dynasty woodblock-printed edition, or a Japanese commentary edition compiled by Gozan Zen monks, both of which were available in his time. This is not a special case. In the tale of Shi Dan (?-13 BCE), for instance, Nobukata similarly made reference to the commentaries by Liu Fengshi 劉奉世 (J. Ryūhōse, 1041-1113) and Yangxia Gong 陽夏公 (J. Yōkakō, a.k.a. Xie Jiang, J. Shakō 謝絳, 995-1039), both of whom were Song dynasty

scholars.⁴⁷

Continuing on, Nobukata cited another detail from the *Han shu*, which was not included in the *hochū Mōgyū*, that when Su Wu was exiled to Lake Baikal, he had no one providing him with food or supper, so he dug out wild rats, stored grass and fruits, and ate them. Here again, Nobukata was drawing from the more recent edition of the *Han shu*, which contained a note by Liu Ban 劉攽 (J. Ryūhan, 1022-1088), a historian of the Northern Song dynasty, which verified the reliability of the narration in *Han shu* that Su Wu had eaten rats in order to survive. In the end, Nobukata added his own finding from the main text of another biography in the *Han shu* that both Shigu and Liu Ban were correct about the particular usage of the word “qu 去,” here meaning “to store.”

Nobukata then collected these notes into new volumes, entitled *Mōgyū chōjin* 蒙求聽塵 (*Upon Hearing the Mengqiu*), in which the notes were further expanded to include vernacular comments on the content and language of the *Mengqiu*.⁴⁸ As the main text was omitted here, Nobukata listed the initial two or three characters for each sentence that he was going to annotate, but in the end actually not every sentence that he listed was annotated. For entries that had already appeared in the *hochū Mōgyū*, oftentimes there would be more explanations added in the *Mōgyū chōjin*, while occasionally they might not even be included at all. There were also entries that could only be found in the *Mōgyū chōjin*. All these suggest that both the *hochū Mōgyū* and the *Mōgyū chōjin* were still ongoing projects at the time they were written down and copied by

⁴⁷ On this point, I am indebted to Kōno Kimiko’s seminar.

⁴⁸ Keio University Library holds a manuscript of the *Mōgyū chōin* written by Nobukata himself, but the manuscript is not accessible to the public. For an introduction, see the entry on “*Mōgyū chōin*” in *Keiō Gijuku Toshokan zō wakansho zenpon kaidai*, edited by Keiō Gijuku Toshokan (Tōkyō: Keiō Gijuku Toshokan, 1958), 43-44. In this paper, I thus rely on a manuscript held by Kyoto University Rare Materials Digital Archive, which is an incomplete version and only contains the second and third volumes of the *Mōgyū chōin*.

scholars around him. Complementing each other, Nobukata's annotated *hochū Mōgyū* and his vernacular commentary, the *Mōgyū chōjin*, reflected his scholarly approach and attitude towards the *Mengqiu*. They became the first serious scholarship on the Xu commentary edition of the *Mengqiu* in Japan and laid the foundation for its growing popularity in the Edo period.

漢書列傳二十四。武帝時——乃幽武——窖 師古曰、旧米粟之窖而空者也。音工孝反。「窖ハ米入ル、土クラ也。

武臥——数月——数日 本伝数月ハ非歟。

匈奴——本伝、徙_レ武ヲ北海上無人処_ニ。

「師古曰、羝、牡羊也。羝不_レ当_レ産乳_ニ、故設此言、示絶其事。若燕太子丹烏白頭、馬生角之比也。羝音丁奚反。乳音人喻反。宋祁曰、牧羝字下、疑有羊字。

「羝乳乃得帰ノ下ニ、別其官属常惠等、各置_レ他所_ニ。武既至_レ海上_ニ、稟食不_レ至、師古曰、無人給飯之。掘_レ野鼠ヲ去_レ中実ヲ_レ而食之。蘇林曰、取鼠、去草実而食之。張晏曰、取_レ鼠及草実_ニ、并而食之。師古曰、蘇說是也。中ハ古草字。去謂_レ蔵_レ之也。音丘呂反。刘攽曰、今北方、野鼠之、類甚多、皆可食也。武掘野鼠、得即食之、其草実乃頗去蔵耳。陳遵伝、亦有蔵去二字。⁴⁹

Han shu, Biographies Twenty-Four. 武帝時 (during the reign of Emperor Wu) 乃幽武 (so secretly had Wu jailed in): 窖 (vault): Shigu said, “It refers to the storage for rice and millet in old times. It is empty. The pronunciation is ‘giao.’” “The vault is an earthen container to store rice.”

武臥 (Lying down, Wu) 数月 (Several months): Several days. Several months as recorded in the *Han shu* is impossible.

匈奴 (Xiongnu): *Han shu*: exiled Wu to an uninhabited region by the Northern Sea (Lake Baikal)

“Shigu said, ‘羝’ means ‘male sheep.’ Male sheep cannot produce milk, so the reason for this order is to prohibit Su Wu from returning. It is similar to the order made to the Crown Prince Dan of the Yan to have the head of a crow turn white or a horn be grown out of the head of a horse. The pronunciation of ‘羝’ is ‘di,’ that of ‘乳’ is ‘rū.’” Song Qi said, ‘There seems to be a character of ‘羊’ that follows the characters of ‘牧羝.’” What follows “only when a male sheep produced milk would Wu be permitted to return” is “he was parted from his followers Chang Hui and others, they all exiled to different places.” When Wu had arrived the region by the sea, he was provided with no

⁴⁹ *Mōgyū chōjin* (Kyoto University Rare Materials Digital Archive), image 41/215-43/215, <https://rmda.kulib.kyoto-u.ac.jp/en/item/rb00008025#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv=0&r=0&xywh=-2204%2C-114%2C7479%2C2275>

food or drink (Shigu said, “it means that there was no one to prepare food or drink for him.”), so he dug out wild rats, stored grass and fruits, and ate them. “Su Lin said, ‘Wu caught rats, stored grass and fruits, and ate them.’” “Zhang Yan said, ‘Wu caught rats, culled grass and fruits, and ate them together.’” “Shigu said, ‘Su’s interpretation is correct. ‘𦉳’ is the old character for ‘草’ (grass), and ‘去’ means ‘to store.’ The pronunciation of ‘去’ is ‘qū.” “Liu Ban said, ‘Nowadays in the north, wild rats and those alike are many and they all can be ate. Wu ate wild rats as soon as he dug them out, and stored grass and fruits for later on.’” *The Biography of Chen Zun* (in the *Han shu*) also contains the two characters “藏去” (to store).

The entries above from the *Mōgyū chōjin* were mostly repetitions of the *hochū Mōgyū*, except for two minor additions. One is in the explanation of “窖 (vault).” After citing Shigu’s words from the *Han shu*, Nobukata further explained it in vernacular Japanese. The second addition is Nobukata’s questioning of the narration in *Han shu* that Su Wu survived for “several months” on snow and the hairs from his yak-tail banner; he used the *Han shu* as his base text but did not take all parts for granted. According to Nobukata, “several days” sounded more reasonable.

「武杖漢節——節ハ、ハタシルシ也。
 「臥起——ハタの首ニ、毛ヲ以テ飾ニス。是落尽ルニテ、ハナヒスメモツ。匈奴ニ屈セヌ処ヲ云。
 「節旄尽落ノ下ニ、積五六年。
 「昭帝立——和睦ス。
 「漢求——蘇武等ヲ、皈セト云。
 「匈奴——「武死ノ下ニ、後ニ漢ノ使復至、匈奴、常惠請テ、其守者ニ。与俱得夜見（ア）ヲ漢使ニ、具自陳道、教メ使者ヲ謂、单于言（イハ）天子射上林中、云々
 「常惠モ武ト、同時ニ、匈奴ヘユク者也。
 「足有係——帛ハ、キヌニカイタル書也。ソノ帛書ニ、ナニトモ沢中ニ、羊ヲカフテ井タリト、アルホトニ、シカト不死トイヘト、漢ノ使ニ、ヲシヘテ、イハシムル也。
 「在某沢中ノ下ニ、使者大喜、如惠語、以讓（セム）单于、々々視左右、而

驚謝_漢使_曰、武等実ハ在。⁵⁰

“武杖漢節” (Wu constantly held the imperial banner of Han): “節” means “imperial banner.”

“臥起” (awake or asleep): The head of the banner was decorated with the fur of yak-tail. Even the yak-tail had shed its fur completely, Wu was still holding the banner. It means that Wu never surrender to the Xiongnu.

What follows “the yak-tail that was attached shd its fur completely” is “five or six years has passed.”

“昭帝立” (Emperor Zhao ascended the throne): to appease.

“漢求” (the Han court requested): to request the release of Su Wu and others.

“匈奴” (the Xiongnu): “What follows ‘[the Xiongnu pretended that] Wu had died already’ is ‘Later on, when the Han emissary revisited the Xiongnu, Chang Hui pleaded with his guarder to be allowed to visit the Han emissary at night. Hui related their encounters to the Han emissary in great detail, and instructed the emissary to argue against the Chanyu (the chief of the Xiongnu) by saying that the Emperor of the Han had shot [a wild goose] in the Shanglin Garden...’”

“Chang Hui was another ambassador who accompanied Wu to the land of the Xiongnu.”

“足有係” (attached to its foot): “帛” is a silk letter. The Han emissary was instructed to say that on the silk letter Wu wrote his experience of herding sheep somewhere by a lake as well as making every effort to survive under some vault.

What follows “somewhere by a lake” is “the Han emissary was much delighted, and reproved Chanyu (the chief of the Xiongnu) as instructed by Hui. Chanyu looked about, and apologized to the Han emissary, saying, ‘Wu is still alive indeed.’”

Here Nobukata continued to add more explanations in vernacular Japanese. Some were about a particular word, some about a transition between events. The most noteworthy entries, however, were the following ones, where Nobukata went beyond the *Han shu* and cited extensively from more recent sources.

「風雅集、漢風吹散羝羊隊、又入_麒麟隊裏_来。武ハ、麒麟閣ニ、画カルハ也。
「雁足ノ書ノ事ハ、実事ニハアラス。宋景濂カ文粹ニモ、実事ニテハナシト云。
元朝ノ郝伯常カ事ハ、実事也。サレトモ武カ故事ニハ、実事ノ如クスル也。阮
南江蘇武羝雪ノ詩ニ、夜寒独对_羝羊_泣、南雁不_皈胡雪深。面白詩也。経ニ

⁵⁰ *Mōgyū chōjin*, image 41/215-43/215.

モ、雁ノ書ヲ伝タル事アリ。多語録可考。

「輟耕録第廿ニ云、零落風高恣ニメ、所ヲ如（ユク）、帰期回首是春初。上林天子援弓繳、窮海累臣有帛書、中統五年、九月一日、放雁、獲者勿殺。国信大使、郝經書于真州忠勇軍營新館、右五十九字、郝公書也。公字伯常沢州陵川人也。世皇召居潜邸、云々 中統元年、拜翰林侍讀學士、充国信使宋。宋館于真州、凡十六年、始得歸。此書当在至元一年、是時南北隔絶、但知紀元、為中統也。先是、有以雁獻、命畜之。雁見公輒鼓翼引吭、似有訴者。公感悟、率從者具香案、北向拜。雁至前。手書尺帛、親繫雁足而從之。後虞人獲之、苑中以聞。上惻然曰、四十騎留江南、曾無一人雁比乎。遂進師伐越、二年宋亡云々 「此時、宋ハ南渡シテ、江南ニアリ。元ハ北ニ都ス。郝ハ元ノ臣ニテ、南方ノ宋ヘ使ニ行テ、其コトトメラレテ居タリ。此ニ於テ、郝カ雁足ニ、書ヲユイツケテ、絶句ノ詩ヲ作テ、五十九字カイテハナツ也。元朝ノ虞人カ得テ、元ノ天子ヘ申ス。マヽニメ、元カラ宋ヲ伐テ亡ス。十六年ニ郝ハ真州ニ居レリ。年号ヲツケカヘタリ。

「武留匈奴十九——

「至宣帝——細コトニ朝スヘケレトモ、武ヲユルメ、朔望ハカリニ朝セシム。

「後図画—— 張晏曰⁵¹

“*The Collection of Elegance*: ‘The wind from the Han swept the flock of sheep, and entered that of *qilin*.’ A portrait of Wu was made in the Qilin Pavillion.”

“The anecdote of the message attached to the foot of the wild goose is not a real event. Song Jinglian also stated in his anthology of literature that it was not a real event. The experience of Hao Bochang in the Yuan Dynasty was real. However, in the tale of Wu, the anecdote was related as if it had actually happened. Ruan Nanjiang composed a poem on Su Wu’s herding sheep in the snow, which read, ‘In the chilly night he faced the male sheep alone and wept. The wild geese had fled south without returning, deep snow accumulating in the land of Hu.’ An interesting poem. There is another “wild goose carrying a letter” anecdote for Jing too, which can be found in the *Duo yu lu*.”

“So is it related in Entry Twenty-Two in the *Retirement to the Country Side*, ‘Sweeping bare trees and withered grass, the wind is high and unbridled. To look back on the date of return, it is already the beginning of spring. The Emperor draws the bowstring and shot a wild goose in Shanglin Garden. A silk letter by his minister from far across the sea is to be found. The first day of the ninth month in Zhongtong 5 (1264). To those who capture this wild goose, please release it without killing. Ambassador with Credentials, Hao Jingshu. Written in the New Residence of Troop Loyalty and Bravery in Zhenzhou. The fifty-nine characters to the right was written by Minister Hao. The minister’s style name is Bochang, a native of Lingchuan in Zezhou. It is said that Bochang was summoned to live in the same residency in which the emperor had lived before he ascended the throne. In Zhongtong 1 (1260), Bochang was assigned Academician Reader-in-Waiting in the Hanlin Academy, and appointed

⁵¹ Ibid. This is the end of the comments on the tale of Su Wu. Many of the notes and annotations in the *Mōgyū chōjin* are incomplete and left with blank space, perhaps to be filled in later.

Ambassador with Credentials to visit the Song court. The Song court detained him in Zhenzhou for sixteen years, after which he finally was able to return. The letter was actually written in Zhiyuan 1 (1264), but since the south and the north were in isolation, Bochang had no way to know the change of era names, and could only assume that the year was Zhongtong 5 (1264). Earlier, when someone had presented Bochang with a wild goose, Bochang ordered it to be reared. The wild goose would flap its wings and stretch its neck to sing upon seeing Bochang, as if it were trying to express something. Bochang came up with an idea and selected an auspicious day. With his companies, he prepared an incense burner table, facing the north, and saluted. The wild goose came forward. Writing up a message on a silk letter, Bochang attached it to the foot of the wild goose and let it go. Later on, the wild goose was captured by a gardener, and the stories became known to the imperial court. Feeling sorrow, the emperor said, ‘forty men were kept in the south, among whom not a single one could return like the wild goose.’ He then sent a troop to attack the south, and in two years the Song court was perished.” “At the time, the Song court has moved to the south, while the Yuan court established the capital in the north. Hao is a minister of the Yuan court; he was sent to visit the Song court in the south and then detained there. Hao attached a letter to the foot of a wild goose, on which he wrote a message of fifty-nine characters, including a four-line *jueju* poem. A gardener serving at the Yuan court received the letter and reported it to the Emperor. In this way, the Yuan attacked the Song and perished it. For sixteen years, Hao stayed in Zhenzhou. Even the era name had changed.”

“武留匈奴十九” (Wu stayed in the Xiongnu for nineteen years)

“至宣帝” (when it came to the reign of Emperor Xuan): Though the ministers were supposed to attend court on a daily base, Wu was allowed to attend court on the first and fifteenth days of the month.

“後図画” (later, a portrait was made): Zhang Yan said

Nobukata first cited a couplet on Su Wu from the *Feng ya ji* 風雅集 (J. *Fūgashū*, *Collection of Elegance*), or *Huang Yuan feng ya* 皇元風雅 (J. *Kōgen fūga*, *Elegance of the Imperial Yuan Dynasty*), which was an anthology of the Yuan dynasty poetry, compiled by Fu Xi 傅習 and Sun Cunwu 孫存吾 during the Yuan dynasty (1271-1368).⁵² Although it is unclear when this anthology was introduced to Japan, it is certain that it was already available to Nobukata by the time when he was working on his vernacular commentary the *Mōgyū chōjin*. Like many other Song and Yuan dynasty books, this anthology was reprinted by Japanese Zen

⁵² See Volume 3 of *Kōgen fūga*, (Kyoto University Rare Materials Digital Archive), image no. 31/33, <https://rmda.kulib.kyoto-u.ac.jp/en/item/rb00013055#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv=0&r=0&xywh=-2204%2C-114%2C7479%2C2275>.

monasteries during the late medieval period (14th-16th centuries), becoming known as the Gozan-ban (五山版) or “Five Mountain” edition.⁵³ The connection was probably based on the reference to the mythical creature *qilin* 麒麟 (J. kirin) in both the couplet and the narration in the *hochū Mōgyū*.

Continuing on, Nobukata mentions the *gansho* (message carried by the wild goose) anecdote, which was so well known and constantly alluded to in premodern Japanese history and literature as a true story. Nobukata, however, noted in particular that the wild goose had never carried a message for Su Wu. To demonstrate his point, Nobukata referred to Song Lian 宋濂 (style name Jinglian 景濂, 1310-1381), a historian and literary and political adviser of the late Yuan and early Ming (1368-1644) dynasties, who stated in his anthology that Su Wu had never sent out a message carried by a wild goose, but the idea of using the wild goose as the messenger became the inspiration for and eventually was realized by Hao Jing 郝經 (style name Bochang 伯常, 1223-1275), a Confucian scholar and politician of the Yuan dynasty.⁵⁴ Hao Jing was sent by the Yuan court as an ambassador to the Southern Song court, but was detained there for sixteen years. It was not until his message, attached to the foot of a wild goose, was delivered to the emperor of the Yuan court that he was finally able to return. This became the inspiration for the Su Wu story of the wild goose.

In comparison with the tale of Su Wu, which had long been familiar to the Japanese, the tale of Hao Jing was quite recent. Nobukata then cited another source to further explain the tale, the *Chuo geng lu* 輟耕錄 (J. *Tekkōroku, Retirement to the Countryside*, 1366), or *Nancun*

⁵³ For an introduction to the Gozan-ban and its significance in the study of Sinitic writings, see Sumiyoshi, *Chūsei Nihon Kangaku no kiso kenkyū*, 3-37.

⁵⁴ See Volume 4 of *Song xue shi wen ji* (Shanghai: Shang wu yin shu guan, 1936).

chuo geng lu 南村輟耕錄 (J. *Nanson tekkōroku*, *Nancun's Retirement to the Countryside*), written by Tao Zongyi 陶宗儀 (J. Tōsōgi, style name Nancun 南村, 1316-1369), a scholar and literati of the late Yuan and early Ming dynasties.⁵⁵ Written in the style of a “brush note” essay (*biji* 筆記), the *Chuo geng lu* is a privately written history and collection of anecdotes of the late Yuan dynasty. Nobukata here did a word-for-word citation of the original passage in *Chuo geng lu* in literary Chinese, which he then explained briefly in vernacular Japanese.

The case above is just one example. In his *Mōgyū chōjin*, Nobukata constantly demonstrated his wide erudition in Song and Yuan dynasties books and knowledge, ranging from completely new collections of anecdotes or poetry to revised editions of earlier works and to the most up-to-date information on contemporary Chinese language, geography, figures, or events. In fact, the texts he had drawn from ranged from Tang dynasty encyclopedias and commentaries, such as the *Chuxue ji* 初学記 (J. *Shogakuki*, *Record for Beginning Study*) and the *Jinshu yinyi* 晋書音義 (J. *Shinjo ongi*, *Pronunciation and Meaning of the Book of Jin*), to Song dynasty histories, collectanea (*congshu* 叢書), and collections of anecdotes, such as the *Tongjian gangmu* 通鑑綱目 (J. *Tsugan kōmoku*, *Outlines and Details of the Comprehensive Mirror*), the *Baichuan xuehai* 百川學海 (J. *Hyakusen gakkai*, *Sea of Learning of One Hundred Rivers*), and the *Taiping guangji* 太平廣記 (J. *Taihei kōki*, *Extensive Records of the Taiping Reign*), and then to Yuan dynasty rhyme dictionaries, such as the *Gujin yunhui juyao* 古今韻會舉要 (J. *Kokon inkai kyoyō*, *Essential Dictionary of Ancient and Contemporary Rhymes*).

In the *Mōgyū chōjin*, Nobukata also revealed a keen interest in citing, word-for-word,

⁵⁵ See Volume 7 of *Tekkōroku* (Waseda University Library, 1652), image no. 33/57, http://archive.wul.waseda.ac.jp/kosho/bunko11/bunko11_d0008/

original text in literary Sinitic from the source, be it Chinese official histories or just collections of anecdotes. He would then provide a brief explanation in vernacular Japanese. It is evident that, at Nobukata's time, there were already a great variety and number of Song and Yuan dynasties books, especially those printed in the Zen monasteries as the Gozan-ban or "Five Mountain" editions, that had become available to people like Nobukata. As the Gozan-ban flourished, the scholarly exchanges among different scholarly families and lineages also intensified. Indeed, many of Nobukata's references had to do with the studies by the Gozan Zen monks, particularly those on Chinese history and Song dynasty poetry.

Conclusion

The compilation of the *Nijūshikō*, or *Twenty-Four Filial Exemplars*, demonstrated a notable difference from earlier compilations of filial piety tales in that it was not just a translation and vernacularization of its Chinese source text but also involved a visual adaptation of Chinese literary culture. With its mixed style of registers – *kanshi* (poetry in literary Sinitic) and *wabun* (texts in Japanese scripts), the *Nijūshikō* could also be read as a collection of poetry with commentary, or a textbook for recitation with explanatory notes. In this sense, it can be compared to the *Mengqiu*, or *Mōgyū*, or *Inquiry of the Youth*, in which the rhymed headlines could be used as poetry for recitation and the explanatory notes, resembled poetry commentary, even though the *Mengqiu* was in a completely different register. Nobukata's lecture notes on the *Mengqiu* then could be seen as a commentary on commentary, or a meta-commentary. In both cases, Sinitic had the status of the language of learning, while the vernacular served as glosses and translations. They were mixed together but held different implications for the reading and understanding of the text in its entirety.

Afterword

This project has attempted to provide a new history of Japan's complex literary and cultural negotiation with China in the twelfth through sixteenth centuries, which on one hand is the history of intermediaries (dictionaries, encyclopedias, and commentaries) that started to be extensively produced in Japan in relation to books and texts imported from China, and on the other is the history of multiple Chinas as they were understood and constructed in this process. In both cases, I have examined the interrelationship among literary language, literary genres, and knowledge production and circulation. While Chapter 1 introduced the development of poetry commentary in Japan, particularly the transition from texts in literary Sinitic to vernacular, Chapter 4 demonstrated that this development was never a simple transition but always an uneven process in which layers of literary Sinitic and the vernacular coexisted within a single text to emphasize the production of different types of knowledge. Chapters 2 and 3 discussed the typological interest in certain themes and values (loyalty and filial piety) when it came to the reference to Chinese figures and events in Japanese medieval warrior tales, which stood in contrast to the references found in the Japanese court tales as discussed in Chapter 1. In the early medieval period, as shown in Chapter 2, there occurred a new, more popular understanding of Chinese history (up to the Tang dynasty), which was constructed through intermediaries and via Japanese cultural imagination but which still relied on the classical knowledge of China as formed in the Heian period. It was not until the late medieval period, as demonstrated in Chapters 3 and 4, that an emerging interest in the more contemporaneous Song and Yuan dynasties culture finally took shape and led to far-reaching changes in Japanese literature and education.

Here I have dealt with only a few important texts and moments in which Sinitic

(literary Chinese) and the vernaculars coexisted and interacted, and in which Chinese literary culture became part of Japanese literature. Many angles remain for further consideration. One possible direction would be to expand the cases of “cultural signs” of China to include visual cues (such as checkered tile floors or a narrow, pointed boat prow). The more popular understanding of Chinese culture, based on names and anecdotes, as I discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, were often supplemented by visuals and oral performance. The classical knowledge of China, formed in the Nara and Heian period court culture, also provided rich models for literary and visual adaptation in later periods.

Another possible direction would be to expand the theme of filial piety to include that in the Edo period. The *Nijūshikō*, or the *Twenty-Four Filial Exemplars*, as I discussed in Chapter 4, was widely enjoyed for its education function (to provide filial paragons) while at the same time becoming the object of parody. A new trend in the Edo period was the focus on impiety. Tales of impiety became extremely popular, the most representative example being Ihara Saikaku’s *Twenty Breaches of Filial Piety in Japan* (1686), often taken as a parody of the Chinese *Twenty-Four Filial Exemplars*. The so-called *katagi-mono*, or character books, which were stories and novels describing the customs and habits of certain categories of people, also featured tales of impiety; Ejima Kiseki’s *Characters of Modern Sons* (1715) is one such example.

A third possibility would be the further exploration of the issue of vernacularization. I am particularly concerned with the role of Buddhist monasteries in secular education and in interpreting and vernacularizing texts in literary Sinitic, which was a shared phenomenon in China, Japan, and other East Asian countries. Ultimately, I hope to contribute to the interpretation, adaptation, and vernacularization of this cultural sphere.

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