

## SERIES EDITORS' PREFACE

Japanese scholarship has profoundly influenced how Sinologists across the globe engage with the Han and non-Han Chinese pasts of the region we today define as “China.” Its insights permeate our discourse, periodization, and even vocabulary. However, despite this, there has been a growing disengagement and decided lack of dialogue between the Anglophone and Japanophone traditions in recent years that has made the voice of Japanese Sinology increasingly difficult to perceive. This is largely due to structural constraints in academia that hinder Japanese scholars from sharing their research internationally and the challenges younger Western Sinologists face in acquiring Japanese as an additional research language. That said, the benefits to be gained by engagement with Japanese scholarship are enormous. In the larger interest of making scholarship on China genuinely international and introducing major work to a largely Anglophone readership, we have launched an exciting new initiative with the extraordinary support of The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press to introduce the best Japanese work on China to the Anglophone world.

This recent lack of dialogue between the two traditions is unfortunate for a variety of reasons. The work of Japanese scholars has prefigured many influential arguments and discoveries in Anglophone scholarship. For instance, Naitō Konan 内藤湖南 (1866–1934) and his disciple Miyazaki Ichisada 宮崎市定 (1901–1995) explored the Tang-Song transition and “East Asian early modernity” (*Tōyōteki kinsei* 東洋の近世), setting the stage for many of the arguments today associated with Kenneth Pomeranz’s notion of a “Great Divergence.” Moreover, while the inadequacy of the “tribute system” framework

has recently come under renewed scrutiny due to David Kang's influence, Japanese scholars such as Iwai Shigeki 岩井茂樹, Ueda Makoto 上田信, and Okamoto Takashi 岡本隆司 have not only criticized and expanded upon the framework of Hamashita Takeshi's 濱下武志 formerly influential "tribute trade system," but they have also provided empirically rich analyses of the reality of China's diversity in foreign relations. Our intent in presenting these examples is not to lionize Japanese scholarship and encourage all of us to begin genuflecting at its altar, but to emphasize the need for improved *engagement*, which would benefit all parties involved. One such example of this concerns the issue of how we deal with the "residual Eurocentrisms"—to use Deniz Kuru's term—that haunt our work. Traditionally, Japanese Sinology has been exceedingly self-aware of its own Eurocentric biases. Practicing the new "modern" Rankean form of historiography that took hold in Japan during the Meiji period necessitated the coining of a vast amount of new terminology derived from the Western European experience. The effects of Western modernity were, therefore, ever palpable in the words people spoke and employed in their writing. For famous Sinologist Tachibana Shiraki 橘樸 (1881–1945), to be "scientific" was to adopt Western concepts and epistemological frameworks. And, precisely for this reason, he followed H. B. Morse's (1855–1934) footsteps and denoted many groups and associations in Chinese society, such as the *huiguan* 會館 and *gongsuo* 公所 as "guilds." Others, however, such as Katō Shigeshi 加藤繁 (1880–1946), saw Tachibana and later Niida Noboru's 仁井田陞 (1904–1966) practice of employing the term "guild" as deeply problematic and rooted in a jaundiced Eurocentric understanding of the Chinese past.<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, paradoxically, Japan's imperial expansion and the desire to establish itself as a superior alternative to the West, which was adequately poised to lead Asia, compelled its intellectuals to contemplate how the specter of Western modernity had hitherto inhabited and colonized Japanese thought. Despite the nefarious ways in which the ideas they produced were used to help justify Japanese expansion in Asia, the "Overcoming Modernity" (*kindai no chōkoku* 近代の超克) symposiums of the 1940s could be read as a conscious means through which to isolate and do away with "residual Eurocentrisms."

<sup>1</sup> Okamoto Takashi 岡本隆司, *Kindai Nihon no Chūgoku-kan: Ishibashi Tanzan, Naitō Konan kara Tanigawa Michio made* 近代日本の中国観——石橋湛山・内藤湖南から谷川道雄まで (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2018), pp. 112–147.

In other words, Japanese intellectuals at this time sought to *overcome* Western modernity, which compelled Japanese scholarship to become profoundly self-aware of its Eurocentric biases. Of course, this self-awareness was by no means infallible, and the very idea that Japan was best poised to lead the benighted Asia that Fukuzawa Yukichi 福沢諭吉 (1835–1901) spoke of in his “On Leaving Asia” (*Datsu-A Ron* 脱亞論, 1885) was an idea that was thoroughly grounded in Hegelian and Marxian portrayals of China as a place outside of history and which was mired by stagnation.

Issues of Eurocentrism also came to light in the postwar period, due to the debates that erupted in Japan over the proper way to periodize Chinese history. The postwar repentance for Imperial Japan’s ills, coupled with a new-found admiration for China’s “success” in achieving socialism through the Communist Revolution of 1949, encouraged a stream of new scholarship in which scholars of the Marxist “Rekiken” 歴研 School at the University of Tokyo sought to fit Chinese history into the mold of a Marxian developmental trajectory. As Kishimoto Mio 岸本美緒 has alluded to in a recent article, the intense debate over periodization that resulted from this paradox helped Japanese scholars to realize, by the 1980s, that periodization according to a Western historical trajectory made no sense and would lead to the cultural relativism that characterizes contemporary Japanese scholarship.<sup>2</sup>

The Japanese Sinology Series aims to bring some of the best Japanese scholarship on Chinese history and culture, broadly conceived, to an English-speaking audience. This series, the first of its kind, aspires to publish high-quality translations of academic scholarship about China produced by scholars working in the Japanese language, regardless of their Japanese or non-Japanese descent. We use the term “China” broadly and do not wish to solely privilege the Han Chinese past, welcoming research on non-Han regimes and peoples associated with what we today define as “China.” We also welcome work on communities, diaspora, and other connections to “China,” wherever situated globally. More generally, we are open to manuscripts coming from any discipline.

We encourage submissions from prospective translators or original authors who can translate their work in line with the academic standards of

---

<sup>2</sup> Kishimoto Mio 岸本美緒, “Gurōbaru hisutorī ron to ‘Kariforunia gakuha’” グローバル・ヒストリー論と「カリフォルニア学派」, *Shisō* 1127 (2018): 86–87.

Anglophone scholarship. Each submission will undergo a rigorous peer review process to ensure the highest standards of scholarship. For inquiries regarding the series, please contact Joshua Fogel ([fogel@yorku.ca](mailto:fogel@yorku.ca)) or Thomas P. Barrett ([thomas.peter.barrett@gmail.com](mailto:thomas.peter.barrett@gmail.com)). It is our sincere wish that, together with your support, we can help push the boundaries of research with input from Japanese Sinology.

Joshua A. Fogel and Thomas P. Barrett  
Series Editors, Japanese Sinology Series

The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press: Copyrighted Materials

# Translator's Preface

Miyazaki Ichisada and the *Shi ji*

In November 1977, while I was studying at Kyoto University and working on my dissertation on Naitō Konan 内藤湖南 (1866–1934), the Tōyōshi kenkyūkai 東洋史研究會 (Research association for East Asian history) held its annual meeting there. This was a long, one-day affair of eight or nine papers by usually prominent scholars before a sizable audience from all over the archipelago and a keynote from the longtime president of the organization, Miyazaki Ichisada 宮崎市定 (1901–1995).<sup>1</sup> Between sessions, Professor Ōtani Toshio 大谷敏夫 (b. 1932) called me over to a side room while asking if I would like to meet Miyazaki *sensei*. Of course I would, I said, but I was also petrified. He was well-known as the most prominent of Naitō Konan's students, and my fellow Japanese graduate students were all terrified of him, although he had retired some years before.

Also present for what was a brief meeting was my good friend and Kyoto University student Kida Tomoo 木田知生 (now emeritus from Ryūkoku University), a specialist in China's Song dynasty history, the field in which Miyazaki had staked such an important claim. As a group, we each spoke seriatim with Miyazaki, and that was it. As Kida and I walked down Higashi-ōji Street shortly afterward, we reflected on the meeting. At one point Kida said: "And his Japanese was so good!" Thinking that, despite having spent nearly

---

<sup>1</sup> His keynote that year concerned how to use historical fiction in historical research, a methodology employed in his essay, "Gesture and Literature," translated in this volume.

a year already in Japan at that point, I must have misunderstood my friend, I responded something on the order of: “Huh?” He understood and replied: “You just don’t expect God to speak Japanese.” Such was the acclaim of this renowned scholar in and around Kyoto University roughly a generation ago.

Miyazaki was born toward the end of the Meiji period (1868–1912) in the city of Iiyama in Nagano Prefecture. His early years would not lead one to suspect a future in Sinology.<sup>2</sup> He entered Kyoto Imperial University in 1922, where, in addition to Naitō, he studied East Asian history with Kano Naoki 狩野直喜 (1868–1947), Haneda Tōru 羽田亨 (1882–1955), and Kuwabara Jitsuzō 桑原隲藏 (1871–1931). His undergraduate thesis was on Chinese relations with non-Han, northern peoples and the ultimate collapse of the Southern Song dynasty in 1279. This launched him on an early Sinological career focused on the Song dynasty.

Before he could fully be launched, though, he was drafted in early 1932 in response to what became known in Japan as the first Shanghai Incident, where for three uneventful months he tended a horse stable; the knowledge acquired there, however, did provide subsequent insights into the rearing of horses. Later in the 1930s he would spend time in France and elsewhere in Europe, studying French and Arabic, before returning to Japan in the summer of 1938. In 1944 he took up a professorship at Kyoto University, receiving his doctoral degree in 1947 for a thesis on currency issues in the Five Dynasties (907–960) and early Northern Song (960–1127). It was in 1950 at the age of forty-nine that he fully articulated a scholarly view with his book *Tōyōteki kinsei* 東洋的近世 (East Asian modernity)<sup>3</sup> that was consonant with that of his mentor, Naitō Konan. Also that year he published *Yōseitei: Chūgoku no dokusai kunshu* 雍正帝：中國の獨裁君主 (The Yongzheng Emperor: Monarchical despotism in China).<sup>4</sup>

Over the many years of his long life, Miyazaki often returned to assess developments in the Song. A short list of his work in this area would include essays on Wang Anshi’s 王安石 agricultural policies, local officialdom under the Song, Prime Minister Jia Sidao 賈似道 (1213–1275) of the Southern Song,

<sup>2</sup> For greater detail on Miyazaki’s early life, see Inoue Fuminori 井上文則, *Ten o aite ni suru, hyōden Miyazaki Ichisada* 天を相手にする, 評伝宮崎市定 (Facing the heaven, a biography of Miyazaki Ichisada) (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 2018).

<sup>3</sup> Osaka: Kyōiku taimusu sha.

<sup>4</sup> Tokyo: Iwanami shoten.

Tibet during the Song-Yuan period, silver in “modern” (*kinsei* 近世) China, literati (*shi* 士) styles in the Song, legal institutions of the Song and Yuan, coal and iron in the Song, and the Tang-Song transition in farm labor. Although he is probably best known in the West for his work on the Chinese examination system, *Kakyo: Chūgoku no shiken jigoku* 科挙：中国の試験地獄 (The civil examination system: China's examination hell),<sup>5</sup> translated into English by Conrad Schirokauer (1929–2018) as *China's Examination Hell*,<sup>6</sup> this was written as a popular book in Japan. A more thorough study by him concerning access into the Chinese elite can be found in his longer and more detailed treatise, *Kyūhin kanjinhō no kenkyū: Kakyo zenshi* 九品官人法の研究：科挙前史 (Studies of the regulations of the Nine Ranks bureaucratic system: The prehistory of the civil examination system),<sup>7</sup> which examined the Nine Ranks-Rectifier (*Jiupin zhongzheng* 九品中正) system of the Six Dynasties era.

Throughout his career, however, Miyazaki never limited himself to the Song, often stretching back especially to the Han (202 BCE–220) and Six Dynasties (220–589) eras. Essays from this area of his scholarship include ordinary life at the end of the Han dynasty, currency in the Five Dynasties and early Song eras, and northern Chinese cities during the Six Dynasties. One of his later book-length works was an analysis of the *Analects* of Confucius, *Rongo no shin kenkyū* 論語の新研究 (A new study of the *Analects*).<sup>8</sup> And, as indicated by his work on the Yongzheng Emperor, he did not balk at studying post-Song history either, producing works on such topics as the rebellion of Deng Maoqi 鄧茂七 (d. 1449) of the mid-fifteenth century, *shidafu* 士大夫 and commoners in the Su-Song area during the Ming era, the life and times of Zhang Pu 張溥 (1602–1641) of the late Ming, cremation in Chinese history, and changes in the structure of population centers in Chinese history.

One development in his work which is apparent among other Japanese Sinologists of his generation (and earlier) was a tendency to poach in the realm of pre-modern Japanese history. The ostensible reason for this was a sense that, in this era when one of the main vehicles for recording history in Japan

<sup>5</sup> Tokyo: Chūō kōron sha, 1963. Based on an earlier study by the same name (Tokyo: Akitaya, 1946).

<sup>6</sup> New York: Weatherhill, 1976; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981.

<sup>7</sup> Kyoto: Tōyōshi kenkyūkai, 1956.

<sup>8</sup> Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1974.

was literary Chinese (some prefer the term literary Sinitic to emphasize its wider East Asian purchase), Japanese historians were not properly trained to accurately read the record. This concern led to rereadings and new explanations of ancient sword inscriptions, stela inscriptions, and passages from the “Treatises on Japan” in the *Wei zhi* 魏志 (Chronicle of Wei) and other early Chinese-language texts concerning Japan, as well as ancient Japanese texts. His writings in this field can be found in a number of books, such as *Nazo no shichishitō: Goseiki no Higashi Ajia to Nihon* 謎の七支刀：五世紀の東アジアと日本 (The Seven-pointed sword: East Asia and Japan in the fifth century)<sup>9</sup> and *Kodai Yamato chōtei* 古代大和朝廷 (The ancient Yamato court).<sup>10</sup>

In his ongoing fidelity to the periodization pioneered by Naitō Konan, throughout his career Miyazaki held to the Song as the start of “modernity” in China—with a couple of amplifications. One such was an effort, as indicated by the title of his 1950 book *Tōyōteki kinsei*, to extend the notion of modernity to elsewhere in East Asia. To this end he examined the principal characteristics Naitō had established as indicating this development—the rise of the common people to greater prominence in state, society, and culture and the emergence of autocracy as the emperor shed the strictures of other aristocrats previously holding his powers at bay—in the context of Japan and Korea. He even went further to refer to the Song as China’s equivalent of the European “renaissance” (albeit occurring much earlier in China) in an effort to place China’s historical development, writ large, within the context of world history. These works, as suggestive as they are, have not always met with rapturous reception. He also went one step further in the realm of periodization inherited from Naitō by claiming that the 1911 Revolution in China marked the beginning of a “recent era” (*saikinsei* 最近世). Whether this thesis acquires support remains to be seen.

As noted, throughout his career Miyazaki returned on any number of occasions to ancient Chinese history. Over the decades, he produced a series of fascinating studies of the *Shi ji* 史記 (Records of the historian) or inspired by the *Shi ji*. In 1979, he brought out a more general introduction to this pathbreaking, life work by the great historian of the Han era, Sima Qian 司馬遷 (ca. 146–ca. 86 BCE): *Shiki o kataru* 史記を語る (Discussions on the *Shi ji*).<sup>11</sup> Although this

<sup>9</sup> Tokyo: Chūō kōron sha, 1983.

<sup>10</sup> Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1988.

<sup>11</sup> Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1979.



work is, as noted, “more general” in tone, it nonetheless includes numerous intriguing ideas for future research. This volume is translated in its entirety herein.

In addition, I have included translations of a number of more specialized essays linked to the *Shi ji* in various ways, such as his remarkable essay on the biography of Li Si 李斯 (280–208 BCE). In this and the other essays translated in this volume, there are countless historiographical and methodological impulses that may, indeed, fuel debate for some time to come. While many of his writings have been published in Chinese, aside from his study of the civil examination system, translated by Conrad Schirokauer, this is the first major collection of Miyazaki's work to appear in English.<sup>12</sup>

Over the years 1991–1994, Iwanami shoten published his entire oeuvre in twenty-five volumes: *Miyazaki Ichisada zenshū* 宮崎市定全集 (Complete works of Miyazaki Ichisada). This collection should keep scholars busy for many years to come. He was always renowned for the clarity of his writing, without excessively long sentences or a vagueness of thought hard to parse. He never hid his distaste for a largely (or purely) economic view of history, as he himself engaged in economic history on a number of occasions. He makes expressly clear in various writings, such as in the last paragraphs of the third chapter and the first ones in Chapter Six of his book, *Shiki o kataru*, that he views a Marxist approach to history (or “historical materialism”) utterly wrong. If anything, Miyazaki honed closely to Naitō's cultural historical approach in which “culture” must be understood in a broad manner to include much of social behavior.<sup>13</sup>

A few more comments are in order to situate the reader. In Chapter 5 of this same work, he discusses how Chinese thinkers came to place the King of Yu of the Xia dynasty (c. 2070–c. 1600 BCE) where he now rests. This process by

---

<sup>12</sup> I should note as well two essays of his which have appeared in English: “Keisho yonen kagami wa Taihōgun sei ka” 景初4年鏡は帶方郡製か (Was the Jingchu 4 mirror a product of the Daifang Commandery?), in *Japanese for Sinologists: A Reading Primer with Glossaries and Translations* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2017), ed. Joshua A. Fogel and Fumiko Jōo, pp. 183–203, 398–401; “Nihon kodai shi no naka no fushigi” 日本古代史のなかの不思議 (The strangeness of ancient Japanese history), in his *Nazo no shichishitō: Go seiki no Higashi Ajia to Nihon* 謎の七支刀：五世紀の東アジアと日本 (The seven-pointed sword: East Asia and Japan in the fifth century), trans. Joshua A. Fogel, in *Sino-Japanese Studies* 16 (2009), pp. 79–86.

<sup>13</sup> Some of the material in this introduction was drawn from: “Miyazaki Ichisada (1901–1995),” *Journal of Asian Studies* 55.3 (August 1996), pp. 806–808.

which subsequent thinkers, in an effort to one-up their predecessors, located an earlier figure upon whom to focus attention. This method, known as *kajō* 加上, or “adding on to antiquity,” was a theoretical approach that Naitō Konan borrowed from Tominaga Nakamoto 富永仲基 (1715–1746), who had devised it to understand the history of Buddhism.<sup>14</sup>

## A Note on This Translation

Wherever possible I have followed Burton Watson's excerpted translation of *Shi ji*. I did this both because it is a top-quality work and model of translation and also because Watson was close to the Kyoto School Sinology and probably knew Miyazaki well. He certainly knew Miyazaki's work. For passages Watson chose not to translate, I have consulted the other translations available in English, notably that of William H. Nienhauser et al. (especially for the *Shi ji* biography of Li Si), as well others in French and Japanese. Miyazaki often “cites” *Shi ji* (and other Chinese texts), although he does so in a highly vernacular manner, meaning that his citations convey the meaning, if not the precise verbiage, of the text. Wherever possible I have added the dates of persons mentioned, though otherwise have chosen to be as unobtrusive as possible.

Finally, let me thank with as much gratitude as I can muster the two anonymous readers who forced me to clarify points and to correct misunderstandings and errors, and also to Kevin Huang, who showed particular interest that these essays see the light of day. One reader for the press made the important point that the translation of *shi* 史 in *Shi ji* should not be rendered “grand historian” (as Watson did in his translations and which has become a widespread practice). The preferred rendering is either “grand scribe” or “grand astrologer.” Whatever may have been the overlap of these conceptions in antiquity, they convey considerably different ideas today. Nienhauser and his colleagues opt for “grand scribe” in their work, and I can only respect their choice, given the formidable amount of time and effort they have expended translating this text. I chose to stick with “historian” here as a paean to Watson, arguably the greatest translator our field has known (working from Chinese and

<sup>14</sup> See Joshua Fogel, “On the ‘Rediscovery of the Chinese Past: Ts’ui Shu and Related Cases,” in *Perspective on a Changing China*, ed. Joshua Fogel and William T. Rowe (Boulder: Westview Press, 1979), pp. 225–226.

Japanese into English), and am prepared to suffer the ivory tower's slings and arrows. In the final days as this manuscript was being typeset, Michael Nylan offered a long list of corrections and emendations which have improved the translation many times over. Her comments were an education in Han history all itself. Special reference should be made to the collaborative effort: Stephen Durrant, Wai-yee Li, Michael Nylan, and Hans van Ess, *The Letter to Ren An and Sima Qian's Legacy* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2016). In modern terms, when all is said and done, the book is about history.

Joshua A. Fogel

Toronto, January 2024

The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press: Copyrighted Material