

Subject : A Study of Japanese *Kanbun* in the Latter Part of the Edo Period

With emphasis on SAITO Setsudo(斎藤拙堂), RAI Sanyo(頼山陽), RAI Shunsui(頼春水), and RAI Kyohei(頼杏坪)

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The literary field of “Japanese *Kanbun*” has developed as a part of the culture of Japan, incorporating Chinese characters, known as *Kanji*, from China, and this field has been influenced by the two cultures, Chinese and Japanese. The latter part of the Edo Period witnessed the most dynamic increase in works by “Japanese *Kanbun*” writers.

In this thesis, a comparison is made of the literary thoughts expressed in the works of SAITO Setsudo(斎藤拙堂), RAI Sanyo(頼山陽), RAI Shunsui(頼春水), and RAI Kyohei(頼杏坪). These writers’ works are excellent sources for literary appreciation of the genre. And although their social status was typical for the period, how each of them expressed himself was unique in the course of his career while remaining linked to the other three.

In the First Section, the writings and Chinese-style poems of SAITO Setsudo are examined. The following are made clear: SAITO Setsudo’s Confucian and literary concepts, the significance of his proposal “We should go back to the writings of Qin and Han periods, the basis of the genre HAN Yu(韓愈)” by analyzing mainly his masterpiece “Setsudo-bunwa(拙堂文話)”, that Setsudo had a new view of literature that superseded the previous morality-based forms, the relationship between the process of the rewriting of “Setsudo-bunwa” and the restrictions applied to its publication, both praise and criticism of and the significance of “Kaigai-iden(海外異伝)” as a novel, which contains the biographies of YAMADA Nagamasa(山田長政), HAMADA Yahyoe(浜田弥兵衛), and ZHENG Chenggong(鄭成功), the author’s attitude as a Confucian, and finally, Setsudo’s intentions for using the two different meanings of the Chinese character “狂”.

In the Second Section, the writings and Chinese-style poems of RAI Sanyo are discussed. The following are examined and explored: the Confucian view of women in “Ju-ni-en Zekku(十二媛絶句)”, RAI Sanyo’s relationship with the various writers by

examining “Shisha”(詩社), or a Poets’ Society, which RAI Sanyo hosted in Hiroshima and Kyoto, the differences observed in the epitaphs of RAI Sanyo and SAITO Setsudo that show the differences of their writing styles and how they lived, the process by which RAI Sanyo changed the usage of the character “狂” from being used in a negative way to a positive one, and finally, the literary tastes of RAI Sanyo.

In the Third Section, the writings and Chinese-style poems of RAI Shunsui, RAI Sanyo’s father, and of RAI Kyohei, RAI Sanyo’s father’s younger brother, are examined. The following are discussed: the loneliness of RAI Shunsui in his Chinese-style poems in spite of his successful career and life; how RAI Kyohei, who suffered from “閑” (boredom) in his retired life, wrote Chinese-style poems to cheer up those who were getting old, including himself; the unique world RAI Kyohei created by combining Chinese-style poems and Japanese “Waka” poems; and finally, the varying literary consciousness of RAI Shunsui, RAI Kyohei, SAITO Setsudo, and RAI Sanyo by reviewing and comparing their usage of Chinese character “狂”.

In conclusion, it is demonstrated that while maintaining Confucian pride through the use of excellent literary skills but without being overwhelmed by the literary strictures of the time, SAITO Setsudo, RAI Sanyo, RAI Shunsui, and RAI Kyohei possessed a consciousness akin to the modern spirit and successfully accomplished their various modes of self-expression while using the traditional literary form of the Chinese-style poem in the latter part of the Edo Period.