

A narrative of the author's research interest in Mori Ōgai, as found on pp. 79-84 and 101-104 of John Timothy Wixted, "One Westerner's Research on Chinese and Japanese Languages and Literatures," *Asian Research Trends* (The Toyo Bunko), New Series 4 (2009), pp. 77-113.

The latter is also available online:

<http://www.toyo-bunko.or.jp/newresearch/upload/2010011510213931.pdf>

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I am currently working on four book-projects: on the Japanese side, a study of the translation-literature of Mori Ōgai 森鷗外, and a book on the *kanshi* 漢詩 of Mori Ōgai; and on the Chinese side, a volume on the sixth-century critic, Zhong Rong 鍾嶸, author of *Shipin* 詩品 (Poetry Gradings), and a general introduction to the poetry of the thirteenth-century writer Yuan Haowen 元好問.

As for the translation-literature of Mori Ōgai, between one-third and one half of Ōgai's belles-lettres consist of translation. He introduced Goethe, Byron, Heine, Ibsen, and Kleist to Japan, and thereby greatly influenced the development of modern Japanese fiction, drama, and poetry. More than 90% of his translations were from German-language originals or translations, the rest from Chinese. (With most of Ōgai's translation work coming from or via German, my interest in German language and literature—an area that, along with other European languages and

literatures, I initially majored in as an undergraduate at the University of Toronto—has been gratifyingly revived.)

Translation served as one or more of the following for Ōgai vis-à-vis his other literary interests: apprenticeship training, substitute undertaking, complementary activity, or even preferred mode of expression. Ōgai's translation activity provides the best overarching index to the writer—alternately guiding, inspiring, pairing with, standing in proxy for, and/or taking precedence over his other literary endeavors.

Some years ago, I presented a paper at a conference in Argentina on “author-translators” that compared the “inter-lingual” translation activity of Mori Ōgai (translating and/or adapting from German and Chinese into Japanese) with the “intra-lingual” activity of Tanizaki Jun'ichirō 谷崎潤一郎 (who rendered the classical Japanese of *Genji monogatari* 源氏物語 into different modern-Japanese versions) [Wixted 1997]. More recently, I completed an as yet unpublished article entitled “Mori Ōgai: Translation Transforming the Word/World,” which both compares Ōgai's two translation-works, *Sokkyō shijin* 即興詩人 and *Fausuto* フェウスト, and shows how the two works were influenced by Ōgai's *kanbun* 漢文 training and *kanshi* 漢詩 expression.

Some of the themes of the ongoing project on Ōgai's translation-literature might be summarized as follows. Hans Christian Andersen's *Improvisatoren* (The Impromptu Poet), the basis for *Sokkyō shijin*, is a fairy-tale, a *Bildungsroman*, a picaresque novel, and a travelogue—all “rolled into one.” It takes place in Italy and is narrated from the point of view of the boy Antonio, who meets various types of women, comes of age, and succeeds in love and life; the reader is treated to scenes in Rome, Campagna, Naples, Vesuvius, Sicily, and elsewhere in Italy. Simply stated, Ōgai took a pleasant, enjoyable, readable work and turned it into a *tour de force* of language, written in a style that can only be called enchanting.

Balancing the obviously atavistic features of *Sokkyō shijin*—intense use of *bungo* constructions, *recherché* diction, and a certain old-fashioned tone—are more modern elements than at first meet the eye—*Bildungsroman* themes (like self-development through love), language usage influenced by Western languages, and a richly otherworld New World vocabulary (in the form of dozens of *kanji* 漢字 compounds with *gairai-go* 外来語 readings, many in “Italian”). Put differently, in *Sokkyō shijin* Ōgai coined new words, created a new world (“Italy”), and transformed literary style, helping fashion a romantic sensibility. It is precisely the style of the work that influenced the poetry of Shimazaki Tōson 島崎藤村, Yosano Akiko 与謝野晶子, Ishikawa Takuboku 石川啄木, and others, and left its imprint on the prose of Izumi Kyōka 泉鏡花, Tayama Katai 田山花

袋, Nagai Kafū 永井荷風, and others. Although *Sokkyō shijin* is a translation (or more properly speaking, an adaptation 翻案), I think it is Mori Ōgai's most creative work.

By way of contrast, in his *Fausuto* translation Ōgai seems to have wanted to demonstrate that “high-classical” works could be rendered in true vernacular Japanese. The focus is more on the use of the occasional *bon mot* embedded in an intelligent flow, rather than on the frequent use of artful turns-of-phrase one encounters in *Sokkyō shijin*. *Faust* has been transposed into a more plain, unadorned, sometimes highly colloquial, and yet elegantly artful Japanese.

Even more important, Ōgai created “Goethe” in Japanese consciousness. It is thanks to Ōgai's prestige as a cultural figure, as well as to his skillful translation of *Faust*, that Goethe has the cultural cachet that he does in Japan. The endorsement, the stamp of approval—the equation of Goethe with “culture”—are largely Ōgai's doing. It may be that Goethe has had more influence on modern Japanese literature than he has had in English, where he has never been that popular. Hoshino Shin'ichi 星野慎一 has argued that Goethe was an important influence on Takayama Chogyū 高山樗牛, Ozaki Kōyō 尾崎紅葉, Natsume Sōseki 夏目漱石, Shimazaki Tōson 島崎藤村, Akutagawa Ryūnosuke 芥川竜之介, and Tanizaki Jun'ichirō 谷崎潤一郎; in his book on Goethe and Ōgai, in addition to lengthy treatment of these two, he devotes a chapter each to Goethe's influence on the others. The sixteen-volume *zenshū* 全集 of Goethe's translated writings that appeared between 1979 and 1992 was already the seventh Goethe-*zenshū* in Japanese. Although there have been many translations of *Faust*, there has been only one Goethe *zenshū* in English. And between 1998 and 2000, on the occasion of the 250th birthday of Goethe, there appeared three complete new translations of *Faust* into Japanese; no new edition appeared in English.

I would like to offer one quick comment on Ōgai's *Fausuto*. Often, an early, good translation of a work, especially one by a famous person, can exercise a sort of “tyranny” over later ones. The following may be one example. Please see Chart E. The original German text is given as E1, and Ōgai's translation is E2. The problem revolves around “*Schoß*” in German, meaning “womb,” and by extension, “lap” or “bosom,” even “bowels.” If one subscribes to the view of most translators now, that in rendering a literary text one should stick to the semantic core of the original as much as possible, then something more concrete might be preferable here. But Ōgai's successors (E3 through E6) seem to have been influenced, perhaps unconsciously, by his example, employing mostly abstract renderings for “*Aus der Verwesung Schoß*” (as underlined and highlighted in bold in

Chart E). Pioneer translators often exert such pull. Only Konishi Satoru 小西悟 (E7) seems to have broken the spell, rendering “womb” directly (*tainai* 胎内). This is not to say that the other translators are wrong; all are good or useful in one way or another.

Certainly, it is no exaggeration to say that Western-language modes of expression, via translations such as Ōgai’s, transformed modern Japanese-language forms, literature, and mental horizons—all of this is of importance and treated in my ongoing work on Ōgai’s translation-literature.

I also ask, in terms of translation theory, where Ōgai’s translation of *Sokkyō shijin*, as well as his other translations like the *Faust* one, fit in reference to the traditional poles of translation: literalness/freeness (逐語的な訳か自由訳か), fidelity/invention (忠実な訳か創造的な訳か), error/accuracy (誤訳か正確な訳か), and barbarization/naturalization (異国語調の訳か自国語調の訳か)? Also of interest is the question, how germane are postmodern concepts to his work: those such as transgression (逸脱), transparency (透明性), contestation (論争), appropriation (専用), and hegemonic center vs. subaltern periphery (支配的中心対副次的縁辺)?

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Regarding the *kanshi* 漢詩 of Mori Ōgai, I am well underway translating and annotating representative selections from his corpus of nearly 240 poems. Invaluable for the project are the two annotated translations into modern Japanese of nearly all of Ōgai’s *kanshi*, one by Kotajima Yōsuke 古田島洋介, the other by Chen Shengbao (Chin Seiho) 陳生保. Also of help is the recent book on one series of the poems by Yasukawa Rikako 安川里香子 and earlier book-length studies on Ōgai’s *kanshi* by Kojima Noriyuki 小島憲之 and Fujikawa Masakazu 藤川正数.

Chart F provides a sample of how I present the poems. In 1916, on the occasion of the reprinting of Ōgai’s 1892 collection, *Minawashū* 美奈和集 (as *Minawashū* 水沫集), Ōgai wrote two *kanshi*, one of which is presented in the chart. It is important to keep in mind that *Minawashū* included not only the author’s famous original works—the three short stories that take place in Germany: “Maihime” 舞姫, “Utakata no ki” うたかたの記, and “Fumizukai” 文づかひ—but also his translations of prose pieces by Alphonse Daudet, Heinrich von Kleist, and Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, and most importantly, his experimental *Omokage* 於母影 poem-translations—material which Ōgai considered ground-breaking.

Ōgai’s original poem is presented in Chart F, along with the two published translations into Japanese (which will not to be reprinted in the book-manuscript). I translate the first couplet of the poem as listed. But I translate the second couplet *twice*: first, in a hyper-literal way (極端な逐語

訳で) in Translation A, then in paraphrase (解釈の条で) in Translation B. The paraphrase brings out the elegant variation in Line 3 (天潢 for 天河), the allusion to *Zhuangzi* 莊子 in the same line (霑涸沫), and the “affect” of the couplet (namely, Ōgai’s would-be bemused, but in fact disappointedly frustrated, recollection of earlier unappreciated efforts).

This sample illustrates *one way* of handling two perennial translation difficulties: (1) the problem of how to handle allusions, and (2) the dilemma of how to deal with the sometimes irresolvable tension between rendering the concrete and the implied senses of a passage. The solution in some cases is to offer two translations. Here the concrete images are maintained in Translation A: “bare fists” 空拳, “moistening desiccated foam” 霑涸沫, “to sprinkle” 灑, and “non-arable fields” 不毛田. And the implied sense is filled in Translation B.

Please note the apparatus for each poem: (A) the original text in *kanji*, (B) *kundoku* readings for poetic lines in *rōmaji* ローマ字 (e.g., *Kūken nao shinsen o hirakan to gisuru mo*), (C) modern-Chinese readings (including tone-marks) for the text (e.g., *Kōngquán shàng nǐ tuò xīnqiān*), and (D) an English-language translation. I hope the book that emerges will be used by Western students of both Japanese and Chinese literature. The *kundoku* readings help clarify *kanbun* constructions for those who either know or who are studying Japanese. The Chinese is helpful for many who have studied the language but whose knowledge of it may be limited. Moreover, the Chinese romanization helps (A) to highlight the rhymes that are maintained by Ōgai in nearly all of his *kanshi* (here underlined: *qiān, lián, tián*), and (B) to give an alternative sense of poem-line rhythms, one visually and aurally closer to *on* 音 readings of the *kanji*, and one that better communicates poetic pauses (since the main caesura comes after the 4th syllable in 7-character *kanshi* lines, and a secondary one often after the 2nd syllable—here communicated by an extra space in the romanization).

In the book, there will also be introductory essays on series of poems and on individual poems, notes that clarify allusions to earlier authors, and selected citation of earlier examples of word usage.

Apart from their intrinsic interest, Ōgai’s *kanshi* comprise an important chapter in the history of Meiji *kanbun* writing. Moreover, they shed light on various Ōgai-related topics (for which his *kanshi* have seldom been cited): his attitude toward women, his role as physician and military figure, his translation activity, his stay in Germany, his interaction with Yamagata Aritomo 山県有朋, his stance as counselor to friends (especially to figures to whom he dedicated series of poems: Ozaki Yukio 尾崎行雄, Ishiguro Tadanori 石黒忠憲, and Araki Torasaburō 荒木寅三郎),

his attitude toward contemporary events (such as the opening of the Suez Canal, the occupation of Taiwan, the Sino-Japanese War, etc.), his views on various painters and paintings, and his attitude toward China and the Chinese.

Kanshi influence Ōgai's writing in other ways as well, as illustrated by looking at the passage from *Sokkyō shijin* cited in Chart G. The passage is first supplied in three *direct translations from the Danish*: the 1845 one into English by Mary Howitt, the 1876 one into German by H. Denhardt (the basis for Ōgai's translation), and the 1987 one into Japanese by Suzuki Tetsurō. These communicate what Andersen originally said.

Compare the bare-bones "original" with Ōgai's rhapsodic version, cited as G4. (The added lineation is meant to illustrate a further point, since the passage is normally printed as one continuous horizontal or vertical line.) Note that *with a minimum of editing*, it is easy to turn Ōgai's passage into a series of standard 5- and 7-character *kanshi* lines, as in G5.

There are numerous passages in *Sokkyō shijin* where one could do this, reflecting a by no means casual relationship between Ōgai's *kanshi* and his other writing.¹ The passage illustrates part of what prompted Shimada Kinji 島田謹二 to characterize *Sokkyō shijin* in the terms: アンデルセン原作, 鷗外改作, "The base text is Andersen's, the transformed one Ōgai's."

CHART E

Goethe ゲーテ, *Faust* ファウスト

- 1 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust* (lines #00797-00798):
Christ ist erstanden,
Aus der Verwesung **Schoß**.

- 2 Mori Ōgai 森鷗外 (1913):
物を朽ち壊れしむる土の膝を
立ち離れつゝ、主はよみがへりましぬ。

- 3 Sagara Morio 相良守峯 (1958):
キリストはよみがえりましぬ、
朽ち果てぬべき大地の胸より。

- 4 Tezuka Tomio 手塚富雄 (1964 [1974]):
キリストはよみがえりたまいぬ。
滅びの土を離れたみいぬ。

- 5 Shimada Shō 柴田翔 (1999):
キリストは甦りぬ
滅びの淵を離れ。

- 6 Ikeuchi Osamu 池内紀 (1999):
ただれた膝元より
キリストは甦った

- 7 Konishi Satoru 小西悟 (1998):
 キリストはよみがえられた、
 腐った人の世の胎内から。

CHART F

Mori Ōgai 森鷗外, *Kanshi* 漢詩

Mori Ōgai 森鷗外 poem:

丙辰夏日校水沫集感觸有作 (1916, No. 1 of 2 [#199, entire poem])

Hinoetatsu kajitsu, 'Minawashū' o *kōsu*, *kanshoku shite saku ari*

Bǐngchén xiàrì, xiào 'Shuǐmòjí,' gǎnchù yǒu zuò

"*Hinoetatsu* Year [1916], Spring Day: Editing *Minawashū*, I Feel Moved and Write"

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|-----------|--|
| 空拳尚擬拓新阡 | <i>Kūken nao shinsen o hirakan to gisuru mo</i> |
| | <i>Kōngquán shàng nǐ tuò xīnqiān</i> |
| 2 意氣當年却可憐 | <i>Iki tōnen kaette awaremu beshi</i> |
| | <i>Yìqì dāngnián què kělián</i> |
| 將此天潢霑涸沫 | <i>Kono tenkō o motte komatsu o uruosan to shi</i> |
| | <i>Jiāng cǐ tiānhuáng zhān hé mò</i> |
| 4 無端灑向不毛田 | <i>Hashi naku mo fumō no den ni mukatte sosogu</i> |
| | <i>Wúduān sǎ xiàng bù máo tián</i> |

Kotajima Yosuke 古田島洋介 translation:

- 誰の助けも借りず、独りで新しい境地を開拓しようとしたが
- 2 当時の気負いぶりは（今からみれば、無謀とはいえ）かえってほほえましい気がする。
 この「水沫集」に収めたさまざまな作品によって、文学者としての生命をつなぐことさえできればと願っていたところ
- 4 想いがけなく、沈滞していた文壇に活を入れる結果になったのだった。

Chén Shēngbǎo (Chin Seiho) 陳生保 translation:

- 若いころの私は素手でありながら、文壇に新しい道を切り開こうとした。
- 2 当時の軒昂たる意気はいまからふりかえってみると、たいへん愛らしかったといえよう。
 あたかも天の池から一滴の水を汲んで来て、
- 4 このはてしなく広がる不毛の土地にそそぐようであった。

My translation (of the first couplet):

- With but bare fists, intent on opening new fields—
- 2 My determination then, only brings a smile now.

My translation A (of the second couplet), word-for-word (逐語訳):

With this Heavenly Pond, moistening dessicated foam;

- 4 Useless, to sprinkle water on non-arable fields.

My translation B (of the second couplet), paraphrase (解釈):

With freshets of water as from the Milky Way's stream (namely, with my new and experimental writings of twenty-five years ago that are being reprinted here—both original works and translations), I wanted to resuscitate a literature that, like the fish in *Zhuāngzǐ* 莊子, was stranded and dry to the gills;

- 4 But it is pointless to try to water totally barren land—(a public and a literary world [*bundan* 文壇] both unreceptive).

Zhuāngzǐ, Dà Zōngshī 莊子、大宗師: 泉涸、魚相與處於陸、相呴以濕、相濡以沫、...

CHART G

Hans Christian Andersen ハンス・クリスチャン・アンデルセン

Improvisatoren (The Impromptu Poet 即興詩人, 1835)

Direct Translations from the **Danish** into English, German, and Japanese:

1. Mary Howitt (1845):

Floating in the ascending beams of the sun, not far from Capri, lay a new, wondrously beautiful island formed of rainbow colors, with glittering towers, stars, and clear, purple-tinted clouds. "Fata Morgana!" exclaimed they all;...

2. H. Denhardt (1876):

In den Strahlen der aufgehenden Sonne schwamm unweit Capri eine neue, schöne, von den Farben des Regenbogens erbaute Insel, mit glänzenden Thürmen, Sternen und klaren, purpurgefärbten Wolken. "Fata Morgana!" riefen sie Alle...

3. Suzuki Tetsurō 鈴木徹郎 (1987):

ある朝、漁師たちは浜の波打ち際に群がっていた。さし昇る朝日の光を浴びて、虹色に染まった見慣れぬ不思議な鳥がカプリ島のわきに浮かんでいた。日に照り輝く塔が立ち並び、星がきらめき、深紅の雲がたなびいる。「ファータ・モルガーナだ！」

Adaptation 翻案 by Mori Ōgai 森鷗外:

4. 即興詩人、初舞臺:

一箇の奇しく珍らしき島國のカプリに近き處に湧き出でたればなり。
 飛簷傑閣隙間なく立ち並びて、
 その翳なきこと珠玉の如く、
 その光あること金銀の如く、
 紫雲棚引き星月麗れり。
 現げにこの一幅の畫圖の美しさは、
 譬へば長虹を截ちてこれを彩りたる如し。
 蜃氣樓よと漁父等は叫びて、...

5. 飛簷傑閣—
 並立無隙間
 無翳如珠玉
 有光如金銀
 紫雲棚引星月麗
 一幅畫圖真此美
 譬截長虹此如彩
 漁父等叫蜃氣樓