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Transmission and Reception of the *Xi xiang ji* (*Romance of the Western Chamber*) during the Edo Period

FAN Keren

Introduction

After the Tang intellectual Yuan Zhen 元稹 wrote *Yingying zhuan* 鶯鶯傳, its story of the love affair between Zhang Sheng 張生 and Cui Yingying 崔鶯鶯 was used in later eras to create new works of all genres. The best known and most beloved among them was the masterpiece *zaju* 雜劇 (a form of Chinese opera) *Xi xiang ji* 西廂記 (*Romance of the Western Chamber*), which was written during the Yuan dynasty.

During the Ming dynasty, annotations and revisions were made by Wang Jide 王驥德, Chen Jiru 陳繼儒, and Ling Mengchu 凌濛初, and a variety of texts were published. In the Qing dynasty, Jin Shengtian 金聖歎's self-critiqued *Di liu cai zi shu Xi xiang ji* 第六才子書西廂記 appeared, and based upon it, dozens of versions of *Di liu cai zi shu* were published. Today, more than one hundred woodblock printed versions of *Xi xiang ji* exist. Parts of the story are incorporated into required textbooks, while others are reworked into comic books and dramas. The *Xi xiang ji* has outlived its original era and is still beloved.

Furthermore, many Chinese books were imported into Japan, which had long engaged in cultural exchanges with China, viewed its culture as advanced and incorporated much of it.

During the Edo period, works such as *Shui hu zhuan* 水滸傳 (*Water Margin/Outlaws of the Marsh*) and other Chinese novels and dramas were brought over to Japan on Chinese merchant ships stopping to trade at Nagasaki. The Japanese, who had previously read mainly classical literature, began to look at popular works, and there was a rise in people researching them as a subject of study. The *Xi xiang ji*, which had been popular in China, was among the many works that arrived.

Most studies on the reception of the *Xi xiang ji* have discussed how it was viewed in mainland China; few have addressed how the poem itself (as well as its story) were received in other countries.

Writings on the reception of the *Xi xiang ji* in Japan include Aoki Masaru 青木正兒's *Shina bungei ronso* 支那文藝論叢¹ and *Shina bungaku geijutsu ko* 支那文學藝術考,² and Ishizaki Matazo 石崎又造's *Kinsei Nihon ni okeru Shina zokugo bungakushi* 近世日本に於ける支那俗語文學史.³ The

¹ "Annotations on the Biography of Toyama Kato, who was skilled in interpreting Chinese romance novels with the yueqin 傳奇小説を講じ月琴を善したる、遠山荷塘が傳の箋" in *Shina bungei ronso* (*Complete Works of Aoki Masaru*, Vol. 2, Shunjusha, 1970).

² "Influence of popular literature 俗文學の影響," "The Edo period" in *Shina bungaku geijutsu ko* (*Complete Works of Aoki Masaru*, Vol. 2, Shunjusha, 1970).

³ Chapter 5, "Vernacular literature and Japanese literature 白話文學と国文學," Section 4,

reception of the *Xi xiang ji* is partly introduced in Yamaguchi Takeshi 山口剛’s *Kato Inei 荷塘印影 (Impressions of Kato)*⁴ and Isobe Yuko 磯部祐子’s *Edo jidai ni okeru Chugoku gikyoku no juyo to tenkai 江戸時代における中国戯曲の受容と展開 (Reception and Spread of Chinese Drama in the Edo period)*.⁵ However, these studies do not focus upon the *Xi xiang ji* in terms of who was reading it, and what effect it had on the culture of the day.

Although Inoue Taizan 井上泰山 discussed the transmission and study of *Xi xiang ji* in “*Nihon ni okeru Seisoki kenkyu 日本に於ける西廂記研究*” (“Studies of *Xi xiang ji* in Japan”),⁶ there is room for further study of the Edo period. The author has chosen to further discuss works that have not received detailed attention in past studies, touching upon the reception and transmission of *Xi xiang ji* in Japan. Hence, this paper will describe how the *Xi xiang ji* and the series of works related to it were received by the Japanese after its transmission to Japan in the Edo period.

1. Transmission of the *Xi xiang ji*

In the sixth month of Keicho 7 (1602), the Tokugawa family built the Gobunko 御文庫 (Imperial Library) in the Fujimi Pavilion to the south of Edo. They built another new library in Momijiyama 紅葉山 in Kanei 16 (1639). The *Gobunko Mokuroku 御文庫目録 (List of the Imperial Library)*, a book which records the list of books at the Gobunko, can be found in Tohoku University’s Kano Library. Verifying the period during which the text of the *Xi xiang ji* was first transmitted is not easy, but in the “Se” section of the *Gobunko Mokuroku*,⁷ the *Xi xiang ji* notes that it was prior to Kanei 16. Thus, the *Xi xiang ji* made its way to Japan by merchant ship during trade with the Qing dynasty of China.

According to the *Shohaku sairai shomoku 商船載來書目 (List of Books Brought to Japan by Merchant Ships)*⁸ compiled by Mukai Tomi 向井富 (the *shomotsuaratameyaku* [chief censor] of Nagasaki), the *Di liu cai zi shu Xi xiang ji* (completed in the 12th year of the reign of the Qing emperor Shunzhi 順治) by Jin Shengtan (hereinafter “Jin version”) was brought to Nagasaki as “One set, one

“Introduction to Chinese drama 支那戯曲の紹介,” and Chapter 6, “The wide reach of Chinese language studies 各地に於ける支那語學の大勢,” Section 3, “Sightings of *towa* (Chinese language) and popular literature in Edo 江戸に於ける唐話學及俗文學の一斑” of *Kinsei Nihon ni okeru Shina zokugo bungakushi* (Kobundo, 1940).

⁴ *Collected works of Yamaguchi Takeshi*, Vol. 6 (Chuokoron-sha, 1972).

⁵ *Reports of the Research Institute for Japanese Culture*, 21st collection (Tohoku University, Faculty of Arts and Letters, Research Institute for Japanese Culture, 1985).

⁶ *Studies of Popular Literature in China*, No. 8 (Chinese Popular Literature Research Group, 1990).

⁷ See reprint of *Gobunko mokuroku* in “*Gobunko mokuroku* held in the Kano Library of Tohoku University 東北大學狩野文庫架蔵の御文庫目録” (*Bulletin of Kansai University Institute of Oriental and Occidental Studies*, No. 3, Kansai University Institute of Oriental and Occidental Studies, 1970) by Oba Osamu 大庭脩.

⁸ See reprint of *Shohaku sairai shomoku* in bibliography of *Edo jidai ni okeru tosen mochiwatarisho no kenkyu 江戸時代における唐船持渡書の研究 (Studies on Chinese books imported in Japan in the Edo period)* (Kansai University Institute of Oriental and Occidental Studies, 1967) by Oba Osamu.

collection” in Genroku 12 (1699). *Shohaku sairai shomoku* contains a record stating that the Jin Shengtan version was transmitted together with the *Shui hu zhuan*, which was critiqued by Jin Shengtan in Kyoho 6 (1721).

Furthermore, a record of the import of the Jin version is seen in the “*Taiisho 大意書*” (“Summary”), which is a report of books in classical Chinese brought to Japan by merchant ships. In the “Draft Summary of the Fourth Merchant Ship in the Month of the Wood Snake of Kyoho 10 (1725)”⁹, in the possession of the Nagasaki Municipal Museum, it is noted that two boxes (with 14 volumes per box) of the “*Liu cai zi shu*” with the “*Zui xin pian 醉心篇*” (revised by Chen Weisong 陳維崧 during the Ming Dynasty) were brought to Nagasaki prior to Kyoho 10.

The reason that several copies of the Jin version were brought to Japan is that it was the most popular woodblock printing of *Xi xiang ji* in China at the time.¹⁰

There are also some instances when only “*西廂記 一部三本*” (*Xi xiang ji* One set, three volumes) is mentioned, such as in the records from Genbun 4 (1739) found in *Shohaku sairai shomoku*. From this, we understand that the three-volume *Xi xiang ji* was brought to Japan in Genbun 4, but it is difficult to pinpoint the exact nature of its woodblock printed book.

In addition to the *Shohaku sairai shomoku*, there is a record of two volumes of the *Xi xiang ji* being brought to Japan by ship from Guangdong, together with books such as the *Wu che yun rui 五車韻瑞* in Kyoho 20 (1735) in the *Seirai shomoku 齋來書目 (List of Imported Books)*—a record of books on trade ships docking at Nagasaki.¹¹ Looking at Denda Akira 傳田章’s *Minkan Genzatsugeki Seisokimokuroku 增訂明刊元雜劇西廂記目錄 (A List of Ming Versions of The Romance of the Western Chamber)*,¹² the two-volume *Xi xiang ji* includes books by Xu Shifan 徐士範, Yu Ludong 余瀛東, Li Zhi 李贄, and Chen Jiru. These “two volumes” may be the woodblock printed books mentioned above.

Furthermore, the *Irohawake Shomoku 以呂波分書目 (List of Books in Iroha order)* collection list could be found in Saeki domain, which contributed to the Edo shogunate’s collection of books in classical Chinese,¹³ even though it was made in Bunsei 11 (1828), the year after books were presented

⁹ See reprint of “Draft Summary of the Fourth Merchant Ship in the Month of the Wood Snake of Kyoho 10 (1725) 享保十年乙巳四番船大意書草稿” in the bibliography of *Edo jidai ni okeru tosen mochiwatarisho no kenkyu* (Kansai University Institute of Oriental and Occidental Studies, 1967) by Oba Osamu.

¹⁰ Huang Dongbai 黃冬柏 stated that “Particularly since the *Di liu cai zi shu xi xiang ji* appeared in the world, its readability and the wittiness of its criticisms together have overwhelmed other editions, conquered the world and had a great influence upon future generations.” in “A Retrospective View of Research on *Xi xiang ji* 《西廂記》研究の回顧と展望” (Kyushu University *Studies in Chinese Literature*, No.30, Kyushu University Chinese Literature Association, 2001).

¹¹ See reprint of *Seirai Shomoku (List of Imported Books)* in bibliography of *Edo jidai ni okeru tosen mochiwatarisho no kenkyu* (Kansai University Institute of Oriental and Occidental Studies, 1967) by Oba Osamu.

¹² Kyuko-shoin, 1979.

¹³ See facsimile of the *Irohawake shomoku* appearing in “*Tohoku Daigaku shozo Bungo Saiki-han*

to the shogunate. The “Ri” section of the first volume contains “*Liu cai zi shu*, six volumes,” and “*Xi xiang ji*, three volumes” appears in the “Se” section of the second volume.

In addition, the presence of *Xi xiang ji* can be confirmed from the book collections of intellectuals. The following is written in the preface to the *Taiheiki engi* 太平記演義 (Chinese vernacular rendering of the Japanese historical epic *Chronicle of Great Peace*) by the mid-Edo period Chinese language scholar Okajima Kanzan 岡島冠山 (1674–1728)¹⁴:

但吾邦學生，讀貫中二書者，僅僅有數。雖讀也，惟能解《三國志》而不能解《水滸傳》。……獨吾師玉成先生，……於貫中二書，通念曉析，無所不解。其餘《西遊記》《西廂記》《英烈傳》等諸家演義小說，亦皆搜抉無隱。

However, few Japanese students read Luo Guanzhong’s two books. If they did read them, although they can understand *San guo zhi yan yi* (*Romance of the Three Kingdoms*), they cannot understand *Shui hu zhuan* (*Water Margin/Outlaws of the Marsh*). However, my teacher Gyokusei knows the two books by Luo Guanzhong in detail; there is no section he does not understand. He has collected all of the popular novels by masterful writers, such as *Xi you ji* (*Journey to the West*), *Xi xiang ji*, and *Ying lie zhuan* (*Heroes of the Eastern Skies*).

As described below, *Xi xiang ji* was required reading for Chinese language study for any *totsuji* (Chinese interpreters) working in foreign trade in Nagasaki, and was useful when reading other Chinese novels. The *Xi xiang ji* may have been a valuable book for Kanzan, who was proficient in Chinese. The *Xi xiang ji* can be found in the book collection of Hirose Kyokuso 廣瀨旭莊 (1807–1863), who was the younger brother of the late Edo period Confucian scholar Hirose Tanso 廣瀨淡窓 (1782–1856). According to the list, “西廂記 六本”(*Xi xiang ji*, six volumes) is stored in the ninth box (“List of books from China.”)¹⁵

In addition to the *Xi xiang ji*, “*Li Weng Liu Qu* 笠翁六曲,” written by the Qing intellectual Li Yu 李漁, is seen in the “*Tohon mokuroku* 唐本目錄” (“List of books from China”),¹⁶ revealing that Tanso, who liked poems, and authored works such as the *Baiton shisho* 梅墩詩鈔 poetry anthology, was interested in studying Chinese lyrical works. This can also be seen in his exchanges with the late Edo period scholar of Chinese popular literature Toyama Kato 遠山荷塘 (1795–1831).¹⁷

‘Irohawake shomoku’ no kenkyu 東北大學所藏豊後佐伯藩《以呂波分書目》の研究” (Tohoku University, Center for Northeast Asian Studies, 2003), edited by Isobe Akira 磯部彰.

¹⁴ *Taiheiki Engi* (Chinese vernacular rendering of the Japanese historical epic *Chronicle of Great Peace*) published in *Ri ben han wen xiao shuo cong kan* 日本漢文小說叢刊, 1st compilation, Vol. 4 (Taiwan Hsuehsheng Shuchu, 2003) edited by Wang San-ching 王三慶.

¹⁵ *Expanded Complete Works of Tanso*, 3rd volume, Shibunkaku, released 1927, republished 1971.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Hirose Kyokuso mentions yearning for performances of the yueqin by Kato in the “To Ikkei 與一圭” letter to Toyama Kato (*An Anthology of Works of Kyokuso* (new edition) in *The Complete Literary Works of Hirose Kyokuso*, Shibunkaku Publishing, 2010). Furthermore, Hirose Kyokuso’s older

Toyama Kato made the *Genkai kochu kohon Seisoki* 諺解校注古本西廂記 referencing multiple woodblock printed copies of the *Xi xiang ji*. Its composition and notable content consisted mainly of the *Xin jiao zhu gu ben Xi xiang ji* 新校注古本西廂記 by Wang Jide (hereinafter, the “Wang version”), and the version of *Xi xiang ji* compiled by Ling Mengchu. However, research by Denda Akira reveals that the Jin version, as well as other versions, were also incorporated.¹⁸ Thus, the six-volume *Xi xiang ji* in the possession of Tanso is the same as the “六才子書 六本” (*Liu cai zi shu*, six volumes) seen in the previously mentioned *Irohawake shomoku*, and is possibly the Jin version. It seems perhaps Kato borrowed from Tanso when putting together his *Xi xiang ji*.

The *Xi xiang ji* itself was transmitted to Japan in the form of multiple woodblock printed books. The titles *Yuan qu xuan* 元曲選 and *Liu shi zhong qu* 六十種曲, which include the *Xi xiang ji*, are entered into the *Tohon ruishoko* 唐本類書考.¹⁹ In addition, books such as *Tai ping guang ji* 太平廣記 and *Shuo fu* 說郛 containing *Yingying zhuan* 鶯鶯傳 (“*Hui zhen ji*” 會真記), the original version of *Xi xiang ji*, were transmitted multiple times to Japan.²⁰ Furthermore, the *Pu dong cui zhang zhu yu shi ji* 蒲東崔張珠玉詩集 (Jade and Gems: Poems of Pudong), written in the Ming dynasty by Zhang Kai 張楷 based upon the story of *Xi xiang ji*, was published in Japan in Shotoku 3 (1713). It is believed that there were many opportunities for Japanese people of the time to encounter the *Xi xiang ji*, beyond just reading the work itself, as can be seen in the record of the transmission of the *Jin xiang xiao pin* 巾箱小品 to Japan in Kaei 3 (1850)²¹, containing *Tang liu ru xian sheng cai zi wen* 唐六如先生才子文, a collection of *baguwen* 八股文 (“eight-legged essays”) on the subject of the writing of the *Xi xiang ji* and *Xi xiang ji jiu ling* 西廂記酒令, a collection of *Xi xiang ji* drinking games.

Looking at the above materials, among the versions of the *Xi xiang ji* transmitted to Japan, the Jin version was relatively commonplace.²² Further, since various woodblock printed versions of the *Xi*

brother Tanso also heard about and enjoyed Kato’s yueqin performances while staying in the Hirose household. Entry in 4th volume of *Enshiro Nikki* 遠思樓日記 (*Enshiro Diary*) on the 28th day, leap month 8, Bunsei 7 (*Expanded Complete Works of Tanso, middle volume*, Shibunkaku, released 1926, republished 1971) reads “一圭來宿。(予將聽其華音, 故館諸家。)……夜聽一圭彈月琴、胡琴。”(Ikkei came to stay. [He was allowed to stay so I could hear his Chinese.] . . . And in the evening, I listened to Ikkei play the yueqin and huqin).

¹⁸ Denda Akira states that “I said that Kato’s book (author’s note: this is the *Genkai kochu kohon Seisoki*) made equal use of the Wang Boliang and Ling Chucheng versions, and was more or less completed with the partial citations from the Jin version, and the exact same thing could be said for these annotations” in “Toyama Kato’s *Genkai kochu kohon Seisoki* 遠山荷塘の《諺解校注古本西廂記》” (*The proceedings of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures*, College of General Education, University of Tokyo, 1978).

¹⁹ National Diet Library, Yamada Saburobe, et al., 1751.

²⁰ See *Edo jidai ni okeru tosen mochiwatarisho no kenkyu* by Oba Osamu . Furthermore, a record of transmission is seen of the *Yong xi yue fu*, *Yuan qu xuan* and *Liushi zhong qu* containing *Xi xiang ji* in the same book.

²¹ A record is seen in the *Nagasaki hakusai tohon shojaku motocho* 長崎舶載唐本書籍元帳, volume 9 (National Diet Library) of “*Jin xiang xiao pin* in one box” arriving in Kaei 3.

²² Furthermore, Huang Shizhong 黃仕忠 indicates in the preface of *Comprehensive Catalog of Chinese Traditional Dramas Held in Japan* 日藏中國戲曲文獻綜錄 (Guanxi Normal University

xiang ji were imported into Japan, it appears that there was a very high demand on the Japan side. One reason for this is its use in the study of the Chinese language.

2. The value of the *Xi xiang ji* to Chinese language learning

As mentioned above, woodblock printed copies of *Xi xiang ji* already numbered in the hundreds, and many compilations and critiques emerged, written by Ming and Qing era intellectuals such as Wang Jide, Ling Mengchu, and Jin Shengtian. Annotations in these books (explaining the meaning behind various dialects and slang) were later incorporated in *Towa* dictionaries created by Japanese intellectuals.

For example, if the author adds discussions in the *Zokugo kai* 俗語解 (*Interpreting Chinese Colloquial Language*) (Nagasawa version),²³ which are believed to have appeared prior to Tenmei 2 (1782), then there are more than 150 citations of the *Xi xiang ji*. From these citations, it is clear which woodblock printed editions of the *Xi xiang ji* were used.

First, it is clear that the Wang version was used.²⁴

A passage titled “晚粧” found in the “Ha” section of the first volume of the Nagasawa version, says:

《西廂》注：“宿粧，未經梳洗也。”

Xi xiang ji annotation: “It is overnight makeup and hasn’t been washed off yet.”

Since “晚粧,” which appears to be a composition in Scene 2, Act III of the Wang version, and an accompanying annotation by Wang, have been incorporated into the Nagasawa version, this “*Xi xiang ji* annotation” seems to indicate the Wang version.

In addition, in interpreting “没掂三” found in the “Ho” section, the Nagasawa version cites

Press Group, 2010) that “The number woodblock printed copies of *Xi xiang ji* that came to Japan over 250 years altogether exceeds 40, and there are many to be found among the dramas transmitted. In terms of era, the highest number of imports was during the reign of Emperor Yongzheng. This shows that after the Jin’s version was in circulation, *Di liu cai zi shu* was the most popular woodblock printed version of *Xi xiang ji*. When the most copies of the Jin’s version were imported, they numbered 14 at one time, which was surprising.”

²³ *Towa jisho ruishu* 唐話辭書類集, 10th compilation (edited by Classics Research Association, Classics Research Association, 1972). Furthermore, regarding the era of appearance of the *Zokugo kai* (Nagasawa version), Kawashima Yuko indicates that “Although the editor and era are unknown, the association copies of bookstore proprietor Sawada Issai (1701-1782) are found in the National Diet Library, and thus its emergence seems to be before Tenmei 2 (1782)” in “The Reception of *Jin ping mei* in the Edo Period: Focusing on dictionaries, essay collections and late Edo period *sharebon* 江戸時代における《金瓶梅》の受容(1) — 辭書、隨筆、洒落本を中心として—” (*Bulletin of Ryukoku University*, Vol. 32, No. 1, Bulletin of Ryukyu University Editorial Board, 2010).

²⁴ A facsimile of *Xin jiao zhu gu ben xi xiang ji* published by Xiangxue ju in the 42nd year of Ming Emperor Wanli (*Hui tu xin jiao zhu gu ben xi xiang ji* 繪圖新校注古本西廂記, Zhongxi Book Company, 2013) was used.

interpretations from Scene 1, Act II of the Wang version, such as “《西廂》注：不着緊要之意。” (*Xi xiang ji* annotation: “There is no understanding of what matters”).

Furthermore, regarding “軀老” found in the “Ku” section of volume 3 of the Nagasawa version:

《西廂記》注：“調侃身也。北人鄉語，多以老作襯字，鼻爲鼻老……手爲爪老……”

In the *Xi xiang ji* annotation, it says “The word is used when jokingly talking about the body. In the northern dialect, the character “lao” (“old”) is often assumed to be a *chenzi* (Word inserted in a line of verse for balance or euphony. Often used in Chinese songs and arias.), and a nose is referred to as “*xiu lao*” and a hand is referred to as “*zhao lao*.”

This cites a note from Scene 3, Act V of the Wang version. The abovementioned annotation by Wang informs us that “軀老” is in the northern dialect.

An annotation from Scene 3, Act III of the Wang version is cited in the “賢聖” entry found in the “Ke” section of the same volume: “《西廂》注：北人稱菩薩神祇，不曰聖賢，則曰賢聖。” (*Xi xiang ji* annotation saying, “When Northerners use the words bodhisattva or god, they say either “*shengxian*” or “*xiansheng*” meaning “saint”). In the “風欠” entry found in the “Fu” section it reads:

《西廂記》注云：“呆也，痴也，北人方言。猶今俗說人之呆者爲欠氣，卽呆氣之謂。風欠，言其如風狂而且呆痴也。”

Xi xiang ji annotation: “This means that someone is not clever or is dumb in the Northern dialect. This is the same as telling a dumb person that they are being “欠氣”, and that they missed something. “風欠” means that someone is crazy and foolish.”

The above cites an annotation from Scene 2, Act II of the Wang version. According to the Wang annotation, “賢聖” and “風欠” are both Northern words. A wide range of dialects appear in the *Xi xiang ji*, and we can surmise their meanings with the help of annotations provided by various literati.²⁵ Several other examples can be seen in the Nagasawa version; thus, the *Xi xiang ji* may be considered a valuable work in the study of Chinese dialects and slang.

In addition to the Wang version, there are also citations from the Jin version found in catalogs and record books transmitted to Japan.²⁶

The following example is found in the “Shi” section of the fourth volume of the Nagasawa version:

四星 《西廂記》張生與崔鶯酬韻ノ回二：“恰尋歸路，佇立空庭。竹梢風擺，鬥柄雲

²⁵ As found in “Discussing Annotations on Dialects in the *Xi xiang ji* with Wang Jisi 就《西廂記》中方言注釋與王季思先生商榷” (*Journal of Hebei University*, Vol.3, 1991) by Xing Wenying 邢文英 and Zhao Xiaomao 趙小茂.

²⁶ I referenced *Guan hua tang di liu cai zi shu xi xiang ji* 貫華堂第六才子書西廂記, published by Jin Gu Yuan and held by the Taiwan National Central Library, to collect the texts.

橫。呀，今夜淒涼有四星，他不做人待忘生。何須負顏傳情，你不言我已省。”聖嘆評注云：“四星者，造稱人每一斤，則用五星，獨至稍盡一斤乃用四星。四星者之爲言下稍也。”明方諸生云：“四星，調侃謂下稍也。製秤之法，末稍四用星……”

Four-star: In the “Verse Exchange” scene in the *Xi xiang ji*, it says “On my backward way, in empty court I stop and stay. In the breeze the bamboo branches sway; The Dipper slants across the sky. Oh, lonely tonight, I see good signs above. What matters though at me she did not cast an eye? Does she need speaking eyes to show her love? I understand what she did not say.”²⁷ An annotation by Jin Shengtan says, “As for four-star, craftsmen who make steelyards insert five stars per catty, but when they reach the end of the beam, they insert four stars per catty. Four-star refers to the far end.” Ming scholar Fang Zhu Sheng says, “Four-star playfully refers to the end. Depending on the balance beam manufacturing method, four stars are inserted at the end of the beam ...”

“Fang Zhu Sheng” is the pen name of Wang Jide. Here, both the Wang version and the Jin version are cited. However, when we look at the relevant sections in Scene 3, Act I of the Wang version, and “Verse Exchange 酬韻” in the Jin version, “負顏傳情” (express emotions with facial expressions) is used in these works in place of “眉眼傳情” (express emotions with a wink) in both versions. This may be a miscopy in the Nagasawa version, but after examining all examples concerning *Xi xiang ji* in this version, I have found several other sources that cannot be identified. Thus, we may imagine that when the *Xi xiang ji* was cited, a procedure was adopted in which woodblock printed editions were used as headwords, after which the author compared several editions for interpretation, and chose the interpretation that they considered best.

Similarly, we will look at another example found in “Shi” section. Although this does not concern the words in the text of the *Xi xiang ji*, the sixth “不亦快哉”(Is this not pleasant too?) written at the beginning of Scene 2, Act IV, “Rose in the Dock 拷艷,” in the Jin version is cited in order to explain the usage of “之也乎哉” as a particle:

《西廂》評曰：“街行見兩措大執爭一理，既皆目裂頸赤，如不戴天，……滿口仍用‘者’、‘也’、‘之’、‘乎’等字。……”

Xi xiang commentary saying, “When walking about town, I saw two poor booklovers arguing over their opinions. The two of them got so angry their eyes grew wide and their necks turned red, and there appeared no room for compromised, ... but they continued to use characters such as 者, 也, 之, and 乎”.

²⁷ Music pieces and name headings in the Jin version use the Xu Yuanhong 許淵沖 and Frank M. Xu 許明 translations of *Romance of Western Bower* (China Intercontinental Communication Publishing, 2018).

This is not merely an annotation explaining the meaning of words, but is also a comment added to the *Xi xiang ji*. Thus, several woodblock printed books and copies of the *Xi xiang ji* (with various annotations and comments) may have served as a kind of dictionary for Japanese people at the time.

Citations of the *Xi xiang ji* are present not only in the Nagasawa version, but also in the *Zokugo kai* (Seikado version), edited by Katsuragawa Churyo 桂川中良 (1754–1810) in Bunka 6 to 7 (1809–1810).²⁸

First, “晚粧” mentioned in the “Ban” section in the Seikado version is the same as the example of “晚粧” in the Nagasawa version. Moreover, regarding the entry of “喬坐衙” in the “Kyo” section, the following is cited from an annotation of a composition in Scene 3, Act III of the Wang version:

广注：“假意尊大之意。官員坐堂鞠事，謂之坐衙。”

广 (author’s note: this character signifies the *Xi xiang ji*) annotation, saying, “Pretend to be great. 坐衙 refers to an official sitting in a government office to hear a case.”

Currently, the Seikado version is only partially extant, and provides other citations of *Xi xiang ji* in several places. As in the Nagasawa version, there are examples in which woodblock printed books cannot be identified from citations of the *Xi xiang ji*.

On the other hand, the title *Xi xiang ji* appears in the list of quotations in the *Kakubiki shosetsu jii 畫引小説字彙* dictionary [Kansei 3 (1791) edition] compiled by Shusuien Shujin 秋水園主人,²⁹ and the *Xi xiang ji* is also cited in the *Zokugo yakugi 俗語譯義* by mid-Edo period Confucian scholar Rusu Kisai 留守希齋 (1705–1767), and the *Kogen kango 胡言漢語* by Toyama Kato.³⁰

Looking at the above examples, it is believed that the woodblock printed editions of the *Xi xiang ji* aided in the understanding of the meaning of Chinese novels and dramatic works and played a major role in the study of dialects and slang. The most frequently used editions seem to be Wang Jide’s *Xin jiao zhu gu ben xi xiang ji*, and Jin Shengtan’s *Di liu cai zi shu xi xiang ji*.

Other than the several citations of the *Xi xiang ji* in dictionaries, they are also cited as examples of vocabulary in intellectual essays.

The Edo period scholar of ancient texts Kitamura Intei 喜多村筠庭 (1783–1856) explains the word “*ojime*” (“string-fastener”) by citing a composition in the *Xi xiang ji* and an accompanying annotation,³¹ as follows:

²⁸ *Towa jisho ruishu*, 11th compilation (Edited by Classics Research Association, Classics Research Association, 1974).

²⁹ *Towa jisho ruishu*, 15th compilation (Edited by Classics Research Association, Classics Research Association, 1973).

³⁰ See “Toyama Kato’s *Genkai kochu kohon Seisoki*” by Denda Akira.

³¹ “*Ojime*” in *Kiyushoran 嬉遊笑覽*, Vol. 2 (*Nihon Zuihitsu Taisei*, Supplementary Vol. 7, Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1979).

緒じめは《西廂記》粧臺窺問と云條に：“我做下一個縫了口撮合山。”（撮合山：荷包上壓口也。）と見ゆ。

Ojime appears as “While I play the role of tacit go-between” (Cuo he shan: a string-fastener) in the part about Yingying reading a letter on the dressing table in the *Xi xiang ji*.

Kita Seiro 北靜廬 (1765–1848) explains the word “房奩” (trousseau) citing examples in *Meng liang lu* 夢梁錄, *Xi xiang ji*, *Shui hu zhuan*, and *Jin ping mei* 金瓶梅.³²

Excluding *Meng liang lu*, the three following works are all dramatic novels. Among these, Takashima Toshio 高島俊男 argues that *Shui hu zhuan* was beloved during the Edo period.³³ Kawashima Yuko 川島優子 has indicated the material value of *Jin ping mei* in various realms, including medicine and pharmaceutical science.³⁴ Similarly, the *Xi xiang ji* was used for Kitamura Intei’s and Kita Seiro’s historical investigation of words; hence, it can be considered a precious resource for the Japanese people of the time.

Furthermore, *Xi xiang ji* was one of the many Chinese language teaching tools used by *totsuji* 唐通事, playing a role in Sino-Japanese trade at that time.

According to the *Seinan bunun shiron* 西南文運史論 by Muto Chohei 武藤長平,³⁵ *totsuji* had to read Chinese books in Chinese when learning the Chinese language. They read the *Lun yu* 論語 (Analects) and *Meng zi* 孟子 (Mencius) in Chinese in order to learn pronunciation and progressed to the first steps of language study—learning two-character words, followed by three, four, and more characters. The regular course would be that once *totsuji* finished studying works compiled by senior and past *totsuji*, they would follow their teachers in reading dramas and novels such as *Shui hu zhuan* and *Xi xiang ji*, and then study difficult works such as the *Fu hui quan shu* 福惠全書, *Hong lou meng* 紅樓夢, and *Jing ping mei* by themselves, asking their teachers regarding difficult parts.

Chinese persons who came to Nagasaki to trade were almost all from the Fujian and Nanjing areas, so it is not likely that the *Xi xiang ji*, which incorporated a great deal of Northern dialect, would have been useful to the *totsuji* for learning the Chinese language. However, since these works were originally written to be performed onstage, the dialogue between characters represents natural speaking to a large degree. Amenomori Hoshu 雨森芳洲 (1668–1755) stated the following in *Kisso sawa* 橘窓茶話³⁶:

³² “Nyobo 女房” (“Wife”) in *Baien Nikki* 梅園日記 (*Plum Garden Diary*) (*Nippon Zuihitsu Taisei*, Vol. 12, Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1977), Vol. 3.

³³ *Shui hu zhuan and the Japanese People* 水滸傳と日本人, Taishukan Shoten, 1991.

³⁴ “The *Chin Ping Mei* as a Form of “Material” in Edo Japan: With Reference to Takashina Masatsune’s Reading of the *Chin Ping Mei* 江戸時代における‘資料’としての《金瓶梅》—高階正巽の読みを通して—” (*Tohogaku*, 125th compilation, Tohogakkai, 2013).

³⁵ See “Research into Chinese Language Studies in Chinzei 鎮西に於ける支那語學研究” in *Seinan bunun shiron* (Okashoin, 1926).

³⁶ *Kisso sawa*, Vol. 1, Yanagida Collection, Waseda University Library.

我東人欲學唐話，除小說無下手處。然小說還是筆頭話，不如傳奇直截平話。只恨淫言褻語不可把玩，又且不免竟隔一重靴。總不如親近唐人，耳提面命之爲切矣。

When we Japanese want to study Chinese, novels are all we have. However, novels only use the written word, and do not use the spoken language as it is, which is the case with romances. However, romances include a lot of bawdy language that should not be studied in detail, and furthermore, since it is written, it is a little different from the original Chinese. It would probably be good to get to know some people from China, and receive direct instruction from them.

Although Hoshu's opinion represents a sound argument, looking at the circumstances of the times, everyone coming from China resided in the *Tojin Yashiki* 唐人屋敷 (Old Chinese Quarter); they could not come and go freely. Japanese were not allowed to live there either.³⁷ Hence, as Hoshu pointed out, it would have been quite difficult for anyone to study with people from China. Here, what Hoshu refers to as “romances” is thought to indicate dramatic works such as the *Xi xiang ji*. This is because the *Xi xiang ji*, which was a well-known title in China at the time, was read not only by the *totsuji*, but by many intellectuals in Japan, along with novels such as *Shui hu zhuan* and *Jin ping mei*.

Around the time of Bunsei 8 (1825), Toyama Kato formed reading clubs for the *Xi xiang ji* and *Shui hu zhuan* in Edo, which were attended by Okubo Shibutsu 大窪詩佛 (1767–1837), Asakawa Zenan 朝川善庵 (1781–1849), Kikuchi Gozan 菊池五山 (1769–1849), and Tachi Ryuwan 館柳灣 (1762–1844)—all notable intellectuals at the time. The text of the *Xi xiang ji* used by Kato was the *Genkai Kochu Kohon Seisoki*, mentioned before.³⁸ Considering that this edition frequently cited phonetic annotations from the Wang version, we may surmise that the participants of the reading club read the text phonetically in Chinese, following Kato's lead. Furthermore, the text of the *Jin ping mei* used by *Jin ping mei* reading clubs that met around the same time drew upon the contents of the *Xi xiang ji* when interpreting the text of the *Jin ping mei*,³⁹ and the *Xi xiang ji* appears to have been useful in the reading of Chinese novels.

3. Reception of *Xi xiang ji* in poetry and prose

The passion of people in the Edo period for the *Xi xiang ji* is reflected in many examples of Chinese

³⁷ See “Daily Life in the *Tojin Yashiki* 唐人屋敷の日々,” Chapter 4, *Hyo-chakusen monogatari: Edo jidai no Nit-Chu koryu* 漂着船物語—江戸時代の日中交流— (*Tales of shipwrecked vessels: Sino-Japanese relations in the Edo period*) by Oba Osamu.

³⁸ See manuscript for “On the compilation of the *Genkai Kochu Kohon Seisoki* by Toyama Kato 遠山荷塘《諺解校注古本西廂記》の成立経緯について” (*Proceedings of the Sinological Society of Japan*, 69th compilation, Sinological Society of Japan, 2017).

³⁹ As found in “Toyama Kato and *Jin ping mei* 遠山荷塘と《金瓶梅》” (*Japan Early Modern Novels and China Novels*, Seishodoshoten, 1987) by Tokuda Takeshi 徳田武.

poetry and essays. One example is the poem “寄其明老人” (*To Old Man Kimei*) by Tachi Ryuwan, a participant of Toyama Kato’s *Xi xiang ji* reading club:⁴⁰

夜雨書樓燈火紅，水天閑話感泥鴻。相逢曾恨秋宵短，一部西廂說未終。

On a rainy night, you and I were moved by hearing those old-fashioned things of yours under the lamp light of a study room. You and I regret the shortness of the fall evening that we meet, and I try teaching you about the story of the *Xi xiang*, but I could not teach you everything.

Furthermore, there is the Chinese poem “*Shichijo shi*” 七娘詞 written by Ota Nanpo 大田南畝 (1749–1823), who was stationed in Nagasaki as a government official from around Bunka 1 (1804) to 2 (1805):⁴¹

城北佳人字七娘，芳年幾日託僧房。幕中巢得紅襟燕，簾外窺看白面郎。艷質曾經迷下蔡，幽期一失憶西廂。……

In the north of the city, there lived a beautiful woman named Qiniang, and she stayed at a temple for a short while in her youth. A red breasted swallow built a nest behind a curtain, and through the blinds she peaked at some dandies. Her beauty fascinated the city’s men, but she missed her rendezvous with the one she desired, and envied the story in the *Xi xiang ji*.

In depicting the unrequited love that men and women inevitably experience, the “*Shichijo shi*” is based upon the story of the secret rendezvous of Cui Yingying and Zhang Sheng.

Going back an era, the first volume of *Kizan shu* 旗山集 edited by Kashida Hokugan 榎田北岸 (1757–1794), who was a Confucian scholar in the Daishoji Domain, includes a work titled “*Sisters, Three Poems* 姊妹詩三首.”⁴² The third poem is as follows:

姊讀西廂記，顧眄憚人來。背後有妹聲，掩帙事剪裁。

While reading the *Xi xiang ji*, my older sister hesitatingly looked back to check if someone was coming. When her younger sister’s voice was heard from behind, she closed the *Xi xiang ji* and started doing needlework.

According to Inoue Yoshio 井上善雄’s *Ota Kinjo denko* 大田錦城傳考, Kashida Hokugan had two sisters called Eki 益 and Ume 梅, and the above poem depicts the daily life of the sisters around

⁴⁰ Third compilation of the *Ryuwangyosho* 柳灣漁唱, Sano Collection, Niigata University Library.

⁴¹ Vol. 2, *Kyoen Poetry Collection* 杏園詩集 (*Complete Works of Ota Nanpo*, Vol. 6, Iwanami Shoten, 1988).

⁴² *Kizan shu*, Keio University Library.

the time the older sister was engaged to the Kuze family of Daishoji domain.⁴³

The poem illustrates the sister reading the *Xi xiang ji* away from the eyes of others. She might have been secretly reading because of a longing for the love story of Zhang Sheng and Cui Yingying depicted in the *Xi xiang ji* while preparing to get married.

Through this poem, we find that there were women who were captivated by the stories in *Xi xiang ji* and simply read them as novels, not for *towa* learning.

The *Goso manhitsu* 悟憲漫筆, by Hokugan's younger brother Ota Kinjo 大田錦城 (1765–1828), reveals another reason that the older sister avoids being seen reading. At the time, Edo Confucian scholars enjoyed reading Chinese dramas and novels. There were also those who admired Li Zhi and Jin Shengtan for their critiques of *Xi xiang ji*, *Shui hu zhuan*, and other works. However, Kinjo asserted that dramas and novels were not as important as conventional Confucianism, and thus not worthy of deeper study.⁴⁴

Regardless, there are more than a few Edo period essays alluding to the *Xi xiang ji*. For example, Arai Hakuseki 新井白石 (1657–1725), when discussing the history of Chinese drama in “*Haiyuko* 俳優考” (“On Actors”), alludes to the *Xi xiang ji*.⁴⁵ Tsuga Teisho 都賀庭鐘 (1718–1794) alludes to the Yuan dynasty drama in “*Tenshiin* 填詞引,” seen at the beginning of *Shimeizen* 四鳴蟬 (*Collection of Four Plays*), which had translations of Japanese classical dramas in a form resembling Chinese theater, making the assessment that “如《琵琶》《西廂》，最其尤者也” (For example, the *Pi pa ji* [*Tale of the Pipa*] and the *Xi xiang ji* are among the greatest Chinese dramas).⁴⁶ Around the time of Kansei 4 (1792), in the preface of the *Kochomu* 蝴蝶夢 (*Butterfly Fantasy*), the translator Ransuishi 嵐翠子 writes that he translated the *Xi xiang ji* so that it would be easily understood by the common people.⁴⁷ Unfortunately, it is unknown whether this translation of the *Xi xiang ji*, titled “*Enshi* 艶詞月下琴,” is extant today.

In Kyowa 3 (1803), Tanomura Chikuden 田能村竹田 (1777–1835) stated in a letter sent to Okubo Shibutsu.⁴⁸

⁴³ “2. Childhood 幼年時代” in *Ota Kinjo Denko*, Vol. 1 (Edited by Kaga City Cultural Property Advisory Committee, 1959) by Inoue Yoshio.

⁴⁴ “近世都下ノ儒士、傳奇ノ俗語小説ヲ喜テ讀ミ、李贄、金聖嘆ヲ尊奉スルコト昌黎、東坡ヨリモ賢ルト見ユル人アリ。却テ宋、元ノ隨筆筭記ヲハ涉獵ニモ及ハス。此流ノ輩ハ歲月ヲ玩愒スルニ近シ。宋人ノ隨筆ハ雷同襍糅ハ有トモ、讀テハ益アルコト尠カラス。經藝ノ羽翼ト云ヘク、詩文ノ資料トスルニハ餘アリ。我門ノ人ハ詩話隨筆等ハ務テ讀ムヘシ。傳奇、俗語小説、演義、院本ノ類ハ謹テ披覽スルコト勿レ。” in *Goso manhitsu*, 3rd compilation, Keio University Library.

⁴⁵ “*Haiyuko*” (“On Actors”), Niigata University Library Sano Collection.

⁴⁶ *Shimeizen* (*Collection of four plays*), Waseda University Library.

⁴⁷ See preface to *Kochomu* (*Butterfly Fantasy*) (Translated by Ransuishi, Amended by Aoki Masaru), Tohoku University Library. According to handwritten additions by Aoki, this book is believed to have emerged around Kansei 4.

⁴⁸ *Complete Works of Tanomura Chikuden* (Kokusho Kankohkai, 1916) collection, “To Okubo Tenmin 與大窪天民.”

半夜酒醒夢回際，挑燈讀《西廂》《牡丹亭》，未嘗釋卷，浩歎才難情難也。或謂鶯々、麗娘，竝係夢中花幻中月，實無有也。夫爾，雖然有事之可見，詩之可証，心目相接，的見其人。

Waking up from an evening of drunkenness and returning from the dream world, I read the *Xi xiang ji* and *Mu dan ting* (*The Peony Pavillion*), not letting go of the book for even a moment, greatly lamenting how hard it is to obtain such superior talent and sincere love. My opinion is that Yingying and Liniang are fictional people whose images excite us (through books and paintings). That being said, their story has remained, and can be found in works of poetry. Readers will surely be able to envision this couple before their eyes if they form heartfelt connection with them.

Chikuden read the *Xi xiang ji* and *Mu dan ting*, and was greatly charmed by the two stories, falling in love with the female protagonists Cui Yingying and Du Liniang 杜麗娘. Regarding the *Xi xiang ji*, he said: “Their story has remained, and can be found in poetry writings.” Therefore, it appears Chikuden might have read the actual *Yingying zhuan*, and gone through poems retelling the story (such as *Pu dong cui zhang zhu yu shi ji*). In addition, we find in a letter addressed to Ito Kyoka 伊藤鏡河 (1752–1829) in the sixth month of Bunka 2 (1805)⁴⁹ that Chikuden sought an annotated copy of the *Xi xiang ji* in Osaka. This suggests that the *Xi xiang ji* described in the letter to Okubo Shibutsu lacked annotations; thus, parts of it may have been difficult for him to understand. After he obtained and read a copy of *Di liu cai zi shu*, Chikuden felt the criticisms in it were interesting, and in the eighth month of that year he made recommendations to Ito Kyoka in a letter.⁵⁰

In addition to Tanomura Chikuden, Kyokutei Bakin 曲亭馬琴 (1767–1848) reported reading the *Xi xiang ji* in a letter to a friend.⁵¹ Matsuzaki Kodo 松崎慊堂 (1771–1844) alluded to the *Xi xiang ji* included in the *Nan hao shi hua* 南濠詩話 by Du Mu 都穆 in his personal diary.⁵² Thus, after the *Xi xiang ji* and its related works were transmitted in the Edo period, increasing numbers of Japanese intellectuals became interested in it.

This included people who wrote works influenced by the previously mentioned *Pu dong cui zhang zhu yu shi*. Ueki Gyokugai 植木玉厓 (1781–1839) stated the following in “*Chushingura kyoshi jo*” 忠臣藏狂詩集序 (“Preface to Collection of Humorous Poems of the 47 Ronin”) in the second volume of the *Hanka sanjin shisho* 半可山人詩鈔 poetry collection (Osaka University):

⁴⁹ See “Letter to Ito Kyoka dated 9th day, 6th month of Bunka 2,” *Collected Materials and Letters of Tanomura Chikuden* (Oita Prefectural Board of Education, 1992).

⁵⁰ See “Letter to Ito Kyoka around the 8th month of Bunka 2” in footnote 49 above.

⁵¹ For example, “Letter to Josai dated 26th day of the 3rd month of Bunsei 13 (attachment)” in *Bakin shokan shusei* 馬琴書翰集成, Vol. 1 (Yagi Shoten, 2002).

⁵² See entry dated 5th day of the 4th month of Tenpo 2 in *Kodo nichu reki* 慊堂日曆, Vol.3 (translated by Yamada Taku 山田琢, Heibonsha, 1973).

予嘗讀毛唐人所著《蒲東崔張珠玉詩》而感心乎其敘事體裁，誠奇妙頂禮屋之仕打矣。遂猿之人真似，傲西施之鬢，賦《忠臣藏》十一段之詩。々成而讀之，其一向不面白者，蓋何也。

I have read the foreign-authored *Pudong cuizhang zhuyu shi*, and have been truly impressed by how the narrative has been presented. Thus, I, without the talent or education, have attempted to imitate the *Pudong cuizhang zhuyu shi* in crafting an 11th poem based on *Chushingura* (Story of the 47 Ronin). I did not find it interesting at all once I completed it and read through it; I wonder why.

In addition to Gyokugai, Kikuchi Gozan stated in *Gozando shiwa* 五山堂詩話 that “余十年以前作詩，開口便落婉麗，絕不能作硬語。嘗有‘晝簾半捲讀西廂’之句。爲人所誦。” (When attempting to compose poetry a decade ago, it would all end up so graceful as soon as I opened my mouth and I was wholly unable to craft any vigorous poetry. There is a phrase in one of my older works that goes “Read the *Xi xiang ji* with the blinds rolled up half-way during the daytime,” which people have passed along to each other);⁵³ and although he created works like *Toku seiso saishi no shi* 讀西廂才子詩,⁵⁴ their whereabouts are unknown.

4. Works related to *Xi xiang ji* that contribute to entertainment

The *Xi xiang ji* influenced the study of Chinese language study and the creation of new literary works in Japan. However, it also inspired short musical pieces and drinking games that amused the people of the period.

Two songs, “*Cui ying* 崔鶯,” and “*Zhang jun* 張君,” are mentioned in the “Short Musical Pieces” section of Vol. 5 of the *Towa sanyo* 唐話纂要 compiled by Okajima Kanzan and published during the Kyoho years.⁵⁵

In “*Cui ying*”, Cui Yingying pays a visit to Hong Niang, and asks about the scenes depicted in the *Xi xiang ji*. “*Zhang jun*” is a song that retells how Zhang Junrui visited his old friend Du Que 杜確 and stayed at Puiju Temple. The lyrics of “*Zhang jun*” start with “張君瑞，訪故友” (Zhang Junrui visiting his old friend). Among the works that begin the same way is the song “*You si* 遊寺,” which is an example of *Beiguan* 北管 music (a traditional style popular in Fujian and Taiwan);⁵⁶ it is possible that the two songs share the same source.

⁵³ *Gozando shiwa*, Vol. 1 (Yamashiroya Sahei, 1824).

⁵⁴ According to *Kinsei kangakusha chojutsu mokuroku taisei* 近世漢學者著述目錄大成 (*Complete Bibliography of Modern Scholars of Chinese Classics*, Edited by Seki Giichiro 關儀一郎 and Seki Yoshinao 關義直, Toyotosho Kankokai, 1941).

⁵⁵ 1718 edition, Waseda University Library.

⁵⁶ Taiwan National Repository of Cultural Heritage.

According to an entry in the *Totsuji kaisho nichiroku* 唐通事會所日録 dated on the second day of the 10th month of Hoei 6 (1709),⁵⁷ the crew of a Chinese merchant ship that stopped in Japan were called to the Nagasaki magistrate's office, where they introduced songs from Nanjing and dances from Zhangzhou. From this, we might presume that the two songs “*Cui ying*” and “*Zhang jun*” may have been sung throughout Fujian Province at the time. It is believed that they were spread through performances and demonstrations, like those mentioned above.

In addition to “*Cui ying*” and “*Zhang jun*,” an early version of “*Mo li hua* 茉莉花,” which is still well-known in China today, is mentioned in the essay by Ota Nanpo, who wrote the previously mentioned “*Shichijo shi*.”⁵⁸:

文鮮花

好一朵鮮花，好一朵鮮花，有朝的一日落在我家，我本待不出門業又恐怕鮮花而下（又）。
好一朵茉莉花，好一朵茉莉花，滿園的花開賽不過了他，我欲要摘一枝戴又恐怕看花人罵（又）。

八月裏桂花香，九月裏菊花黃，勾引的張生跳過粉牆，好一個雀鶯々來忙把門關上（又）。
哀誥小紅娘，哀誥小紅娘，可憐的小生跪著半夜，儻著是不開門來，我就跪到東方亮（又）。
右、崎陽より写し來れるとて、人のみせしを写す。時に癸亥の正月十一日、寒泉子の亭にて見し也。

Wen xian hua

Beautiful flower, beautiful flower, when will you fall in my room. I want to go outside, but worry that the flowers may fall. (repeat)

Beautiful jasmine flower, beautiful jasmine flower, blooming throughout the garden more beautiful than any other flower. I want to pick one, but I am scared of angering the person guarding the flowers (repeat)

In the eighth month, the fragrant olive flowers bloom, and in the ninth month the chrysanthemum flowers bloom. Zhang Sheng was enticed to climb over the wall, but Cui Yingying suddenly appeared and shut the door. (repeat)

Please Hong Niang, please Hong Niang, the hopeless Zhang Sheng whispers through the night, if you do not open the door, I will keep whispering until morning. (repeat)

The above song is said to have been a copy of one from Nagasaki, and was written down from what people had introduced. I saw it at Kansen's house in the 11th day of the 1st month of Kyowa 3.

According to Ota Nanpo's annotations, this song was introduced to him by his friend Okada

⁵⁷ *Totsuji kaisho nichiroku*, Vol. 5 (University of Tokyo Press, 1963).

⁵⁸ “short musical piece” in *Kyoen kanpitsu* 杏園間筆, Vol. 2 (*Complete Works of Ota Nanpo*, Vol. 10, Iwanami Shoten, 1986).

Kansen 岡田寒泉 in *Kyowa* 3 (1803). Okada Kansen was one of the “*Kansei no sanhakase* 寛政の三博士” (Three sages of the Kansei era), known through the promotional efforts of Zhu Xi learning 朱子學. We do not know the circumstances in which he copied this song, but it reflects an interest in *Xi xiang ji* and other popular literature (at the same time that Zhu Xi learning was in vogue). Furthermore, the song title “*Wen xian hua* 文鮮花” led to the creation of songs such as “*Han yan qu* 含艷曲” and “*Mo li hua* 茉莉(抹梨)花” in later collections.

Depending on the song collection, the lyrics of “*Wen xian hua*” might include only the first two verses—or might be 13 verses. The version of “*Mo li hua*” that people recognize in China today does not include any lyrics related to the *Xi xiang ji*.

At the close of the era, “*Mo li hua*” was popularized by Toyama Kato, also a famous yueqin performer. Toyama Kato, who completed his study away from home in Nagasaki in Bunsei 7 (1824), visited the great Kyushu Confucian Kamei Shoyo 龜井昭陽 (1773–1836), and captivated the Shoyo clan with Ming and Qing music. Shoyo was very impressed by Kato’s talent, and left behind a great deal of poetry and prose writings about him. These include several mentions of “*Mo li hua*.” Shoyo wrote the following in a letter he sent to Oka Shikyu 岡子究 (“*Letter to Oka Shikyu* 與岡子究書”):⁵⁹

豚兒學夏音、《韻鏡》，女孩學小曲，……門生亦歌《茉莉花》《九連環》。一畝之宮，殆變於夏。

My son is studying the Chinese language and *Yun jin*, my daughter is studying short musical pieces, ... and my pupils are also singing “*Mo li hua*” and “*Jiu lian huan*.” My home really seems like Chinese persons are living there.

In a letter sent to Yamaguchi Shihan 山口士繁,⁶⁰ he wrote the following:

琴客安於草堂，悉曇與夏音竝發。《茉莉花》《到春來》《算命》《九連環》，入月琴、胡琴，鏘々盈人耳。妻孥、炊婢亦學口，草堂變爲唐人窠窟。

Instrumentalists are relaxing in my home, mixing Sanskrit and Chinese. “*Mo li hua*,” “*Dao chun lai*,” “*Suan ming*,” and “*Jiu lian huan*” are being performed on the yueqin and huqin, and clear tones are resonating throughout the rooms. My wife, children, and servants cooking food, all heard the music and imitated it. My home has become a Chinese dwelling.

That is, “*Mo li hua*” was being studied and sung by everyone from Shoyo’s students to children. Shoyo wrote the following about Kato playing the yueqin in the poem “*Ikkei Plays the Yueqin* 圭上人

⁵⁹ *Collected Writings of Shoyo* 昭陽先生文集, Vol. 2 (Ishizaki Bunko Collection, Kyushu University Library).

⁶⁰ 復山士繁書 (response to Yamaguchi Shihan) in Vol. 2 in footnote 59 above.

鼓琴”⁶¹:

圭公鼓月琴，引我蘇州去。……古樂雖洵美，不關知夏音。吾憐小詞曲，有益藝文林。吾門二三子，先學九連環。一曲諳多字，放歌非等閑。日我初請曲，先歌茉莉花。屢聽頻得益，不獨悅皇琴。

Ikkei played the yueqin, and took me to Suzhou... Ancient music is really beautiful, but it is not related to Chinese language study. What I love about short musical pieces is that they benefit learning, study, and literature. Two or three of my students first studied “*Jiu lian huan*.” Each song can allow you to remember, or sing, many words. Previously, when I asked Ikkei to perform a song, he first sang “*Mo li hua*.” I gained a lot each time I listened to the song, and it is awe-inspiring to be able to monopolize such a beautiful folk song.

He says that ancient music is very good, but not useful for learning spoken Chinese—while songs such as “*Jiu lian huan*” and “*Mo li hua*” are useful for learning Chinese in general. At the end of the poem, he mentions singing “*Mo li hua*” for his own benefit, and writes that he often gains from repeated listening.

In addition to “*Mo li hua*,” there are the songs “*Yue hua ji* 月花集” and “*Zhang zhou qu* 漳州曲,” which incorporate many details related to the *Xi xiang ji*.

“*Yue hua ji*” has other titles: “*Jian jian hua* 剪剪花,” “*Hong xiu xie* 紅繡鞋,” and “*Zhang zhou yue hua ji* 漳州月花集,” and can consist of as few as one verse, or as many as ten verses.

For example, “*Jian jian hua*” in *Joga seiin* 嫦娥清韻 by Toyama Kato (Kansei University Library) consists of ten verses, with each verse in the form of a counting rhyme. The song speaks of flowers representing each month from the first to the 10th, while singing of love between men and women (based on the *Xi xiang ji* in some of the verses):

一雙紅繡鞋，噯呀，梅花正月裏開，噯ㄟ。勾引張生跳過粉牆來，儂跳過來，我的小快快，噯ㄟ。

二雙紅繡鞋，噯呀，杏花二月裏開，噯ㄟ。二人房中蒲竹那鬥牌，儂搬過來，我的小快快，噯ㄟ。……

七雙紅繡鞋，噯呀，鳳仙七月裏開，噯ㄟ。張生死了買致短棺材，儂要欲壞了腎，我的小快ㄟ，噯ㄟ。……

A pair of embroidered red shoes, ahhh, plum flowers blooming the first month, ahh ahh. Enticing Zhang Sheng, he climbs over the white wall. You can also climb over, my precious, ahh ahh.

Two pairs of embroidered red shoes, ahhh, apricot flowers blooming the second month, ahh

⁶¹ Vol. 2 in footnote 59 above.

ahh. Two people play *sugoroku* and *karuta* in a room... You can also climb over, my precious, ahh ahh.

Seven pairs of embroidered red shoes, ahhh, balsam flowers blooming the seventh month, ahh ahh. Zhang Sheng died and a short coffin was bought. Are your kidneys going to fail too? My precious, ahh ahh.

As described in the previously mentioned letter by Kamei Shoyo, Ming and Qing era music was received not only by intellectuals, but by both young and old men and women. The “*Mo li hua*” was not the only song with the scene of Zhang Sheng scaling the wall; it can also be found in “*Yue hua ji*.” Thus this scene from the *Xi xiang ji* was likely well-known.

The Zhang Sheng appearing in the seventh verse died from a disease of the kidneys, but such a scene does not appear in the *Xi xiang ji*. However, seen from a different perspective, this speaks of how well-known Zhang Sheng was as a representative of love affairs.

This song is recorded in the *Joga seiin*, so it is speculated that it was introduced in formal gatherings and reading clubs by Toyama Kato. The following passage about specific performances appears in the “*Preface for Seeing off Ikkei 送一圭上人序*” written by Kamei Shoyo:⁶²

余每把酒，必請上人拊絲。一日醉甚，坐者解曲中義。北海敦禮學，不喜詞藻。說“二人房中”曰：“不是雙女，必兩男。”余笑曰：“以《三禮》談小曲，不知西房乎東房乎。” Each time I drink alcohol, I always have master play stringed instruments. One day, the people were very drunk and sitting in chairs, interpreting the meaning of songs. Hokkai respects gratitude and does not like elaborate works. He interpreted the sentence saying “two people are in the room” to mean “If the two people are not women, they will always both be men.” I laughed and said, “If one ventures to interpret short musical pieces using *San li*, then one is already going in the wrong direction.”

Shoyo has Kato play the yueqin each time he drinks alcohol. At a drinking bout one day, the student Kitaumi tried to explain the meaning of the words in the song, “Two people are in a room,” using his knowledge of Confucianism. The words are exactly the same as those in the second verse of “*Jian jian hua*.”

Next, let us take a look at “*Zhang zhou qu*.” So far, I have not found any other titles for this song, but the following verse is contained in the *Kagetsu kinpu 花月琴譜*, edited by Kireiken Toen 龜齡軒斗遠 (1778-?):

紗帳裏飄蘭麝，……玉臂忙搖，金蓮高舉。喃喃燕燕嘖嘖鶯聲，好似君瑞遇鶯娘。

⁶² Vol. 4 in footnote 59 above.

The scent of orchid wafts about the inside of a silk tent, ... Excitedly waving beautiful arms and raising pretty feet high in the air. The softly whispering voices are like when Junrui met Yingying.

In this song about a love affair between a man and a woman, a secret rendezvous between Zhang Sheng and Cui Yingying is used as a metaphor. A similar expression is seen in episode 13 of *Jin ping mei*.⁶³

燈光影裏，鮫綃帳中，一個玉臂忙搖，一個金蓮高舉。一個鶯聲嘖嘖，一個燕語喃喃。
好似君瑞遇鶯娘，猶若宋玉偷神女。

In the shadow of a lamp, inside a thin silk tent, one excitedly shakes their beautiful arms and one raises their beautiful legs high in the air. One vocalizes clearly like a warbler and one speaks very softly and quietly. It is just as when Junrui met Yingying, and when Song Yu secretly communicated with a goddess.

In the text of the *Jin ping mei* (Tamazato Collection, Kagoshima University Library) used by the *Jin ping mei* reading clubs that met around Toyama Kato during the Bunsei and Tenpo years, the following marginalia was added:

《西廂記》ニ張生名珙、字君瑞。鶯娘トハ崔鶯ヒノヲ也。可見コノ一段《西廂記》ニヨツテ作りシヲ。

In *Xi xiang ji*, Zhang Sheng's given name is Gong, and his courtesy name is Junrui. The dear Ying refers to Cui Yingying. From this, we find that this paragraph was written based upon the *Xi xiang ji*.

Therefore, in speaking of Zhang Sheng and Cui Yingying, what the people of the late Edo period recognize first is not “*Yingying zhuan*” but *Xi xiang ji*. Furthermore, “*Zhang zhou qu*” can also be found in the *Kagetsucho* 華月帖, edited by Kireiken Toen.

Kagetsucho, which was published in Tenpo 7 (1836),⁶⁴ is very eclectic, containing Japanese poems and prose by famous literati such as Toen, Kamono Suetaka 賀茂季鷹, and Ota Nanpo, placed between erotic pictures with shadow images. Of these, the “*Zhang zhou qu*” is found under the title of “*Yueqin Music* 月琴譜.” According to discussions by Nakano Mitsutoshi 中野三敏, when Toen left for Edo, he tried to give it away as a souvenir⁶⁵. We do not know if he gave it to anyone, but Toen,

⁶³ *Jin ping mei* in the Tamazato Collection of Kagoshima University Library.

⁶⁴ Publisher unknown, 1836.

⁶⁵ See “Latter Half of Kireiken Toen—Tenpo Tastes 龜齡軒斗遠の後半生—天保の風流—” (School of Letters, Kyushu University, *Literary Research*, 87th compilation, 1990) by Nakano Mitsutoshi 中野三敏.

who enjoyed the company of writers and artists, is believed to have given the *Kagetsucho* to many literati. In *Kagetsucho*, “*Zhang zhou qu*” is the only Ming and Qing song included about love between a man and woman, so the secret rendezvous between Zhang Sheng and Cui Yingying seen in the *Xi xiang ji* is believed to be a story representing forbidden love between men and women.

“*Zhang zhou qu*” confirms the existence of two verses in addition to the verse found in *Kagetsu kinpu*. The second verse of the song found in *Gekkin gakufu* 月琴樂譜 edited by Nakai Shinroku 中井新六 are as follows:⁶⁶

春天桃李開，嘍吶，鴛鴦戲水蝶迷花。多情郎，跳過粉牆折一枝，並不怕被人罵。

In the spring, peach flowers and Japanese plum flowers bloom, ahhh, lovebirds play in the water, and butterflies go about the flowers. A passionate youth scales the white wall to pick a flower, unafraid of being scolded by anyone.

The above verse is probably based on the scene of “Zhang Sheng climbing over the wall” from the *Xi xiang ji*. Thus, there are variations of “*Mo li hua*,” “*Yue hua ji*,” and “*Zhang zhou qu*” that all include a scene of Zhang Sheng climbing the wall to meet Cui Yingying. It is likely that this was the most well-known scene from the *Xi xiang ji* during the Edo period.

In the preface to the *Higi ensetsu tsukushigoto* 秘戲艷說筑紫琴 published in Bunsei 3 (1820),⁶⁷ “*Ying sheng yun yu hui* 鶯生雲雨會” found in *Pu dong cui zhang zhu yu shi ji* is cited, and in the endpaper of *Makuro bunko nihen* 枕文庫二編,⁶⁸ edited by Keisai Eisen 溪齋英泉 (1790–1848), “*Ying xiu can bu xing* 鶯羞慙不行” from *Pu dong cui zhang zhu yu shi ji* is cited. As for the latter, Tanobe Tomizo 田野邊富藏 states in *Isha mitate Eisen “Makura bunko”* 医者見立て英泉《枕文庫》 (*A Doctor’s Opinion, Eisen’s Makura Bunko*) that “After *Keichu kibun makura bunko* 閨中紀聞 枕文庫 went on sale, it became an unprecedented bestseller, with many people demanding a sequel and the original work becoming a moneymaker for the publisher Seirindo 青林堂. From Bunsei 5 to Tenpo 7–9, close to ten volumes were published in a series.”⁶⁹ This indicates that *Makuro Bunko* was read by many people at the time. Furthermore, the *Pu dong cui zhang zhu yu shi ji* is frequently found in erotica depicting the sexual customs of the Edo period; it is believed that the *Xi xiang ji* represents the time when the story of a man and a woman in a secret love affair became an established trope. This lines up exactly with the scenes in the *Xi xiang ji* sung about in “*Mo li hua*,” “*Yue hua ji*,” and “*Zhang zhou qu*.” The broad spread of this perception can be considered one of the reasons for songs about the *Xi xiang ji* in Ming and Qing music, and why they were popular among so many different kinds of people, at both drinking parties and formal gatherings.

⁶⁶ Gunsendo, 1877.

⁶⁷ Stored at International Research Center for Japanese Studies.

⁶⁸ In possession of International Research Center for Japanese Studies.

⁶⁹ Kawade Shobo Shinsha, 1996.

In addition to songs, the Chinese found many games drawing upon the *Xi xiang ji* in taverns. *Xi xiang ji jiu ling*, which I mentioned in the first section of this paper, put such games in writing. Specifically, game participants would play by drawing lots containing content from the *Xi xiang ji* with drinking instructions written on them. These lots were called “*Jiu chou 酒籌*” in China.

From the mid-Edo period, the Chinese coming to Nagasaki for trade resided in the “*Tojin Yashiki*” residential area designated by the Edo Shogunate, and could not move around freely for a long time. Thus, residents dealing with everyday boredom would hold feasts, where they would drink and sing the Ming and Qing songs to amuse themselves.⁷⁰

The following is found in the poem “*戲贈英波生。生善拇戰。*” (*Give it to Eiha for fun. He is good at morra.*) written by Ota Nanpo:⁷¹

崎陽多酒令，拇戰最稱雄。金谷傾千石，觥船掉一空。……

Many drinking games could be found in taverns in Nagasaki, the most popular being morra. People would pay a lot to be served delicious dishes, and immediately down large bottles of sake once they were filled…

Morra in the second verse is a kind of game played with one’s hands in taverns.⁷² At that time, this was the most popular game in Nagasaki, and is believed to have been influenced by the Chinese residing in the city. Various games were played in taverns; the fact that these included games played with lots related to the *Xi xiang ji* (referred to in China as “*Chou ling 籌令*”) is reflected in a title of poetry (“*醫院月池 [桂川國瑞] 酒令籤有張生、鶯々而無夫人、紅娘。以予所藏二籤換狀元、會元。戲賦爲寄。*”)(*The lots used for games in taverns owned by Doctor Getchi [Katsuragawa Kuniakira] consisted of Zhang Sheng and Yingying lots, but no Lao Fu Ren and Hong Niang lots. Getchi traded his zhuangyuan [someone who was ranked first-class in the palace examination] and huiyuan [provincial imperial examination graduate who ranked first in metropolitan examination] lots with my Lao fu ren and Hong niang lots. I made and gave poems for fun.*) Nanpo sent to Katsuragawa Kuniakira (pen name Getchi), a Dutch scholar and shogunate doctor.⁷³

⁷⁰ See “Chinese Residents of the *Tojin Yashiki* 唐人屋敷における唐人の生活” in Chapter 5 of *Nagasaki Tojin Yashiki* (Kenkosha, 1983) by Yamamoto Noritsuna 山本紀綱, and “The South Area” in *Scenic Paintings of Nagasaki 長崎名勝圖繪*, Vol. 2 (Nagasaki Shindankai, 1931).

⁷¹ *Nanposhu 南畝集 15 (Complete Works of Ota Nanpo, Vol. 4, Iwanami Shoten, 1987).*

⁷² Chinese hand games played in Nagasaki referenced in “6. The Pinnacle of Game Play 遊戯完成時代” in *History of Games in Japan 日本遊戯史*, (Kobundo, 1942) by Sakai Yasushi 酒井欣 and “3. The Wonderful World of Play 華麗な遊びの世界” of *The History of Japanese Games – Play and Society from Ancient to Modern Times 日本遊戯史—古代から現代までの遊びと社会* (Heibonsha, 2012) by Masukawa Koichi 増川宏一, and discussed in detail in “4. Simultaneous Hand Guessing – Popular Hand Games in Late Edo 同時當て物拳—幕末までの主流の拳—,” “Japanese Hand Games 日本の拳遊戯” (Vol. 1) (*Osaka University of Commerce, Institute of Amusement Industry Studies, Studies on Gambling and Gaming*, No. 15, Osaka University of Commerce Institute of Amusement Industry Studies, 2013) by Takahashi Hironori 高橋浩徳.

⁷³ *Nanposhu 16 (Complete Works of Ota Nanpo, Vol. 5, Iwanami Shoten, 1987).*

Although we do not know the specific details of such drinking games, since the character “*kuji* 籤” (“lot”) was used, it is believed that what Nanpo and Kuniakira had in their possession was a type of “*Chou ling*.” In addition, “Zhang Sheng,” “Yingying,” “Fu Ren,” and “Hong Niang” seen in poetry title represent appearances by characters in the *Xi xiang ji*. Although it is not known where these “*kuji*” were obtained, there is no doubt that they were brought by Chinese visitors to Nagasaki. Though life must have been tedious in the *Tojin Yashiki*, *Chou ling* related to the *Xi xiang ji* at least served as a means of amusement over a round of drinks.

Conclusion

As we have discussed in this paper, the reception of the *Xi xiang ji* during the Edo period was not restricted to the actual *Xi xiang ji* alone. Various spinoffs in the forms of related poems, short musical pieces, drinking games, and essays of a variety of origins made their way across the sea to Japan. Naturally, it would have been quite difficult for Edo period literati, who were not as well-versed in Chinese dramas and novels as their Chinese counterparts, to read works such as the *Xi xiang ji* or related *baguwen* (“eight-legged essays”). However, it appears there might have been many people familiar with the various scenes found in the *Xi xiang ji*, starting with the love story of Zhang Sheng and Cui Yingying, thanks to erotica, short musical pieces, and other works.

The various commentaries and annotations on the *Xi xiang ji* found in different woodblock printed editions were used in *Towa* learning, and both the *Xi xiang ji* and related works were used to aid in reading other novels, so they were used in a variety of settings. A prime example of this is how Toyama Kato created the *Genkai kochu kohon Seisoki* by combining multiple woodblock printed editions of the *Xi xiang ji* and used it in readings and discussions.

As Inoue Taizan stated in “*Nihon ni okeru Seisoki kenkyu*” (“Studies of the *Xi xiang ji* in Japan”), the *Xi xiang ji* has attracted the attention of Japanese researchers. Multiple translations have been produced long after the era in which it was created, ranging from the Meiji Period to the end of the last century. In this way, the reception of this work, which started during the Edo period, has been carried on by later generations.

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