

INTRODUCTION

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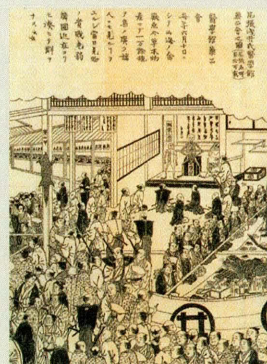
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Translation is a vital element of development in any culture. We only have to recall the itinerary Greek classics travelled through Arab translations into Latin, to realise how vital translation has been in the preservation and transmission of an existing culture or legacy as well as in stimulating the birth of new cultural offspring, a 'renaissance'. It is no exaggeration to say that "[a] translator is not someone whose task is to conserve something but to propagate something, to spread and develop it: translators are agents of change. Translators, in fact, make a difference."<sup>1</sup> If until early modern times, however, translation may have seemed of less importance, this was due to the paucity of communication and exchange. Communication across boundaries and borders was carried on in Latin, but actually involved a tiny minority of the people. During the Renaissance, what with the discovery of new continents and cultures and the translation of the Bible into several European literary vernaculars, opportunities for communication were multiplied and European high culture gradually diversified from unilingualism to multilingualism. In the process, translation became vastly more important, a fact of daily life so to speak.

The translation of the Bible constituted a challenge to traditional authority, and at the same time embodied the recognition of the value of the vernacular. It did not only break the hierarchy of authority but also challenged the hierarchy among the languages, for up to that time only Greek and Latin and to some extent the Italian of Dante had been considered languages that were "rational" and therefore having a grammar, in contrast to the "vulgar" languages which were supposed to lack rationality and grammar<sup>2</sup>. Translation into the vernacular languages therefore was a concomitant to the rise of the critical and scientific spirit, of modern episteme. As time went by, the more widespread and economically strong vernaculars were gradually upgraded



and in the end became a cornerstone in the process of nation building. Although national cultures are deeply indebted to translation, they have tended somehow to obfuscate its importance, no doubt because it runs contrary to the myth of independence, which is at the heart of the nation construct. Even nowadays, the role of translation and the translator tend to be slighted or ignored. They are viewed as a necessary evil, or something like a mechanical interface, something that ideally could to be replaced by a machine, and that does not colour the originality and the quality of the contents that are being rendered, the one exception by general consensus being the translation of *belles-lettres* and poetry.

In the scheme of things of the nation-state the translation of a particular work, whether scientific or literary, can hardly be ranked among the masterworks of the national cultural heritage. The nineteenth century transformed the nation-state into the norm, creating a fictitious microcosm of self-subsistence and independence. It was supposed to be able to exist on its own, to be independent from others, other states, other nations, other communities, or whatever these others are called in present-day parlance. There was a national literature, a national science, national philosophy etc. In such scheme of things, the translation of a foreign work can never be central to the own tradition. Translation was relegated to the periphery, was something that could supplement, but was not indispensable. Japan may be an exception in this respect, which does not necessarily mean that it has relied more extensively on translation than other cultures, but it has always been strongly aware of the function and importance of translation.

In reality, translations have been essential to new developments in the most varied areas of human endeavour, even in those cultures that claim the highest degree of originality for themselves. *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* was of tremendous importance for the development of the Romantic Movement in French literature, yet its French translation never featured as an important work. In science the situation was probably worse, for here authorship was less revered than in literature, tended to slip more easily into anonymity or oblivion, while scientific writings were sometimes translated almost surreptitiously. The situation seems to be different in Japan. The *Kaitai shinsho* is the translation of a rather pedestrian Dutch book on anatomy, yet to this day it is considered a masterpiece and a classic. Admittedly, whether it is really a translation in the strict sense is debatable, but what matters here is



that it was at least conceptualised as a translation. Does this confirm once more the *cliché* that Japanese culture is derivative? This qualification is more of a value statement than it is a useful standard or criterion, for derivation is central to all cultures. Only, the perspective on derivation is different in different cultures. Ours may be a culture just as derivative as the Japanese, but we are less apt to recognise or perceive this, because the derivation may be hidden behind a screen of distortion or the mist of time. The willingness to acknowledge indebtedness may be a more important distinction characterising cultures than the degree of derivation itself. The so-called derivative cultures, by the very nature of their awareness, tend to stress their own derivation and by the same token the alleged originality of other cultures. Nowhere more than in Japan does the *cliché* of the four great civilisations (Ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, India and China) hold sway, thus reinforcing the dichotomy between derivative and original cultures. This is a simplistic and reductionist vision of culture, for, borrowing is not passive receptivity, but implies active adaptation and creativity.

Our nation-state has provided us with a powerful framework to write cultural histories in. Each national culture is conceived of as something that is ideally self-contained and self-supporting, while outside influence is acknowledged but perceived as something of a minus, "indebtedness" as something that has to be limited, something that supplements a lack or defect in the own culture. Corollary to this prejudice is the conceit that dominating cultures usually are "inspired" by other cultures, whereas non-dominant cultures are always "influenced" and "indebted". It is evident that we are dealing here with a perspective that is determined by contingent elements: geography, political and economic history, remoteness in time, which allows to "forget" that some or other cultural element was once borrowed etc.

With reference to the situation in the Far East, people have sometimes distinguished between continental and insular cultures. In that frame Chinese culture is continental. Vast and encompassing, it has always projected an image of autonomy and being self-contained. This has not prevented it from taking in many foreign loans, but since the Chinese territory kept expanding, the place of origin, which was initially outside the boundaries of Chinese rule, eventually ended up within the territory of a subsequent dynasty or period, thus feeding the Chinese construct that they were all part of the Chinese cultural legacy. Between the seventeenth and the nineteenth century, when con-



fronted with Western science and technology, many Chinese intellectuals held that they were actually rediscovering ancient wisdom lost from China in antiquity, which the Westerners had merely “augmented and nurtured.” Here we are confronted with the ideology of an all-encompassing integrative cultural matrix. Conversely, we could say that insular cultures cultivate the ideology of duality and distinction. In view of the clear-cut geographical rupture it is easier to identify something indigenous from something imported, but as time goes by, something that was once foreign may end up being perceived as something indigenous. Yet, the two never fully integrate, there is always some measure of coexistence of the foreign with the indigenous, in which the foreign continues to be meaningful as foreign. The preceding argument may have gone some way in showing the limited usefulness of a parameter such as the “origin” of a cultural element. Our approach is that all cultures are indebted to others and that exchange, communication, is essential for the vitality of any culture or rather *is* culture. In the final analysis, the existence of derivative cultures is not at issue here, it being obvious that all cultures, great or small, are derivative, and for their own sake better be.

### THE PRIMACY OF LANGUAGE

The aforementioned dualistic typology of cultures is easily correlated with another duality: that of classical culture versus the vernacular and the popular. Leaving the opposition continental-insular- merely a geographical metaphor- aside, it is not difficult to see an analogy between the relationship between Chinese and Japanese culture on the one hand, and the Mediterranean and Germanic spheres of culture in Mediaeval Europe on the other. China and the Mediterranean world respectively embodied classical civilisation. The weight of the “classic” was heavy, so overwhelming that at first what was indigenous was neglected or overlooked. The learned elite looked at the books and not at reality. Within a scholastic tradition, classical texts were the source of authority. In the field of abstract thinking, speculation and theory, it was hard to challenge scholastic authority and there was nothing readily available to falsify or disprove long held speculative theories. In the field of the study of nature however, the conditions were different. There, reality was bound one day to thrust itself much more compellingly upon the scrutiny of students of classical texts. One such area of nature was the world of plants. Since the first century A.D. Dioscorides’ *De materia medica* had been the cynosure of botanists and



phytographers. When Renaissance botanists tried to correlate Dioscorides' plant descriptions to the reality of their native floras, they found many discrepancies. They thus realised that their compass was not reliable, and classical authority had to be supplanted by empirical scrutiny. German botanists were the first to initiate this methodological shift, which was to have far-reaching implications. Rembert Dodoens, alias Rembertus Dodonæus, the central figure of this collection of essays, followed in their footsteps, but he took their work one step further. While the methodological innovation of his predecessors had mainly been embodied in their illustrations, in Dodoens's case it equally informed his descriptions. Dodoens took a particular interest in the nomenclature, because he realised that vernacular names of plants are closely linked to local flora and are not easily translatable into equivalents in other vernaculars, because each has other local connotations. His approach involved the attitude of a physician, a botanist and a lexicographer. Accurate naming and comparison of the various names was a *conditio sine qua non* to an adequate grasp and understanding of the regional particularities of the plant world. By including the multitude of local flora, i.e. varieties not found in the Mediterranean, into their repertory, the botanists in Germany and the Low Countries veered away from the classical botanical writings. The new development in North-western Europe amounted to a departure from the classical matrix. It was a rejection of authority and went hand in hand with the assertion of the local and the particular. Instead of the illusion of a unified worldview fostered by classical learning, came a vision of diversity and particularism. It will be noted that these new herbalist treatises came out of Lutheran Germany, that had cancelled its subscription to Roman dogma.

The Southern Low Countries, a prosperous area, were not insensitive to the new developments, both in the field of religion and herbal studies. The area boasted a high density of botanical and herb gardens. The demand for botanical knowledge created a market for books on the subject and publishers saw the new opportunities. The first botanical treatise to be published in the Low Countries was *Liber ruralium Commodorum* by the Bolognese agriculturist Petrus de Crescentiis, printed by Jan Veldener in Leuven in 1474. In 1484 Veldener, who hailed from Bavaria, published an illustrated *Herbarius in dyetsche*, which was reprinted in the beginning of the sixteenth century in Antwerp by Willem Vorsterman and Govaert Back. In 1514 the Antwerp-based printer Claes de Graeve published *Den groten herbarius met*



*al sijn figueren die ortus sanitatis ghenaeamt is*, which went through reprints in 1526, 1532, 1533, 1538 and 1542. Leonhart Fuchs had barely published his *De historia stirpium* (1542) when a Dutch translation was being prepared and published in Basel (either 1543 or 1445) under the title *Den nieuwen herbarius dat is dboeck vanden cruyden*. The translator has remained anonymous, but it is assumed that it was the young Rembert Dodoens. At any rate, we have to note how through translation, notably into the vernacular, new herbalist and medical knowledge was being absorbed, to be further developed in the Low Countries. It is not hard to see the similarities with the development of herbal studies in Tokugawa Japan.

The new trend was the harbinger of stronger regional trends in culture and religion on the European continent. In the political field it was the dawn of an era marked by the advent of absolutism, and subsequently the formation of the nation-state. We do not mean to say that these changes were caused by the innovations in the study of plants, only that the innovations were part of the broader frame of transformation. If it was true for the world of plants it also applied to the world of culture. Latin, although not supplanted, was no longer the only language worth that name, while gradually literary vernaculars claimed their rightful place on the stage of higher culture. Significantly, Ambroise Paré, the French surgeon who revolutionized European surgery, was not formed in the classical mould. He did not know Latin and therefore wrote all his treatises in French.

An analogous development appears to have taken place in Tokugawa Japan. Herbal studies in Japan, like many other fields of science, were based on knowledge transmitted from China. The Chinese herbal *par excellence* that offered the Japanese herbalists their paradigm was Li Shizhen's (1518-93) *Bencao gangmu* (Jap. reading *Honzô kômoku*). It actually provided the mould for all traditional East Asian herbal scholarship. In 1607 the famous Confucian scholar Hayashi Razan acquired a copy of this book in Nagasaki and presented it to the Bakufu. From 1638 on the Bakufu laid out two herbal gardens (*yakuen*) in the environs of Edo, one in Shinagawa and one in Ushigome. The Confucian scholar and herbalist Inô Jakusui (1655-1715) was an avid and intelligent student of the Chinese herbal. His edition of *Honzô kômoku* (1714) is considered authoritative and superior to its original, yet all improvements and corrections he added, were based on philological and textual study. His perspective was and remained *identifying* Japa-

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16

nese plants with the ones described in the *Honzô kômoku*. He was still looking at the book instead of at reality. The same attitude prevailed in compiling his magnum opus *Shobutsu ruisan*, which in its original planning was to comprise thousand chapters (*maki*). Although death prevented him from achieving this Herculean feat, yet he managed to complete 362 chapters. It includes descriptions on animals and plants culled from more than 170 Chinese books. Unfortunately, since the compilation was stored away as a secret book it never rendered service to any students. It is well organised and erudite, yet it contains few novelties or original views.

貝原益軒

In contrast, the polymath Kaibara Ekiken (1630-1714), while following *Honzô kômoku*, at the same time went beyond its limits and enlarged and refined its descriptions on the basis of his own observations. Like the Renaissance botanists who found Dioscorides' *De materia medica* to be at variance with their native floras, Ekiken discovered many discrepancies between the Japanese flora and the descriptions in *Honzô kômoku*. This not only lead him to a practice of juxtaposing Chinese and Japanese varieties, but also to including many varieties that were not mentioned in the Chinese herbal. His *Yamato honzô* (1709) diverges in various ways from his Chinese model, adds information drawn from other Chinese herbals and includes numerous indigenous varieties, for which there are no Chinese names and which he specifically marks as Japanese. It contains descriptions of no less than 1366 varieties.

大和本草

平賀源内

Hiraga Gennai (1728-1779), a man of Renaissance proportions in vision and aspirations, if not in achievement, would take this "departure" one step further by incorporating herbal knowledge from Dutch herbals, notably Dodonæus, and be one of the first to formulate a programme of natural history in Japan. Since first-hand observation was of paramount importance, opportunities to see natural products had to be increased. Herborizing and studying plants in their natural habitat were the answer, but required an enormous amount of time and resources. Exchange among like-minded was a far better and cheaper way. Therefore Hiraga Gennai and Tamura Ransui (Gen'yu) organised exhibitions of medicinal and natural products in Edo. This became a popular practice among herbalists, physicians and students of natural history, not only in Edo, but also in Nagoya, where during the nineteenth century the Asai academy of medicine organised yearly exhibitions of medicinal and other useful products. These were highly

田村藍水(元雄)



acclaimed events that drew a large public, as we gather from the descriptions in *Owari meisho zue*.

尾張名所図会

These practices marked an important step forward towards empiricism. This new direction, outside the Chinese matrix, was concurrent with a policy of indigenisation, promoted by the Bakufu, and with an increasing interest in novel knowledge from the West. Indigenisation did not mean at once a stronger emphasis on indigenous culture, but on indigenous nature. Arguably, indigenous popular culture would not have been powerful enough to supplant the prestigious classical Chinese culture in an effort to overcome its constraints, only nature itself could achieve this. Interestingly, the so-called Nativists (*Kokugaku-sha*) frequently refer to nature in Japan, when they argue the superiority of Japanese “culture” over Chinese. At such a juncture of time precise scientific knowledge about nature based on observation was introduced in Japan from the West. Among that Western knowledge figured Dodonæus’ herbal. The first copy known to have been imported in Japan was the 1618 Dutch edition. It was presented to the Shogun Tokugawa Ietsuna in 1659 by Zacharias Wagenaer, the head of the Dutch factory on Deshima. However, it was stacked away in the Shogunal library, where it gathered dust for decades, until it was allegedly “rediscovered” in 1717 by the Shogun Yoshimune, who subsequently ordered it to be studied, thus setting in motion an intellectual current that was later to be labelled *Rangaku* (Dutch Studies). Thus both in Europe and in Japan we meet the Flemish botanist at a crucial juncture in the formation of the scientific mind, the articulation of modern episteme. Just as was the case in Europe, the new developments in Japan were marked by a broadening of the scope from a strictly medicinal interest to a more detached and encompassing view of nature. The shift is also visible in the terminology, which *per se* is derived from Chinese but takes on new meaning in eighteenth-century Japan. The initial term is *honzô*, which corresponds to *materia medica* and hence herbal studies, but as the interest of the Japanese intellectuals shifts towards natural history they use new compounds containing *butsu* and *hin* or combinations thereof such as *buppin* to finally adopt *hakubutsugaku* as the standard equivalent to the Western concept of natural history.

物、品  
物品、博物学

Here it would seem that the East and the West for the first time caught up with each other. In Europe Linnaeus published his *Systema naturae* in 1735 and Buffon (1707-1788) his *Histoire naturelle* between 1749 and 1784. In Japan Kaibara Ekiken published his *Yamato honzô*



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in 1709, Hiraga Gennai his *Butsurui hinshitsu* in 1763, while Ono Ranzan (1729-1810) was working on the compilation of his *Honzô kômoku keimô* during the eighties of the eighteenth century, although this work was actually published in 1803. The interest of the West in natural history is obviously related to the discovery of the world and the development of international trade, but in Japan it is less easy to explain. To all intents and purposes the country remained closed and isolated from the outside, yet a tiny minority of intellectuals were discovering the world vicariously, through foreign books.

水谷豊文  
物品識名  
物品識名拾遺、物品  
伊藤圭介  
泰西本草名疏

The interest for and the discovery of the natural world may have run parallel in Japan and the West, yet the shift from *materia medica* to natural history in Japan took longer and was more gradual and vacillating. This is clear from the self-styling of the herbalists. In the early seventeenth century it was self-evident for Kaibara Ekiken to style his book *honzô*, but one century later, Ono Ranzan, at a time that natural history was riding the crest of the wave, still referred to *honzô* in the title of his book. The first to deviate from this style was Hiraga Gennai who opted for *butsu* (thing, creature) and *hin* (class, category) in a clear reference to classification of the natural world. Mizutani Hôbun echoed this style in his *Buppin shikimei* (1809) and *Buppin shikimei jûi*, (1825). *Buppin* seems to be the first term that was used as an equivalent of natural history. When Von Siebold came to Japan he had in his luggage a copy of Carl Peter Thunberg's *Flora Japonica*, a work that is based on Linnaeus' taxonomy. He presented the book to Itô Keisuke (1803-1901), who in 1829 published his Japanese translation of Thunberg's book under the antiquated title *Taisei honzô meiso*. Not only does the title include the term *honzô* but it also styles itself a gloss in the fashion of Confucian exegetical literature, while the term *Taisei* for West is reminiscent of the seventeenth-century Chinese adaptations of Western works composed by Jesuits and their learned Chinese converts.

It may strike the reader as an anachronism to find Dodonæus in the company of Buffon, Linnaeus, Thunberg etc., because it was precisely the herbal tradition represented by Dodonæus that was superseded by natural history. Yet, in Japan his herbal endured along the new science of natural history. During the twenties of the nineteenth century, while Itô Keisuke was preparing the compilation of what was the first presentation of the Linnaean system in Japanese, the integral translation of Dodonæus' herbal was under way. It was completed around the year 1823 under the title 'Illustrated Herbal of the Westerner Dodonæus'



and in 1829, the very year that Itô Keisuke published his compilation, plans were laid out to publish it, but due to the death of the sponsor of the project, Matsudaira Sadanobu, and the loss of the woodblocks in a fire, the plan was never carried through. Conversely, Itô's comprehensive compilation incorporating the Linnaean system, *Nihon sanbutsushi* 日本産物志 was only published in 1873.

From natural history sprang botany in the narrow sense of the term and horticulture. This stimulated the cultivation of plant varieties, particularly flowering plants, thus creating the need to inventory cultivated varieties. Representative of this interest is *Honzô zufu*, a botanical album compiled by Iwasaki Kan'en (1786-1842). It consists of 96 *maki*, which were published between 1830 and 1844. It was the first Japanese botanical album produced in colour. It describes about 2000 plants, which are still arranged according to the order of *Honzô kômoku*. Kan'en not only included wild varieties but also cultivated ones, as well as foreign plants and products. Some of the illustrations are reproduced from Johann Wilhelm Weinmann's *Taalrijk register der plaat- ofte figuur-beschrijvingen der bloemdragende gewassen* (1736-1748) (known in Japanese as *Kenka shokubutsu zufu*), a book owned by the famous Rangaku scholar Udagawa Yôan (1798-1846)<sup>3</sup>.

本草図譜  
岩崎灌園

顕花植物図譜  
宇田川榕庵

## TRANSLATION

Although the chronological boundaries set by the title of this collection of essays coincide with the Tokugawa period, let me take an example from the Meiji and Taishô periods. I am warranted to do this, because of the teleological slant given to this collection of essays. Since we want to demonstrate the contribution of Dodonæus to the articulation of modern episteme in Japan, the implied teleology is that it reached certain maturity in the subsequent modern era. From that perspective, the Meiji and Taishô periods are the realisation of something that was embryonic in the mid-Tokugawa period, was gestated in the late Tokugawa period, and burst into full bloom after the Meiji Restoration. My example is taken from philosophy since that is an area where the fundamentals of a culture are at work.

Nishida Kitarô is generally recognised to be the first original Japanese philosopher. In this one statement lies hidden a whole set of cultural *aprioris*. It is obviously very hard to prove or to disprove. What we can say is, that he is the first to have mastered the Western philo-



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20

sophical idiom. His predecessors were still writing in a so-called antiquated style, exemplified by e.g. Nakae Chômin. This is a style that is still very redolent of *kanbun-chô* Japanese, not only in the grammar but also in the vocabulary. It is true that Nishida's Japanese is much less tributary to that kind of style and approximates much better *honyaku-chô*, the style evolved during the Meiji period to translate English, German and French original works of fiction and non-fiction. By the time Nishida was publishing his *Zen no kenkyû*, the Japanese language had already undergone a deep change, equipping it with a syntax that came much closer to that of Western languages. This was in the first instance the result of four decades of frantic translation activities during the Meiji period, but actually we have to go back even further, at least to 1774. That is the date when the *Kaitai shinsho* was published, the first Japanese translation of a Dutch book. It marked the beginning of an era of Dutch studies (*Rangaku*), in which, as we shall amply see in this collection of essays, the study of language and translation played a central role. Consequently, the scientific Japanese of Meiji and Taishô times equally owes a great deal to the *Rangaku* translators. In the process, the source languages (Dutch, English, French, German etc.) have rubbed off considerably on the target language (Japanese). In a sense, in order to make translations of Western works into Japanese faithful, the Japanese language had to mimic the source languages. If the early translations of Western works seemed less reliable or faithful, it was perhaps not so much because the translators were poorly qualified, as because the tool was unfit for it. Japanese was simply too distant from many of the Western languages. No individual could single-handedly force the language through such a complex mimetic process; it took several decades to accomplish. When this work of "gutting" had finally been done, what was left was an altogether different language. It was "easy" then for Nishida to write something that sounded convincingly like western Philosophy.

The preceding argument attributes primacy to language over any other cultural element, and although it may strike the reader as fairly radical, there is a good measure of truth in it. If we were to take this line of reasoning to the extreme, we could even deny Nishida any philosophical originality, brand any perception of originality as illusory and attribute it entirely to the impression created by his usage of a Westernised language. In the early phase Japanese was unable to accommodate (Western-style) philosophy because it was so alien, but in the end it caught up with the "alienness" of philosophy. The bottom



line is however that we are still left with the doubt whether the confirmation by Westerners that Nishida's philosophy is indeed mature philosophy and universal, is not just another variation of the oft encountered tendency of equating universal with western and qualifying anything that is not Western as deviant or particularistic.

The big gap between Western languages and Japanese is perhaps most eloquently exemplified by an example again taken from the Meiji period. Oda (Niwa) Jun'ichirô (1851-1919) translated Bulwer-Lytton's *Ernest Maltravers* into Japanese as *Karyû shunwa* (A Springtime Tale of Blossom and Willows) and published it in 1879. Obviously, by the time Oda made his translation Rangakusha had already been translating Western texts for more than a century, but except for a few curiosities, they had been texts of a non-literary nature. Now Oda was confronting a far more difficult task: producing a text that combined stylistic grace with fidelity of rendering. The original was intended as literature, and its translation had to be perceived as such by the Japanese. We may assume that Oda, who had studied in England and Scotland, had a sufficient command of English. However, the syntactical structure and the semantics of this language were so totally different from his native as to defy rendition. Therefore the novel had to be "rewritten", nothing more, nothing less. Not only the title was changed beyond recognition but the contents too were drastically altered, if not in the plot, at least in terms of mood and style. He adopted the stiff literary style known as *kanbun-chô*, a variety of Japanese that both lexically and syntactically echoes Classical Chinese and lacks the flavour of contemporaneity that is associated with more vernacular varieties of Japanese.

織田純一郎  
花柳春話

This does not mean to suggest that at the time he was writing a more vernacular variety of Japanese would have solved the problem. In fact, Oda was using a tried and tested method: that of substituting the unfamiliar for the unknown. For centuries "overseas" and "foreign" had meant Chinese to the Japanese. When they were confronted with the West, things Chinese all of sudden looked familiar by comparison, for many of the latter the educated at least knew as bookish knowledge, although the social and institutional referent of a great deal of the Chinese vocabulary they knew, was unknown or at least abstract. But, precisely because of that, Chinese terminology and by extension style redolent of Chinese was considered the most suited interface to negotiate the cultural gap yawning between Japan and the West. The way Itô



Keisuke titled his adaptation of Thunberg's book *Taisei honzô meiso* is an example of this method, which we mentioned a while ago. Chinese was traditionally the Japanese paradigm for foreignness and as such familiar enough. That is a procedure that is not uncommon in English or any of the other European languages either. We often borrow from Latin to denote something novel, something that is (at first) not part of our social and political experience. We know the Latin word, but since it is devoid of any of its sociological or political implications, we can easily transfer it. It is at the same time distant and familiar enough. It was only when Japanese social and institutional reality, and in its wake, customs and way of life, were gradually aligned to Western models, that commensurable notions could be articulated. In the process the Japanese used Chinese terms for the Western concepts and notions, terms that had hitherto no sociological and political reality for them, to denote phenomena that were analogous to the Western ones. At that point, these terms, coined to denote novel phenomena that had their counterparts in Western societies, could be "translated" into their Western equivalents without great loss of meaning. Subsequently, by dint of use, the terms became workable translations of Western phenomena, because they were meant to be just that. Here we have an indigenous signification. But before Japanese reached that comfortable stage, they had to traverse a phase of baffling and unnatural literal translation. However great the resistance may have been against this procedure, it proved to be the only way out of the conundrum.

Reference to classical models and paradigms was doomed to remain unsatisfactory. Asahina Chisen (1862-1939) was perhaps the first to attempt a faithful translation of a literary text, making no concessions to traditional literary conceits and style or to fears that the reader might be baffled by the unfamiliar setting of the plot. His translation of Bulwer-Lytton's *Kenelm Chillingly*, under the Japanese title *Keishidan* (The Story of K.C., 1885) was hailed by the critic Morita Shiken (1861-1897) as the first truly exact rendering of a European novel. But a heavy price had to be paid. The Japanese was unnatural, betraying heavy influence of English idiomatic expressions, and sometimes it was hard to grasp the intended meaning. "To pay attention" was translated as "chui o harau" and personal pronouns such as he (kare) and she (kanojo) were explicitly mentioned, a practice then uncommon in Japanese. Similes and metaphors linking phenomena unknown to the Japanese must have baffled many readers. However, these literal transpositions were repeated in subsequent translations until in the end they had

朝比奈知泉

森田思軒



imperceptibly acquired citizenship, deeply affecting both the syntax and the vocabulary of the Japanese language<sup>4</sup>.

Subsequently, step by step, in the course of a polishing process through thousands and thousands of pages of translation, a new language completely different from what it had been at the outset, came into being. Admittedly, all languages evolve, but Japanese went through a much more incisive transformation in a short span of time. Even the final form of verbs and adjectives at the end of sentences had to be re-invented. Not until the publication of *Ukigumo* was this realised satisfactorily. 浮雲

The complete translation of Dodonæus' herbal was undertaken during the twenties of the nineteenth century, a period when Dutch Studies reached full maturity. Scholarly families such as the Katsuragawa's and Udagawa's took the level of Dutch Studies to an unprecedented level. We must however not exaggerate the influence of Dutch Studies in the Edo period. After all, many of the writings of these scholars were never printed and remain to this day in manuscript form. If influence there was, it was more indirect in the sense that it paved the way for the right attitude, which matured in the Meiji period. However, the importance lies in the fact that we have here a tendency for systematic translation. It is a recognition that systematic translation will help forward society or science. It is without parallel in terms of the sheer effort that was invested into the enterprise. Moreover, scientific terminology was not systematised until the end of the Bakufu period, so that the effect of what we study here came with a time lag, having its full impact only in the Meiji period.

## THE ESSAYS

The collection of essays presented here lies at the intersection of two lines of perspective: the study of the translation of science and that of the science of translation. More specifically, it endeavours to trace how the Western herbal tradition, notably the herbal of Dodonæus, was received into the intellectual discourse of Tokugawa Japan, and to demonstrate how it contributed to the articulation of modern episteme, the scientific mind. In writing their essays the authors have more or less had that teleological perspective in the back of their minds. In presenting and grouping the essays, we have tried to marry this vantage point with a chronological order.



The first part contains, besides a bio-bibliographical summary, a group of essays that place Dodonæus in the European context and assess his importance and his contributions to the development of modern science. Robert Visser's essay sets the tone and makes a careful evaluation of his position in the herbal tradition from the viewpoint of the history of science. Although he owed a great deal to the so-called "German fathers of botany", his phytographical descriptions, based on a consistently empiricist approach, were superior to those of his predecessors. Moreover, he was much more concerned with systematics and botanical classification than they were, although Visser points out that perhaps his innovativeness has been exaggerated in the past. Mauro Ambrosoli approaches Dodonæus from the angle of economic and cultural history and deals with the link that existed between botanical practice and agricultural demands in early modern Europe. Moreover he shows how contemporary religious and political cleavages impinged on the path that botanical science took. Helena Wille gives a detailed analysis of the botanical networks that existed in the Low Countries in the time of Dodonæus and highlights the important contribution made to phytography by amateur collectors. Moreover, she has succeeded in identifying a set of albums with drawings of plants, that is presently preserved in the library of the Jagiellonian University at Krakow.

The second group of essays transfers the scene to Tokugawa Japan in an effort to assess the impact Dodonæus' herbal had on the articulation of the modern episteme in that country. This involved a process of transmission, which in its turn was predicated on translation. The fundamental meaning of translation in society is what Michael Schiltz's essay deals with. W.F. Vande Walle focuses on the issue of translation from the viewpoint of the history of linguistics. He addresses the complicated issues involved in translating European languages and concepts into Japanese and Chinese, problems encountered by the Japanese translators of Dodonæus. Shigemi Inaga extends this approach to translation in another area, notably the visual and the artistic, an issue relevant to the translation of Dodonæus, since it also involved a host of plant illustrations. He demonstrates how transmission and rendition were tied in with the (re-) interpretation of the Western linear perspective. Kazuhiko Kasaya's essay on the Tokugawa Bakufu's policies for the national production of medicines establishes the important link between the transmission of Dodonæus' *Crujdeboeck* to Japan and the broader dynamics of national policy.



PART III is a collection of essays more specifically related to rendering Dodonæus into Japanese. Kiyoshi Matsuda's essay is a careful bibliographical study on the reception and spread of Dodonæus' *Cruijde-boeck* in Japan. Timon Screech has contributed an essay about the visual impact Dodonæus had in the culture of representation in Tokugawa society. Tôru Haga traces the way that Dodonæus contributed to the paradigm shift in Tokugawa culture, in particular as embodied by Hiraga Gennai, who reinforced the departure from the Chinese model and had the ambition to formulate a universal science encompassing Chinese, Japanese and Western elements. Yôzaburô Shirahata takes this evolution even one step further and shows how Japan witnessed the transformation from pharmacopoeia to botany to horticulture.

PART IV deals with issues in the broader context of Rangaku, so-called Dutch studies, that are relevant to the transmission and impact of Dodonæus. Harmen Beukers describes the important role Deshima surgeons played as mediators in the early introduction of Western natural history into Japan. Gabor Lukacs's essay shows that Dutch studies were not limited to science from Holland, but involved the broader frame of European science. He notably provides a well arranged overview of the contributions made by French science to the articulation of the modern scientific mind in Japan. He pays particular attention to the transmission of the French surgeon Ambroise Paré's works through Dutch translations to Japan. Catharina Blomberg's essay introduces Carl Peter Thunberg, who as the direct disciple of Linnaeus, made many descriptions of the Japanese flora and played a pivotal role in introducing his master's system into Japan. He was the harbinger of the new type of botany that supplanted the herbal tradition as exemplified by Dodonæus. Frederik Cryns's essay deals with Japanese translations by Udagawa Genshin and Tsuboi Shindô that remained in manuscript form. Although their influence was of necessity limited, they are fine examples of the level of sophistication Dutch Studies had reached. They highlight the problems involved in translating fundamental concepts of medicine that have a bearing on anthropological views. Crijns shows how central and fundamental the issue of translation was in the development of modern science in Japan, thus making this collection of essays come full circle.

#### NOTE ON SPELLING AND ROMANISATION

The spelling of personal names in Europe before the Napoleonic



period is not uniform. Moreover, before the eighteenth century, most scholars also had a Latin sobriquet. As a result the same person is often referred to by various names. We have made an effort at uniformity but not at all cost. Thus e.g. the Flemish version Dôdoens and the Latin equivalent Dodonæus are used without distinction. In addition the name Dodoens or Dodonæus is often used in the way *Laozi* or *Zhuangzi* are used. As is the case with so many “classical” authors, writer and writing have become each other’s metonym, so Dodoens can often be interchanged by the *Cruijdeboeck*. This book has gone through many revisions and editions, and in the process the spelling of the title also changed. When we refer to the book in general we use the spelling of the first edition, i.e. *Cruijdeboeck*. When a reference to a particular edition is intended, explicitly or implicitly, we use the spelling adopted in that edition, usually *Cruydt-boeck*.

For exonyms we have used the spelling that is presently in use in the region, city or place concerned or was used at the time under study. Thus Mechelen is preferred over Malines (French) or Mechlin (English). Exceptions are well known places with generally recognised English equivalents such as Antwerp, Bruges, Ghent etc.

Japanese names are arranged in the order used in Japan: family names precede given names. Japanese words are romanised in what is commonly called the modified Hepburn system, as used e.g. in *Kenkyûsha’s Japanese English Dictionary*. Common Japanese words, that have entered the English lexicon, are not italicised. Chinese words are transliterated in *Hanyu pinyin*, representing present-day standard pronunciation, except in quotations, where the original transcription is respected, except for those words that have an accepted spelling in the English language. Chinese characters that are included in the list of the *Jôyô kanji* are consistently given in their simplified form.

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#### NOTES

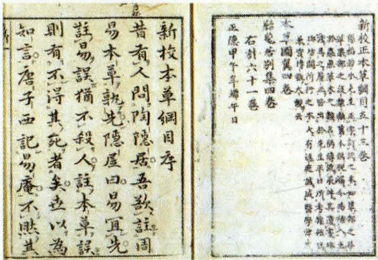
- 1 Andrew Chesterman, *Memes of Translation* (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1997), 2.
- 2 Tanaka Katsuhiko 田中勝彦 H. Hâman (Harald Haarmann), *Gendai yôroppa no gengo 現代ヨーロッパの言語* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1985), 35-53 (Iwanami shinsho 292).
- 3 For an in-depth treatment of the history of pharmacopoeia (*Honzôgaku*) and its development into natural history (*Hakubutsugaku*), see Yamada Keiji ed. 山田慶児編, *Higashi Ajia no honzô to hakubutsugaku no sekai 東アジアの本草と博物学の世界*, 2 vols. (Kyôto: Kokusai Nihon bunka kenkyû sentâ, 1995).
- 4 Donald Keene, *Dawn to the West: Japanese Literature of the Modern Era: Fiction* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1984), 55-71.



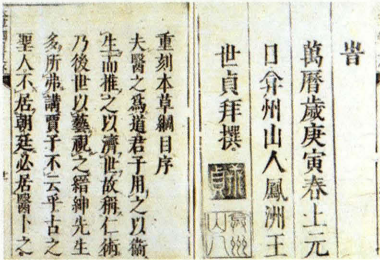
ILLUSTRATIONS

By courtesy of Université catholique de Louvain, Bibliothèque générale et de sciences humaines, Donation Japonaise.

- ILL 1 Preface to Inō Jakusui's edition of *Honzō kômoku*, the Japanese edition of *Bencao gangmu*, published in Edo, Kyoto and Osaka, in 1714.
- ILL 2 Pair of facing pages from Inō Jakusui's version of *Honzō kômoku*, reproducing on the right hand side the concluding lines of Wang Shizhen's preface to the Jingling edition of *Bencao gangmu* (1596), on the left hand side the preface of Xia Liangxin, the publisher of the Jiangxi edition (1603).
- ILL 3 Exhibition of natural products at the Asai medical academy in the province of Owari. The exhibition was organized by the herbalist Asai Shizan in Nagoya in 1835. Woodcut from *Owari meissho zue*, by Okada Kei & Noguchi Michinao, Nagoya, Tenpō 15 - Meiji 13, 7 *maki*, 7 *satsu*; reproduced in Shirai Kôtarô, *Zôtei Nihon hakubutsugaku nenpyô*, Tokyo, Meiji 41.
- ILL 4 Page from Kaibara Ekiken's *Yamato honzô* (1709-1715), dealing with the cranes. It contrasts Chinese and Japanese varieties and evaluates the taste of their meat.
- ILL 5 Pair of facing pages from Kaibara Ekiken's *Yamato honzô* (1709-1715), supplement, featuring varieties of maple leaves.
- ILL 6 Pair of facing pages from Kaibara Ekiken's *Yamato honzô* (1709-1715), supplement, featuring on the left page an ostrich fern in the violet.
- ILL 7 Title page of *Butsurui hinshitsu* by Hiraga Gennai, Osaka, Hôreki 13, 6 *maki*, 6 *satsu*, revised by Tamura Seiko.
- ILL 8 Effigy of Ono Ranzan, after a drawing by the painter Tani Bunchô. *Chôtei honzô kômoku keimô* by Ono Ranzan, Edo, Kôka 4, 48 *maki*, 6 *satsu*, revised and supplemented by Obara Yoshinao.
- ILL 9 Page from Itô Keisuke, *Nihon sanbutsushi*, 11 *satsu*, Meiji 6 (1873).
- ILL 10 Page from Itô Keisuke, *Nihon sanbutsushi*, 11 *satsu*, Meiji 6 (1873).
- ILL 11 Pair of facing pages from Iwasaki Kan'en. *Honzô zufu*, 96 *maki*, 95 *satsu*, Taishô 10 (1921).
- ILL 12 Pair of facing pages from Iwasaki Kan'en. *Honzô zufu*, 96 *maki*, 95 *satsu*, Taishô 10 (1921).



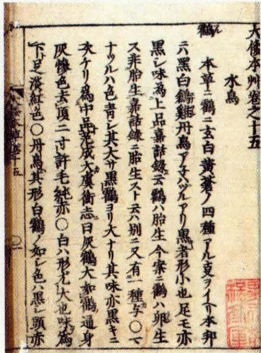
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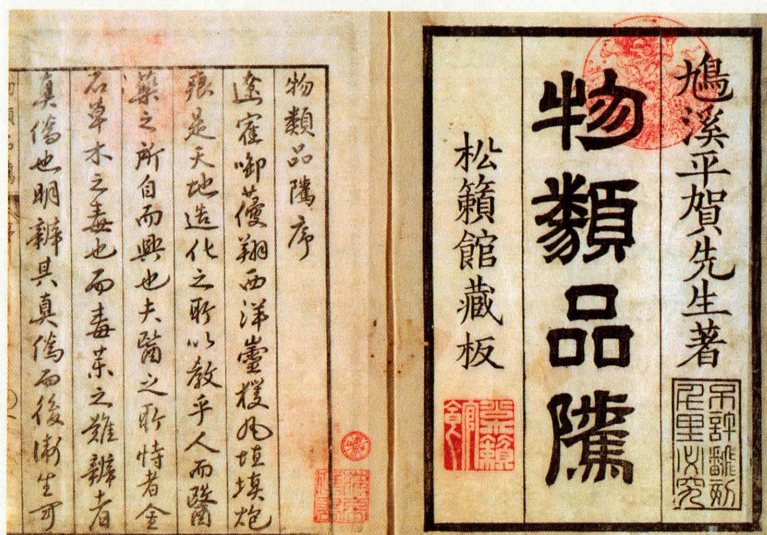
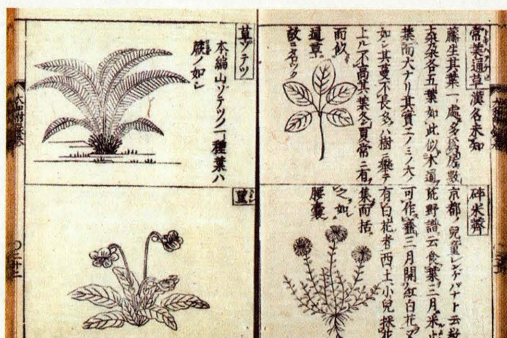
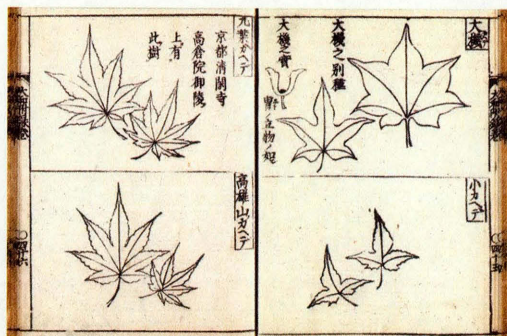


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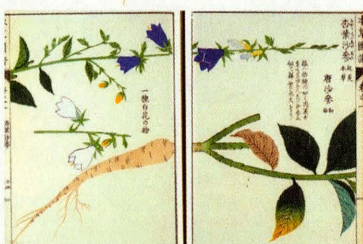
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