

Toward Internationalization and Interdisciplinarity of Japanese Studies

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Introduction

While in May 2017 the International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Nichibun) marked the 30th anniversary of its founding, in April of the same year the Association of Historical Science in Japan (歴史科学協議会) also celebrated the 50th anniversary of its founding. Nichibun is an inter-university institute funded by the Japanese government to fulfill the mission to “promote and support the study of Japanese culture and history through international collaboration and cooperation and to support the work of scholars in Japanese studies in other countries.”¹ Meanwhile, the Association of Historical Science was founded as an independent organization for discussions with the aim of “creative development of history.”² The former focuses on studies on “Japan” mainly by scholars from outside Japan and aims for international and comprehensive studies from an interdisciplinary perspective, while the latter focuses on history, including Japanese history, studied mainly by Japanese scholars and aims for focused studies on particular periods or generations from a disciplinary perspective. It can be said that this difference reflects differences in the position of Japan in the world and the research trends at the time of these organizations’ founding.

Recent progress in globalization has blurred the boundary between disciplines and interdisciplines and has required international perspectives and interdisciplinary approaches to be taken with increasing importance placed on the practical effectiveness of studies. This paper takes elephant trading and the origin of Matsusaka-jima textiles (striped textiles produced in Matsusaka), both of which are subjects related to the early-modern relations between Japan and Vietnam, as examples in order to discuss the importance of the internationalization of research sources and the interdisciplinarity of research approaches in Japanese studies.

1. Internationalization of Japanese Studies Seen from Some Examples from Research on the Export of Elephants from Vietnam to Japan

1.1 Historical Sources and Literature Concerning the Export of Elephants from Vietnam to Japan

As widely known, elephant bones and teeth were discovered from prehistorical and ancient remains in Japan, but the animal became extinct in a later period. Therefore, the elephant was a rare foreign animal for Japanese people in medieval and later times, and every occasion of elephants being transported from abroad was viewed as an important event. The highest profile were a brace of elephants transported from Vietnam in Kyōhō 13 (1728). Although the female

¹ Greetings from the Director of the International Research Center for Japanese Studies: <http://www.nichibun.ac.jp/pc1/en/about/>

² Association of Historical Science 歴史科学協議会 ed. *Rekishigaku ga Idonda Kadai* 歴史学が挑んだ課題, 2017, p. 3.

died three months after they arrived in Nagasaki because the climate and food in Japan did not suit it, the male lived in Japan for 14 years after that. In Kyōhō 14, the year after the elephants' arrival, books and poetry collections were published in various areas that the elephant(s) visited. Among them, famous publications include *Zōshi* 象志 by Chizen'in 智善院, chief priest of Honkoku-ji Temple in Kyoto; *Zō no Mitsugi* 象のみつぎ by Nakamura Sankinshi; *Eizōshi* 詠象詩 by Okuda Shikō 奥田士亨; *Reizōkōshinki* 靈象貢診記 by Hakubaien 白梅園; *Kenzōraireki* 獻象來歴; *Iezuto* 家津登 by Yuensai 油煙斎 in Osaka; *Junzōben* 馴象編 by Hayashi Daigakuno-kami Ryūkō 林大学頭榴岡 in Edo; *Junzōzokudan* 馴象俗談 by Inoue Randai 井上蘭台, head scholar in the Hayashi clan; and *Sanjūendan* 三獸演談 by Kanda Hakuryūshi 神田白竜子. These are important historical sources for studies on elephant trading.

There is also a large accumulation of studies on the introduction of the Vietnamese elephants into Japan in the Kyōhō era. A study that deserves special mention is “Kyōhō no Zōgyōretsū” (享保の象行列; lit. “Procession of Elephants in the Kyōhō Era”) published by Yamashita Sachiko in 1972 (Yamashita Sachiko: 1972). She thoroughly looked into historical sources concerning the elephants that came to Japan in Kyōhō 13, including documents about the Amagasaki domain left by Okamoto Shunji, and examined in detail the procession of the elephant(s) from Nagasaki, where they landed, to Edo, the destination. Meanwhile, in the *Ishii Kendō Collection: Edo Hyōryūki Sōshū* 石井研堂コレクション・江戸漂流記総集, Yamashita Tsuneo analyzes historical sources concerning Annamese people who accompanied the elephant(s) to Japan in Kyōhō 13 (Yamashita Tsuneo 1992). Moreover, a special exhibition titled *Zō ga Yuku: Shōgun Yoshimune to Kyūtei <Miyabi>* 象がゆく・将軍吉宗と宮廷〈雅〉 (lit. “Elephants Travel: Shogun Yoshimune and Imperial Elegance”) was held in Saitama Prefecture in October 2000. The exhibition showcased pictures and historical sources concerning the elephants from the collections of the Saitama Prefectural Museum, the Kobe City Museum, the Cabinet Library of the National Archives of Japan, the Kansai University Library and other organizations (Saitama Prefectural Museum 2000).

All the above-mentioned studies examine only historical sources from Japan and explore only what happened in Japan concerning the elephants that came to Japan in Kyōhō 13. From the perspective of a scholar from Vietnam, I have studied this subject for the past decade, adding historical sources from Vietnam and western countries to those from Japan and focusing on issues that the previous studies have not clarified, including Japanese people's interest in Vietnamese elephants, the request for the transportation of the elephants, the elephants' prices, and the ship used for transportation. I have presented my research findings in some papers.³

³ The author's major papers on elephant trading are as follows: “Vietnam Shiryō ni okeru Zō no Isō to Kyōhō 13-nen Torai Zō ni tsuite” ベトナム資料における象の位相と享保13年到来象について (Elephant's Image through Vietnamese Historical Materials and the Event of Vietnamese Elephants Coming to Japan in 1728), *Asia Bunka Kōryū Kenkyū* アジア文化交流研究 vol. 5 (Kansai University, 2010, pp. 545–562); “16–18-seiki ni okeru Vietnam Chubu kara Nihon eno Zōbōeki” 16–18世紀におけるベトナム中部から日本への象貿易 (Elephant Trade from the Center of Vietnam to Japan in the 16th–18th Centuries), *Higashi Asia Bunka Kōshō Kenkyū* 東アジア文化交渉研究 (Journal of East Asian Cultural Interaction Studies) vol. 7 (Kansai University, 2014, pp. 413–422); and “Chaya Kōshi Bōeki Tokaizu ni Egakareta Zō ni tsuite” 茶屋交趾貿易渡海絵図に描かれた象について, *Shuinsen Bōeki Ezu no Kenkyū* 朱印船貿易絵図の研究 (Shibunkaku, 2014, pp. 55–60).

In this paper, I will give some suggestions for studies on elephant trading as an example of the internationalization of Japanese studies.

1.2 What Has Been Revealed by International Use of Historical Sources and Crosschecks

To explore the Japanese side's interest in and request for Vietnamese elephants, I would like to take up a letter from a Vietnamese officer named 安南国副都堂福義侯阮書 dated Quang Hung (光興) 14 (1591). Introducing this historical document in 2013, Fujita Reio analyzed the diplomatic relations between Vietnam and Japan at the time of the document and judged it to be the oldest document of amity from the Nguyễn clan⁴ in Vietnam to the "King of Japan."⁵ However, I would pay special attention to the following sentence about a Vietnamese elephant: “前年見陳梁山就本國謂、國王意好雄象、有象壹隻已付陳梁山將回、國王其槽小不能載、有好香貳株・雨油蓋壹柄・象牙壹件・好紵貳匹寄與、明年隆巖又到本國謂、陳梁山并財物未見、茲有雨油蓋壹柄再寄與國王為信。”⁶ From this sentence, I infer that a request from Japan for the transportation of an elephant had already reached Vietnam by the end of the 16th century. In addition, *Chaya Shinroku Kōshi Tokō Zukan* 茶屋新六交趾渡航図巻 (lit. “Picture Scroll of Chaya Shinroku's Journey to Cochín”)⁷ painted in the 17th century also suggests the Japanese side's interest in Vietnamese elephants. Many studies have analyzed this picture scroll to examine the routes the Chaya clan took by sea and by land and the Japanese quarter at that time, but they have paid little attention to a depiction of three elephants trained by elephant trainers in the upper left corner of the picture scroll. I would surmise that the detailed depiction of elephants in this picture scroll, which can be valued as a report from the Chaya clan to the Tokugawa shogunate, helped increase interest in Vietnamese elephants among Japanese people in the Edo period.

Next, I have tried to crosscheck historical sources from Vietnam, France and Japan concerning the trade and prices of elephants. Lê Quý Đôn 黎貴惇, an 18th-century Vietnamese intellectual, said, “一象價銀二笏”⁸ (“An elephant is priced at two “hot”〈笏〉of silver”), mentioning the price of an elephant sold at a market in the Cam Lộ (甘露) district⁹ on the border between Vietnam and Laos. One 笏 was roughly equivalent to ten ryō (両) of silver. Meanwhile, Daniel Tavernier, a Frenchman who visited Vietnam in the 17th century, stated that silver used for

⁴ No generally accepted answer has yet been given to the question whether “安南国副都堂福義侯阮” was the Nguyễn lord of the Quảng Nam kingdom (1533–1777) based in Thuận Hóa (順化; present-day Huế) in south central Vietnam or a person from the Nguyễn clan in Nghệ An (乂安) Province in north central Vietnam. However, the person is thought to have been an influential figure in central Vietnam.

⁵ Kyushu National Museum 九州国立博物館 ed. *Dai Vietnam Ten Kōshiki Catalog: Vietnam Monogatari* 大ベトナム展・公式カタログ・ベトナム物語 (*The Great Story of Vietnam: Feature Exhibition*), TVQ Kyushu Broadcasting and The Nishinippon Shimbun, 2013, p. 18.

⁶ Kyushu National Museum, op. cit., p. 105.

⁷ This picture scroll is currently housed in Jomyō-ji Temple, Nagoya City.

⁸ Nguyễn Khắc Thuần rev. *Lê Quý Đôn tuyển tập* 黎貴惇選集: Volume 3: Part 2 of “Phủ biên tạp lục” 撫邊雜錄, Giáo dục Publication, 2007, p. 271.

⁹ The district is located in present-day Quảng Trị (廣治) Province of Vietnam.

transactions in Annam actually seemed the same as Japanese silver.¹⁰ Furthermore, *Annam Kiryakukō* 安南紀略藁 describes Vietnamese silver called *Annam itagin* (安南板銀; “Annamese silver plates”) as “掛目凡百目程” (“roughly worth 100 *moku* [目]”).¹¹ This suggests that, if 100 *moku* equaled ten *ryō* at that time, “*itagin*” described by Kondō Morishige was equivalent to ten *ryō*, which equaled one 笏 mentioned by Lê Quý Đôn. This means, within Vietnam, an elephant was traded at two 笏, which was equivalent to 20 *ryō*.

Concerning requests for the transportation of elephants and its cost, *Tsūkō Ichiran* 通航一覽 edited by Hayashi Fukusai and other persons in Kaei 6 (1853) reports on Ngo Tu Minh 吳子明, the owner of Tonkinese ship no. 38, as follows: “蒙問委帶小象、可以帶來否、但此獸出在暹羅地方、唐山各省並無、若蒙諭委帶、遵依帶來進上,”¹² which means that elephants recommended by 吳子明, a shipowner from Tonkin¹³ in Vietnam, were produced not in Vietnam but in Siam. Two years later, however, elephants not from Siam but from Quảng Nam (Đàng Trong in Vietnam) were transported to Japan by Zheng Dawei 鄭大威, a Chinese who owned Chinese ship no. 15.¹⁴ *Tsūkō Ichiran* also states: “一象其帶來、小船不堪裝載、徒新定造大船二艘、每艘只裝得一隻、但欲定造大船二艘、要用銀一萬餘兩、又唐山發船到暹羅、往來雜費、該用銀二萬餘兩,”¹⁵ which means that transporting two elephants from Siam to Japan required some 10,000 *ryō* as the cost of building a ship and some 20,000 *ryō* as miscellaneous costs. Therefore, transporting one elephant cost 15,000 *ryō*. No exact record has yet been discovered to show how much the Tokugawa shogunate paid when Zheng Dawei transported the elephants produced in Quảng Nam to Japan. Supposing that it cost the same as transportation from Siam, the cost was over 700 times as high as 20 *ryō*, the price of an elephant traded within Vietnam, probably bringing huge profits to the merchants. Meanwhile, it is thought that, despite such a high cost, the Tokugawa shogunate requested elephants, especially not only a powerful male one but also a female one that was expected to give birth to a child, with the aim of breeding elephants in Japan for a long time.

Another interesting question is what criteria were applied when selecting elephants to travel to Japan by sea. The above-mentioned *Phủ biên tạp lục* 撫邊雜錄 states that a male elephant offered to a Vietnamese king was “高五尺五寸” (five 尺 and five 寸 tall). The male elephant that came to Japan was born eight years before the record and was seven years old when it arrived in Japan, and its forefeet were “五尺六寸餘”¹⁶ (more than five 尺 and six 寸) tall. There are actually

¹⁰ Jean Baptiste Tavernier 1681 *Relation nouvelle et singulière du Royaume de Tonquin*; Lê Tư Lành trans. *Jean Baptiste Tavernier: Tập du ký mới và kỳ thú về vương quốc Đàng Ngoài*, Thế giới Publication, 2005, p. 38.

¹¹ Kondō Morishige 近藤守重 *Annam Kiryakukō* 安南紀略藁, Kokusho Kankōkai 国書刊行会 ed. *Kondō Seisai Zenshū* 近藤正齋全集, Jakura Shobō, 1906, p. 27.

¹² Hayashi Fukusai 林復齋 et al. eds. *Tsūkō Ichiran* 通航一覽, Part 4, Vol. 175, Seibundō, 1967, p. 520.

¹³ From the 17th century to the end of the 18th century, the Gianh River in present-day Quảng Bình (広平) Province divided Vietnam into Đàng Ngoài (the area in and north of Quảng Bình Province under the rule of the Trịnh clan, also known as Tonkin [東京]) and Đàng Trong (the area from Quảng Bình Province to Phú Yên (富安) Province under the rule of the Nguyễn clan, also known as Cochinchina [交趾] or Quảng Nam [広南]). Đàng Trong was also called “Namhe” (南河), which implies the “area far from China.”

¹⁴ *Annam Kiryakukō*, p. 22.

¹⁵ *Tsūkō Ichiran*, Part 4, Vol. 175, p. 521.

¹⁶ *Annam Kiryakukō*, p. 28.

slight differences between historical materials in the description of the height of the male elephant. *Tsūkō Ichiran* says that the male elephant was “五尺五寸” (five 尺 and five 寸) tall, the same as the elephant offered to the king in Vietnam, while *Zōshi* written in Kyōhō 14 mentions that the forefeet of the male elephant were “五尺七寸” (five 尺 and seven 寸) tall¹⁷. According to these historical sources, the male elephant was about 1.7 meters tall. This means that the male elephant that came to Japan was roughly as tall as the elephant offered to the king in Vietnam. The height suggests that both elephants for offering in Vietnam and for international trade were about seven to eight years old. As *Annam Kiryakukō* mentions, “牡象三歳に成り、乳放し致候、而から段々教込熟練いたし候”¹⁸ an elephant at that age has been trained for three to four years so it can understand people’s instructions. In addition, it can be determined that an elephant with a height of 1.7 meters was suitable for people to escort by land and transport by sea.

Finally, let’s look into the ship that transported the elephants. Kondō Jūzō, a Tokugawa shogunate vassal reported: “此度廣南より象二疋乗渡り候南京造り之船に長さ十二丈八尺程幅二丈ほど深さ一丈四尺程御座候。先頃象乗渡り申候則壱疋式丈六尺程横一丈一尺程の所へ入申候但上日数三十七日其内土を踏不申候水もあひ申事不罷成候頭と前の方横木を打象留め仕置候其中より鼻を出し罷在候船中象部屋之内にて跡の方へ漸々ふり返り申候事罷成候。”¹⁹ The “南京造り之船” (“Southeast Asian-built ship”) denotes a junk. According to this report, the junk was 38.8 meters long, 6.06 meters wide and 4.24 meters deep, and had a chamber for the elephants with an area of 7.88 × 3.3 meters, where the animals were confined for 37 days with bars at the heights of their heads and chests and projected their noses between the bars, ending up gradually returning back. A study by Matsuura Akira shows that junks were often used for maritime trade over the 16th to 19th centuries and their average loading capacity was 2,500 tons²⁰. *Annam-koku Hyōryōki* 安南国漂流記 written by a crew member of the *Himemiya-maru* after the ship returned home from Hôi An, Vietnam, says about Annamese ship no. 4, which visited Nagasaki on the 16th of the seventh month of Meiwa 4 (1767), “安南より長崎まで、丑寅〈北東〉の方に向ひて、昼夜やすまず日数二十七日にて着仕り候”²¹, which means that it took 27 days for the Annamese ship to travel from Annam northeastward to Nagasaki without taking any rest day and night. The ship that transported the elephants to Japan in Kyōhō 13 was larger than an ordinary junk and seems to have required 10 days more for travel than an ordinary junk.

As mentioned above, I believe that studying early-modern elephant trade between Vietnam

¹⁷ Saitama Prefectural Museum 埼玉県立博物館 ed. *Tokubetsuten – Zō ga Yuku: Shōgun Yoshimune to Kyūtei “Miyabi”* 特別展・象がゆく・吉宗と宮廷「雅」, Kasumi Kaikan, 2000, p. 70.

One *ken* (間) equals six *shaku* (尺), which is roughly equivalent to 1.8 meters. Therefore, four *ken* are roughly equivalent to 7.2 meters.

¹⁸ *Annam Kiryakukō*, p. 22.

¹⁹ *Annam Kiryakukō*, p. 28.

²⁰ Matsuura Akira 松浦章 “16–19-seiki Chūgoku Junk niyoru Vietnam Hué tonō Kaijō Bōeki” 16–19 世紀中国 Junk によるベトナム・フェとの海上貿易 (“The Maritime Trade by Chinese Junks between China and Hué, Vietnam in the 16th–19th Centuries”), *Shūen no Bunka Kōshōgaku Series 7: Hué Chiiki no Rekishi to Bunka* 周縁の文化交渉学シリーズ7・フェ地域の歴史と文化 (*History and Culture of Hué: Viewed from the Neighboring Settlements and Outside*), Kansai University, 2012, p. 515.

²¹ “16–19-seiki Chūgoku Junk niyoru Vietnam Hué tonō Kaijō Bōeki,” p. 511.

and Japan requires not only reviewing historical sources and paintings from Japan, including *Annam Kiryakukō*, *Tsūkō Ichiran* and *Chaya Shinroku Kōshi Tokō Zukan*, but also crosschecking such Japanese materials with historical sources from Vietnam, such as *Phủ biên tạp lục*, and western materials, including *Relation nouvelle et singulière du Royaume de Tunquin*. As shown by this example, international use of historical materials can play an important role in Japanese studies in an era of globalization.

2. Enhancement of the Interdisciplinarity of Japanese Studies Seen from Some Examples from Research on the Origin of Matsusaka-jima Textiles

2.1 Historical Sources and Literature Concerning the Origin of Matsusaka-jima Textiles

The Kadoya family was originally a family of Shinto priests of a *hachimangu* shrine located in Matsumoto, Shinano Province (present-day Matsumoto City, Nagano Prefecture), and they moved to Yamada (present-day Ise City) in the 15th century and began to operate as a shipping agent. Kadoya Shichirōbei Eikichi (Keichō 15 [1610]–Kanbun 12 [1672]), the sixth head of the relocated Kadoya family, embarked on his first ocean journey at the age of 22 and arrived in Hôi An, Kochin-central Annam (Vietnam). However, the Edict of Seclusion issued by the Tokugawa shogunate soon after his voyage made him spend the rest of his lifetime in Hôi An (41 years). During the period, while playing an important role as the last head of the Japanese quarter in Hôi An, Shichirōbei kept contact with his family back home in Matsusaka, sending them Vietnamese specialty products and donating money to Ise Jingu Shrine, as well as Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines in the Matsusaka Castle town. Vietnamese specialties given by Shichirōbei included textiles, which some argue inspired people in Matsusaka, who had a tradition of cotton weaving and indigo dyeing, to originate Matsusaka cotton textiles (also known as Ise cotton textiles), one of Matsusaka's specialties. Matsusaka cotton textiles were supplied in a large amount for general consumers in Edo in the 18th century and came into vogue among them. The art of Matsusaka cotton textiles was designated as an Intangible Folk Cultural Property by the Agency for Cultural Affairs of Japan in 1981.

An inscription about Kadoya Shichirōbei Eikichi can be found on a stele Pho Da sơn Linh Trung Phat (普陀山靈中仏) built in 1640 in a cave called Hoa Nghiêm (花嚴) in the Marble Mountains (五行山) near Hôi An. The sentence in the engraving “日本宮七郎兵衛阮氏慈号紗泰供銭” indicates that Shichirōbei married a Vietnamese woman named 阮氏慈 and donated money to create a Bodhisattva statue. In Japan, the Jingu Museum in Ise City and the Nagoya University Library have collections of “Kadoya documents,” which comprise 110 historical materials handed down by the Kadoya family from the end of medieval times to the Meiji era, including a genealogy, incoming letters, documents related to red-seal ships and materials related to indigo ball wholesalers. Among them, “Annam Koshi Kadoya Eikichi Isho” 安南交趾角屋榮吉遺書 (lit. “Documents Left by Kadoya Eikichi, Cochin, Annam”) is a set of important historical sources, including letters from Shichirōbei, his Vietnamese wife and Tanimura Shirōbei living in Annam, as well as various records.

While many secondary sources concerning Shichirōbei are available, among the oldest studies on him are “Kadoya Shichirōbei Annam ni Tokō shi Bōeki wo nasu koto” 角屋七郎兵衛

安南に渡航し貿易を為す事 (lit. “Kadoya Shichirōbei’s Voyage to Annam and His Trading Business”) written and edited by Seki Toku in *Kuni no Hikari* 日本之光輝 and published in 1887 and “Kadoya Shichirōbei no Den” 角屋七郎兵衛の伝 (lit. “A Biography of Kadoya Shichirōbei”) by Matsumoto Akihiko from Matsusaka published in *Gakushūin Hojinkai Zasshi* 学習院輔仁会雑誌 in 1897. A recent representative example is a project titled “Matsusaka Hōi An no Kōryū no Kako to Genzai—Kadoya Shichirōbei wo Chūshin tosite” 松阪・ホイアンの交流の過去と現在—一角屋七郎兵衛を中心として (“Cultural Exchanges between Matsusaka and Hoian, Vietnam Tracing Kadoya Shichirōbei’s Achievements”) led by Kikuchi Masao at the Institute for Regional Studies, Mie Chukyo University. Kikuchi’s research group created a list of historical sources and written materials concerning Kadoya Shichirōbei, analyzed his life and exchanges between Matsusaka and Hōi An, and presented their research findings as research notes.

I participated in the Survey Project on Old Streets in Hōi An conducted jointly by the Agency for Cultural Affairs of Japan and Showa Women’s University from 1993 to 1996, and the Survey Project on Traditional Clothes in Hōi An organized by Showa Women’s University from 2014 to 2016. While looking into written materials concerning Kadoya Shichirōbei on those occasions, I became most interested in the relationship between Matsusaka-jima textiles (striped textiles produced in Matsusaka) and Vietnam throughout Shichirōbei’s lifetime. Although fewer studies on Matsusaka cotton textiles are available than on Shichirōbei himself, studies that deserve special mention are Tabata Yoshiho’s *Matsusaka Momen Oboegaki: Itohen Ise Fudoki* 松阪もめん覚書・糸へん伊勢風土記 (lit. “Memorandum on Matsusaka Cotton Textiles: Ise Province Fudoki from the Perspective of the Textile Industry”) published in 1988 and *Matsusaka Momen: Shiryo ni Manabu Momen no Rekishi* 松阪木綿・史料に学ぶ木綿の歴史 (lit. “Matsusaka Cotton Textiles: History of Cotton Learned from Historical Sources”) edited by Mie-ken Dentō Senshoku Kenkyūkai 三重県伝統染色研究会 (lit. “Mie Prefectural Traditional Dyeing Research Group”) in 2016. The former is the first comprehensive analysis of cotton cultivation, indigo dyeing, the weaving of striped textiles in Matsusaka and other related subjects by Tabata Yoshiho, a local researcher. The latter introduces historical sources and written materials concerning Matsusaka cotton textiles from early-modern and later times and clarifies the entire process, from cotton cultivation to sales.

In his *Matsusaka Momen Oboegaki: Itohen Ise Fudoki*, Tabata Yoshiho argues that the word “*shima* 縞” meaning “stripes” was indicated with the homonymic *kanji* character “鳴” meaning “islands” until the mid-Edo period because Japanese striped textiles had been “introduced from overseas islands,” quoting from Endō Motoo’s *Orimono no Nihon-shi* 織物の日本史 (lit. “Japanese History of Textiles”).²² He also maintains that textiles with vertical stripes were introduced from Cochin on the basis of the description of gifts brought from Cochin, Annam, including “striped cotton textiles (木綿島) called *ryūjōfu* 柳条布,” as well as chintz, pongee and gauze, in Nishikawa Joken’s *Kai Tsūshō-kō* 華夷通商考 (lit. “On Trading in China and the Surrounding Countries”) published in Genroku 8 (1695).²³ Concerning patterns on Matsusaka cotton textiles,

²² Tabata Yoshiho 田畑美穂. *Matsusaka Momen Oboegaki: Itohen Ise Fudoki* 松阪もめん覚書 糸へん伊勢風土記, Chunichi Shimbun Honsha, 1988, pp. 123 & 126.

²³ *Matsusaka Momen Oboegaki: Itohen Ise Fudoki*, pp. 123–124.

Tabata argues: “Although it may be too late, I cannot help admiring Matsusaka merchants for their sense of fashion based on which they combined coloring unique to Southeast Asian textiles with indigo-dyed cotton textiles to devise products that would appeal to the people of Edo, who adhered to their own style of sophistication, and weavers and dyers for their keen aesthetic consciousness and great skills enough to meet the merchants’ demanding requirements.”²⁴ However, the Kadoya documents housed at the Jingu Museum mention only “white pongee,” “black pongee,” “cotton,” “Tonkinese silk” and “figured white satin” as Shichirōbei’s gifts to Japan. Tabata analyzes this fact as follows: “Probably because it was just cotton, striped cotton textiles may not have been especially mentioned as a gift. Instead, I suppose that quick-eyed Matsusaka merchants may have noticed junk masters and sailors using them for their own clothes and belongings casually and gained the inspiration for commercializing them the earliest in Japan by displaying their intrinsic commercial aptitude.”²⁵ In other words, the key point of his hypothesis is that textiles with colorful “vertical stripes” brought from Annam are the origin of Matsusaka’s striped cotton textiles.

Meanwhile, *Matsusaka Momen: Shiryō ni Manabu Momen no Rekishi* claims that Matsusaka cotton textiles were popular for their beautiful dye and thin threads among merchants in Edo who placed higher importance on “*iki* 粋” (sophistication) than the sturdiness of textiles.²⁶ Concerning the origin of Matsusaka cotton textiles, the book emphasizes two points that disagree with Tabata’s arguments. Disagreeing with Tabata’s argument that Matsusaka cotton textiles have their origin in Cochin, the first point is that *Kai Tsūshō-kō* quoted in *Annam-ki* 安南記 (lit. “Report on Annam”) jointly edited by Matsumoto Moriyoshi and Kadoya Arinobu and completed in Bunka 4 (1807) mentions that “striped cotton textiles (木綿島)” were also a gift brought from Siam, the Mogul Empire, Java and other places. The book argues that, if this description is taken up as the basis, the origin of striped cotton textiles can be traced not only to Annam but also to other Southeast Asian countries. The second point is that, although Kadoya Shichirōbei arrived in Hōi An in Kansei 8 (1631), it was around Kanbun 6 (1666) that he became able to send Annamese products to his relatives in Matsusaka and Nagasaki. Nevertheless, the section of “Specialties” in volume 4 of *Kefukigusa* 毛吹草 by Matsue Shigeyori published in Shōhō 2 (1645), about 20 years before Shichirōbei’s first gifts from Hōi An, mentions just “cotton” as a specialty of Ise Province, while mentioning “striped cotton textiles” as Musashi and Buzen Provinces’ specialties and “Kawasaki striped cotton textiles” as Settsu Province’s specialty. The book thus claims that the Tabata’s attribution of the origin of Matsusaka striped cotton textiles to Shichirōbei would disagree with the fact that Japan had already striped cotton textiles before Shichirōbei became able to make contact with his family.²⁷

My interpretation of this issue is as follows: The fact that *Kefukigusa* in Shōhō 2 (1645) mentioned just “cotton” as a specialty of Ise Province suggests that Ise Province, and especially Matsusaka, at that time had cotton textiles but they were not “striped.” The later origination of

²⁴ *Matsusaka Momen Oboegaki: Itohen Ise Fudoki*, p. 126.

²⁵ *Matsusaka Momen Oboegaki: Itohen Ise Fudoki*, pp. 125–126.

²⁶ Mie-ken Dentō Senshoku Kenkyūkai 三重県伝統染色研究会 ed. *Matsusaka Momen: Shiryō ni Manabu Momen no Rekishi* 松阪木綿・史料に学ぶ木綿の歴史, Hikari Shuppan, 2016, p. 11.

²⁷ *Matsusaka Momen: Shiryō ni Manabu Momen no Rekishi*, p. 12.

Matsusaka-jima (striped) textiles can be thought to have been inspired by products from other domestic or overseas areas. Although Tabata also acknowledges that there were already striped cotton textiles in the Genna era (1615–1624), he maintains that they had horizontal stripes or checkers and that textiles with vertical stripes were introduced from Cochin.²⁸ Therefore, I determined that Matsusaka cotton textiles might have some elements that show the influence of Vietnam and decided to pursue my studies in this direction.

2.2 What Has Been Revealed by Interdisciplinary Approaches

While historical studies should be conducted while referring to historical sources, no historical documents have yet been discovered to exactly prove where the origin of Matsusaka-jima textiles lies. In such a case, a possible way we can follow is relying on anthropological approaches and materials. If clothes or catalogs of striped patterns sent from Vietnam in the late 17th century are available, they will be important historical sources for us. I believe that such materials could allow us to analyze dyeing and weaving techniques used for them to clarify how Matsusaka cotton textiles originated and developed and what relationship they have with traditional Vietnamese textiles.

At the Matsusaka Cotton Symposium jointly hosted by Matsusaka City and Matsusaka Momen Kyōgikai 松阪木綿協議会 (lit. “Matsusaka Cotton Council”) on November 26, 2016, we exchanged views with the representatives of Matsusaka-based Miito Orimono Co., Ltd. and Yūzuru-kai, a group of people who aim to hand down Matsusaka cotton’s handweaving techniques. While some panelists argued that the origin of Matsusaka-jima textiles could lie in the textiles of the Viet or Chams in Vietnam, I emphasized that the three key features of Matsusaka cotton textiles are “cotton”, “vertical stripes” and “indigo dye”, so the origin of Matsusaka cotton textiles is little likely to lie in the textiles of the Viet or Chams. More specifically, the Viet may have used indigo dyeing techniques in prehistoric and ancient times, but they have generally worn brown- and black-dyed clothes since medieval times and do not weave textiles with vertical stripes. Meanwhile, the Chams do not use indigo dyeing techniques. When conducting fieldwork in Hôi An in the 1990s, I bought indigo-dyed textiles with vertical stripes from ethnic minority peddlers who lived near Hôi An. Based on this experience, I infer that textile products brought to Japan in the 17th century could have included textile products made by ethnic minorities who lived near Hôi An. The cotton textiles of the Cờ Tu²⁹ in particular, whose textile techniques were designated as an Intangible Cultural Property by the Vietnamese government in August 2014, have the three features of cotton, vertical stripes and indigo dye in common with Matsusaka-jima textiles. Paying special attention to these common features, I began exploring the relationship between Matsusaka-jima textiles and the cotton textiles of the Cờ Tu.

I conducted surveys on Matsusaka cotton textiles in Kadoya Shichirōbei’s hometown

²⁸ *Matsusaka Momen Oboegaki: Itohen Ise Fudoki*, p. 126.

²⁹ The Cờ Tu is an ethnic minority group living in the Trường Sơn (長山) mountains in Vietnam. According to statistics in 2009, the population of the Cờ Tu was approximately 60,000. (Website of the Minority Affairs Team of the Voice of Vietnam (VOV): <http://vov4.vov.vn/TV/gioi-thieu/dan-toc-co-tu-cgt2-3230.aspx>)

in October 2013, November 2016 and November 2018, while collecting written sources at Mitsui Bunko in November 2018. Meanwhile, I also visited the Cờ Tu in Zo Ra Village, Nam Giang District, Quảng Nam Province twice—in August 2016 and in February 2017—in order to conduct research on their cotton textiles. The aims of these surveys were not only to seek the above-mentioned catalogs of stripe samples but also to visit the Matsusaka Cotton Center, Raigō-ji Temple, the Matsusaka City Museum of History and Folklore, Miito Orimono Co., Ltd. and other parties to collect information about the entire process of making cotton textiles, from cotton cultivation through spinning to dyeing and weaving. In Matsusaka, I also interviewed Ms. Kamei Shizuko, a member of the NGO Namagomi Recycle, which aims to restart cotton cultivation; President Nishiguchi Yūya and Mr. Hashimoto Hirotsugu from Miito Orimono Co., Ltd.; and Ms. Moriya Naoko, a member of Yūzuru-kai. Meanwhile, in Zo Ra Village, I interviewed local Cờ Tu women about their spinning and dyeing techniques, as well as the technique of weaving while using their bodies as part of primitive looms, and also shot photos and videos to record their techniques.

As a result of my survey on old textiles, in Matsusaka I found *Shima honchō* 嶋本帳 (lit. “Catalog of Stripe Samples”) dating back to Ansei 4 (1857), which was stored by Matsusaka Momen Shinkōkai 松坂木綿振興会 (lit. “Association for Promotion of Matsusaka Cotton.”), and hundreds of pieces of cloth pasted on *Oshima-no-chō* 御嶋之帳 (lit. “Stripe Book”) in Meiji 7 (1874). Meanwhile, among the oldest stripe catalogs I found at Mitsui Bunko are *Shimahon* 嶋本 dating back to the Bunka 3 (1806), *Shimahon* 嶋本 in Kaei 1 (1848) and some volumes of *Matsusaka Shima Mihon* 松坂嶋見本 from the Kaei era (1848–1855) to the Meiji era (1868–1912). Since these stripe catalogs were created about 150 years later than the era of Kadoya Shichirōbei, those stripes seem fully “Japanized,” but the colorful vertical stripes surprisingly resemble those found on indigo-dyed textiles produced by ethnic minorities living in the Mekong Delta.

In addition, my fieldwork has revealed that the traditional methods of cotton cultivation, spinning and dyeing, and the technique in and principle for weaving vertical stripes unexpectedly have many features common to the people of Matsusaka and the Cờ Tu. The representatives of Yūzuru-kai, who participated in fieldwork on Cờ Tu cotton textiles in February 2017, also confirmed the similarities and paid special attention to the common characteristics of dyeing techniques. Both Matsusaka and Cờ Tu cotton textiles have indigo, red and brown as the main colors and are unique in that; while red and brown dyes are used after being boiled in principle, indigo is “let to ferment” without being boiled because indigo is believed to live. This characteristic appears in the process of soaking indigo leaves in water, stirring the water with the leaves until it is colored, adding lime or tiny pieces of shells to the water, and letting it ferment while neutralizing it. Moreover, for both Matsusaka and Cờ Tu textile traditions, arranging the warp is an important step to design vertical stripes. However, while almost the entire process from indigo dyeing to stripe weaving in Matsusaka has been automated except in the activities of Yūzuru-kai, the Cờ Tu still cherish traditional techniques in dyeing and handweaving while using their bodies as part of primitive looms.

Although I have thus conducted anthropological fieldwork to explore the relationship between Matsusaka-jima textiles and the textiles of the Cờ Tu, I have not yet become able to conclude that the origin of Matsusaka cotton textiles lies in Cờ Tu textiles. From now on, I will

search the collections of the Jingu Museum and the Nagoya University Library for documents concerning the origin of Matsusaka-jima textiles and older stripe catalogs than *Shimabon* dating back to the Bunka 3 (1806). I also hope to examine the traditional dyeing and weaving techniques of ethnic groups who live near Hôi An other than the Cờ Tu.

Meanwhile, my research among the people of Matsusaka and the Cờ Tu has produced favorable results outside the research: it has facilitated exchanges between people engaged in preserving cultural heritage in both countries and invigorated their products. The representatives of Matsusaka City, Miito Orimono and Yüzuru-kai visited Hôi An and exchanged views on traditional techniques and their preservation and use with Cờ Tu people living in Zo Ra Village, and Viet and Chams people, who played important roles at the Hôi An Silk Village. This encounter has resulted in Vietnamese-produced silk threads being used as the weft for some products of Matsusaka-jima textiles. I hope to continue helping sustain exchanges between the people of Matsusaka on one hand and the Cờ Tu and people working at the Hôi An Silk Village.

Conclusion

Although “elephant trading” and the “origin of Matsusaka-jima textiles,” which this paper has dealt with, are just minor themes in the history of exchanges between Japan and Vietnam, I now firmly believe that this research field really requires crosschecks of historical sources and written materials beyond national borders or the border between the domestic academic worlds in Japan and Vietnam and interdisciplinary approaches beyond the frontier of history as a discipline. Amid ongoing progress in globalization, every academic discipline has seen emerging trends toward interdisciplinarity and internationalization and escalating demand for the practical effectiveness of studies. It can be said that, while Japanese studies has so far placed importance on sharing its fruits with the rest of the world, it must also share its fruits with people in Japan. What is important for this purpose is building networks between scholars from Japan and abroad, and I believe that participation in studies of general people and organizations, their contribution to research achievements, and use of research achievements for people’s everyday lives in contemporary society can also be new sources of vigor of Japanese studies.

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