

A 'Republic of Letters' Circulating around East Asia

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How was a Republic of Letters formed in East Asia? In the 18th century, the Qing dynasty of China, the Yi Dynasty of Korea and the Tokugawa Shogunate of Japan closed their countries to outsiders, except that the Yi Dynasty presented tribute to the Qing Dynasty China every year, and dispatched 12 embassies to Tokugawa Japan over the course of 260 years. At any rate these were the only opportunities for East Asia to become a meeting place of cultural exchange. In those days, many poets and painters worked and collaborated together. Writers and artists enjoyed one another's company, and sometimes one person played two roles, of both poet and painter. In China and Korea also, not in Japan, though, government officials were selected through the civil service examination system, the *Kakyo* in Japanese. Institutionally excellent officials also often became prominent literati at the same time, such as Bai Juyi 白居易 (772-846) and Su Shi 蘇軾 (1036-1101). However, in Japan, the Tokugawa Shogunate did not adopt the civil service examination system. Consequently most Japanese literati consisted of the nongovernmental Confucians. They formed the world of letters in cities as in the case of Kimura Kenkado 木村兼葎堂 (1736-1802). In Korea few literati were fostered in a favorable environment. This is a big difference among the three countries, but the Korean and Japanese literati were still attracted to the Chinese literati, and followed their example. Thus the East Asian tradition was formed with China as the role model.

In order to evoke a concrete image, I'd like to visualize the images of a Republic of Letters in East Asia. First, I shall take up two images; one is the portraits of the participants of the Korean Embassy to Japan described by Japanese Confucian, Miyase Ryumon 宮瀬竜門 (1719-71); the other is the portrait of the Korean Embassy to Beijing sketched by the Chinese literatus, Yan Cheng 嚴誠 (1732-67). The eleventh Korean Embassy was dispatched to Japan in 1764. In Edo Miyase Ryumon exchanged poems with members of the Korean Embassy and drew portraits of the 15 members (Fig.1, *Tosa Yodan* 『東槎余談』 1764, a manuscript). He made these drawings for those people who were interested in the Korean Embassy. A feature of his portraits is that they are full of insightful. He portrayed the personalities of different characters in his drawings. For example, Ryumon found a congenial spirit in an unfortunate

person, Yi Eon-jin 李彦瓚 (1740-66) and captured the intelligent and ironic look in his eyes, and so represented him as he had been recognized for what he was (Fig.2). This is a starting point of the formation of a Republic of Letters to distinguish individuality in a companion. Furthermore Ryumon described even two servants at the very end (Fig.3). His consideration toward servants deserves some attention. This is because his attitude was free from discrimination. This is an early sign of the principle of equality. In most cases, a Confucian was strict with regard to relationships between higher and lower. In Osaka the Korean Envoy had a good relationship with the Kimura Kenkado group. Although Kimura Kenkado was a mere sake brewer and merchant, he was an encyclopaedic intellectual, poet, painter, engraver and even publisher. He owned a large library and placed his collections at anyone's service, and he enjoyed the company of various intellectuals. Kenkado painted the poet's party and engraved some seals to send the embassy members as souvenirs. This painting was rated high by many Koreans but regretfully, it is reported as missing now. Now I would show you his seals to the Korean Envoys (Fig.4). Seal carving was one of the necessary accomplishments of literati at that time. Besides enjoying poetry and painting, and open mind and relationship of equality are qualities requisite for the formation of a Republic of Letters.

Hong Dae-yong 洪大容 (1731-83) heard about the Japanese literati's activity from Weon Jung-geo 元重拳 (1719-90), his friend and a secretary to the Vice-Envoy to Japan. He was impressed with the refinement of the Japanese literati's activities. Two years later, he went to Beijing in order to search for the same sort of literati. He happened to make the acquaintance of three successful candidates of the civil service examination system, Yan Cheng, Pan Tingyun 潘庭筠 (1742-?) and Lu Fei 陸飛 (1719-?). Hong Dae-yong was delighted to find that they had the same way of thinking and the similar attitudes as he had. They made best friends with each other beyond the border and called themselves "distant friends in the world" 天涯知己 (『乾淨筆談 清脾錄』上海古籍出版社, 2010). Yan Cheng sketched portraits of the Korean Embassy to China, including Hong Dae-yong (Fig.5, *The complete works of Tie-jiao*, 『鉄橋全集』 4, 5, a manuscript). A depiction of Kim Zen-ko 金善行, Kim Yang-kyo 金養虛's uncle, looks dignified suitably as a Premier (Fig.6). But the portrayal of Hong Yi 洪億's facial features were not visible under a visor. This results from the fact that this portrait was drawn more artistically than realistically (Fig.7). Curiously enough, Kim generates a very strong presence keeping his face out of sight. Both Miyase Ryumon and Yan Cheng tried to maintain the memory not only of physical features but also of the subjects' personalities. This is a jumping-off place for forming a Republic of Letters.

Lu Fei was a top candidate at the first civil service examination in Hangzhou 杭州. Ding-Jing 丁敬 (1695-1765) and Huang Yi 黄易 (1744-1802), famous seal engravers even today, engraved seals for Lu Fei and Pan Ting-yun as a token of their esteem. Ding-Jing inscribed "brilliant Lu is a top candidate" (陸秀才解人也) on the side of a seal (Fig.8). Huang Yi made a seal carved "My sailing boat" (Fig.9, 自度航) and presented it to Lu Fei. Huang Yi wrote that Xiaoyin (Lu Fei), a top candidate, had obtained a boat named 'My sailing boat' and if he had recorded his poetic life on the lake, then this seal would be remembered forever. Also, Qian Daixin 錢大昕 (1728-1804), a famous learned official, mentioned that

Lu Fei's boat was exquisite and graceful in his poem. He wrote:

批風判月自由身 Discussing refined arts in unrestrictive circumstances
穩住湖心一隻船 He lives quietly on a boat in the middle of a lake

(*Senkendo-Bunshu*, zokushu, Vol.3, 潜研堂文集続集)

As Lu Fei revered the virtues of Zhang Zhihe 張志和 (730?-810?), he constructed a boat on which he lived with his family. Zhang Zhihe, a famous literatus of the Tang Dynasty, lived like a hermit on the lake. This episode proved that Lu Fei was free from worldly concerns in spite of his position as a top candidate in the civil service examinations. Thereafter Lu's boat was picked up by a noble man, and he sold his paintings to buy as much as he needed in life. Huang Yi also sent Lu Fei a seal engraved, 'Selling pictures and buying a mountain' 売画買山 (Fig.10) in 1763. Ironically Lu Fei is not so well known now, but Ding and Huang's seals became widely known as all their works were published in China and Japan, and these books are popular among lovers of calligraphy. Luckily, Lu Fei's paintings were published in Beijing recently (*Eihosai-zo Sakketsu sen*, 『荣宝斋藏册頁選』荣宝斋出版社, 2009). These pictures are perfect examples of literati painting (Fig.11).

Weng Fanggang 翁方綱 (1733-1818) composed a poem on the theme, 'Huang Xiaosong (Huang Yi)'s picture titled, "Autumn scenery hermitage" painted by Lu Fei, a top candidate'.

題黃小松秋景葦園 陸解元飛画
手植疎柯日夜蒼
林梢雁背好山光
故人莫誦姜夔句
每聽秋声憶故鄉

葦即白石所居旧址 (The Poetic Works of Weng Fanggang, 『復初齋詩集』16)

Planted trees with sparse foliage; the garden is covered with green day and night
The treetops and the geese's backs reflecting the shining mountains
Don't read aloud Jiang Kui's line, my old friend,

For the sounds of the wind, a singing insect and a falling leaf always remind us of our home

Jiang Kui was a poet of seclusion in Southern Sung age. A hermitage was his dwelling. At any rate, this poem indicates that these poets had a relationship with each other. Weng Fanggang was a distinguished scholar of the Evidential School in the Qing dynasty, a learned poet and a famous calligrapher. In conclusion he was a leading figure in the republic of letters. Huang Yi and Lu Fei were members of a constellation of literati.

A younger colleague of Hong Dae-yong, Pak Je-ga 朴齊家 (1750-1805), traveled to Beijing on diplomatic missions three times. He made the acquaintance of many Chinese literati, for example Pan Ting-yun the first trip, a distinguished scholar Ji Yun 紀昀 (1724-1805), a famous painter, Luo Pin 羅聘 (1733-99), a prominent statesman and wonderful calligrapher, Yi Bingshou 伊秉綬 (1754-1815) and a famous poet, Zhang Wentao 張問陶 (1764-1814). Pak Je-ga wrote:

I always idolize the Chinese civilization. When I read Hong Dae-yong's records of communication by writing with the literati trio, Pan Ting-yun, Yan Cheng and Lu Fei, I got excited and forgot to take up my spoon at the table. For 300 years, no a single embassy could meet with prominent figures in China. Now Hong Dae-yong had a relationship with an excellent person he called the distant friends in the world.

(Letter to Jo Kanken, *Teizuikakushu*, 4, 「与徐觀軒」『貞蕤閣集』4)

Pan Tingyun commented on Pak Je-ga's poetry that his verse writing was as quick as a bullet. He composed poem fluently (*Kin-en-shu*, an anthology of four Korean poets). Luo Pin drew a fine portrait of Pak Je-ga (Fig.12) and Yi Bingshou dedicated a poem to Pak.

送高麗朴檢書 (齊家) 帰国 A farewell to Pak Je-ga returning to his country
扶桑東海水 A country lying to the east and the eastern sea
楊柳春風城 A spring breeze brew the willow in the walled town
上国花開讌 In the capital people have a party in the flowers
遙天月伴行 The moon goes with you to the distant sky
文能通繹語 Talking by writing communicates for long
詩解繼吾声 Poetry expresses everything on my mind
欲訪遺書在 I'd like to read the old books in your country
悠悠箕子情 How Jizi's heart was calm and leisurely

(*Ryushundo-Shisho*, 2, 『留春草堂詩鈔』2)

Ji-zi 箕子 was an old king of ancient Korea, an uncle of King Zhou 紂 of the Yin dynasty.

Pak Je-ga also made some poems about Yi Bingshou:

伊公素心人 Mr Yi's spirit is plain and pure
托契猶比隣 Finding a congenial spirit in him as a neighbor
頂礼觀音墨 Grateful for an ink stick carved with 'the Bodhisattva of Compassion'
吾将殉碧山 I will bring it to the grave at a green hill

伊秉綬、号墨卿、贈徽州貢墨刻仏像、背書般若密多心經細入秋毫。

(「燕京雜絕」、『貞蕤閣集』4)

Yi Bingshou presented Huei mo 徽墨, a distinguished ink stick, to Pak Je-ga, including a line from the Wisdom Sutra in small characters.

Here I'd like to introduce how fascinating Yi Bingshou's calligraphy is. For Yi Bingshou, calligraphy was a cultivation of his character and an amusement at the same time. He wrote that he had learned Confucianism; and that he enjoyed his plain living to put the teachings of Confucius into practice in his boyhood (Fig.13). He composed one poem titled, 'Four chanted at his study' 書齋四詠, saying that cultivating his character is equivalent to rubbing down an ink stick. An upright person is possible to compose correct writing. He thought calligraphy was connected directly with a way of life, namely his spirit (磨人自是同磨墨,正筆忘知在正心「端硯」). On the other hand, Yi Bingshou enjoyed

himself by shaking his brush. Please see a part of 遂's letter (Fig.14). While he was vibrating his brush, he didn't forget the Confucian practices. He continued to write that building virtue is better than giving savings to posterity. His rounded writing of characters proved his positive attitude toward his life, that is, happiness. In this way Yi Bingshou became a virtuous statesman and he was praised as one of the Four Sages of Yangchow 揚州. The others are Ouyang Xiu 歐陽脩 (1007-72), Su Shi, and Wang Shi-zhen 王士禎 (1634-1711).

In 1831, Tanomura Chikuden 田能村竹田 (1777-1835), a famous Japanese literatus edited an anthology of Qing dynasty poets, called *Kinsaichoshu* 今才調集. Chikuden selected poems of Luo Pin, Yi Bingshou, Zhang Wentao and others. He wrote in the preface that these poets were contemporary with him and lived abroad. He regretted they were separated by a big sea and had not a relationship with them. Then he compiled this anthology for friends of similar tastes. For example, at spring noon or autumn evening, awaking from a dream or after drinking, in bed hearing the sound of rain or feeling a gentle breeze near the window, we can have a pleasant time with the small anthology. In this circle Chikuden enjoyed company with Chinese literati and Japanese friends at the same time. Chikuden also expressed his thought that if he had received instruction from Kenkado, in spite of his lack of talent, he would have learned from the experience of the ideal ancients, in his work *Sanchujin Jozetsu* 『山中人饒舌』. Chikuden met Kenkado only once at the very end of Kenkado's life. However Chikuden succeeded to Kenkado's spirit excellently. I believe there was a possibility that Chikuden became a member of the Republic of Letters in East Asia.

[付記] 小論は、2011年7月28日、オーストリアのKarl-Franzens Universität Graz で開かれていた国際18世紀学会のラウンドテーブル (Public Knowledge in the East and The West: Comparative perspective, 13th International Congress for Eighteenth Century Studies-Graz) で発表したものを一部修正したもので、朴齊家の詩句の解釈について教示を忝くした成均館大学の安大会教授と、英文校閲の手を煩わせたオークランド大学のローレンス・マルソー氏 (Dr Laurence Marceau) に謝意を表する。

出発の前日、たまたまニューオータニ美術館から「池大雅展」解説の依頼を受け、ウィーン・グラーツ間の鄙びた急行列車のなかでワープロをたたいたのも、今では懐かしい思い出である。その「文人大雅の素顔」は、帰国後の加筆を経て小林忠先生監修の『池大雅 中国へのあこがれ』(求龍堂、2011年)に掲載された。グラーツでは先年、私どもの18世紀科研研究会で発表して下さったケンブリッジのコートネー先生夫妻 (Mr and Mrs Cecil Patrick Courtney) がメンザでお休みのところに通りかかって挨拶することができた。ラウンドテーブルの前後に、長尾先生たちとたまたま立ち寄った旧市街のキャフェが、キャフェ・ザッヒャーのグラーツ支店だったことに増田真先生に指摘されて初めて気付いたのも忘れたい。また《大阪城屏風》で知られるエッゲンベルグ城の見物は同宿の関谷先生夫妻とご一緒し、その後下階のギャラリーで小田部先生とすれ違ったりしたのもささやかな思い出である。

というのもウィーンでは折から美術史美術館でデューラーやホルバインの肖像画展が開かれていたもので、常設のフェルメールやベラスケスともども心底堪能し、その後足を延ばしたヴェネチアでも18世紀共和国の洗練の残照に酔い、フィレンチェでは「文芸復興」の栄華を目の当たりにするなど、前後の見聞が圧倒的だったからである。

なお小論は9月30日にソウルの高麗大学校で開催された日本近世文学会のシンポジウム「日本近世文学と朝鮮」において発表した「通信使行から学芸の共和国へ」(『2011年度日本近世文学会秋季大会資料

集』収録)と一部重複する部分があるが、同時期同様のテーマでやや立ち入って執筆したので、公刊の
 暁にはあわせ御参照いただければ幸いです。

〔図版〕



fig.1



fig.2



fig.3

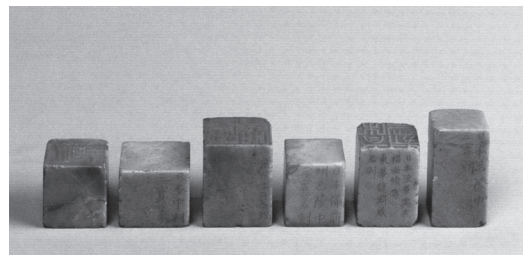
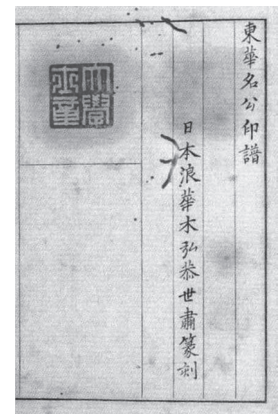


fig.4



fig.5



fig.6



fig.7



fig.8



fig.9

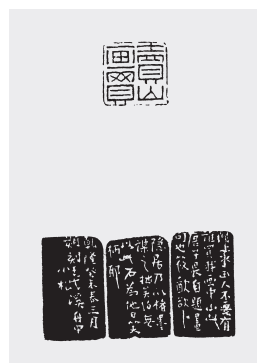


fig.10



fig.11



fig.12

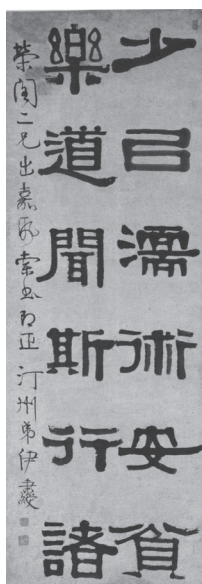


fig.13

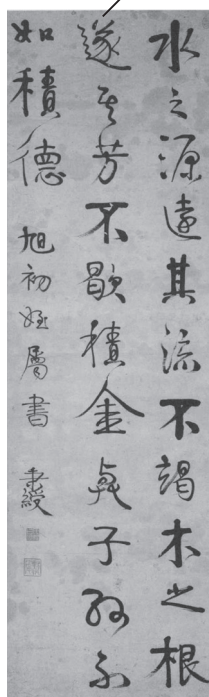


fig.14