

Japan Academy Prize to:

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for “Research on Chinese Literary Theory”

Outline of the work:

These remarks will focus on two works by Dr. Hiroshi Kōzen: *Chūgoku no bungaku riron* 中国の文学理論 (Chinese Literary Theory) (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1988; rpt. Seibunsha, 2008) and *Chūgoku bungaku riron no tenkai* 中国文学理論の展開 (The Development of Chinese Literary Theory) (Tokyo: Seibunsha, 2008), particularly the latter.

Dr. Kōzen focuses on three Six Dynasties texts: *Wenxin diaolong* 文心雕龍 (The Literary Mind: Ornate Elaborations) by Liu Xie 劉勰, *Wenxuan* 文選 (Literary Selections) by Xiao Tong 蕭統, and *Shipin* 詩品 (Poetry Gradings) by Zhong Rong 鍾嶸. He systematically outlines their importance in the development of literary theory from the Six Dynasties through the Tang and Song dynasties.

(A) In reference to the first of these texts, the *Wenxin diaolong*. Dr. Kōzen discusses the influence of such earlier works as the “Wen fu” 文賦 (“Rhymeprose on Literature”) by Lu Ji 陸機, the *Wenzhang liubielun* 文章流別論 (A Discussion of Literature Divided by Genres) by Zhi Yu 摯虞, and the “Xie Lingyun zhuanlun” 謝靈運傳論 (“Biographical Treatise on Xie Lingyun”) by Shen Yue 沈約 in the *Songshu* 宋書 (History of the Liu-Song Dynasty).

He analyzes Liu Xie’s thought in terms of two discourses: one on literary creation, the other on the appreciation of nature. In his statements on the former, Liu Xie places cardinal importance on a return to the Confucian classics: the Confucian classics are ever the source of writing. As for appreciation of nature, Liu Xie argues for a return to nature itself, original nature (rather than imparting one’s melancholy to scenes of nature). In this, he not only draws on Confucian thought, Daoist and Buddhist philosophy are also just beneath the surface.

Dr. Kōzen bases his argument for the influence of Buddhism on Liu Xie on the fact that in many specific instances the latter draws on the expression and vocabulary of the *Chu sancang jiji* 出三藏記集 (Compilation of Notes on the Tripitaka) by Sengyou 僧佑—a work on whose revision Liu Xie himself had participated. Additionally, he argues that in the subtleness with which its argumentation is woven together, the *Wenxin diaolong* stemmed more from systemic Buddhism than from Confucianism.

Dr. Kōzen points out the influence of Liu Xie’s work on later literary theory. The following concepts advanced in the *Wenxin diaolong* were to influence the *Yanshi jiaxun* 顏氏家訓 (Admonitions for the Yan Clan) by Yan Zhitui 顏之推: *qingzhi* 情志 (‘will cum feeling’), *shiyi* 事義 (‘facts and their meaning,’ i.e., ‘allusion’), *cicai* 辭采 (‘phrasing and the polychromatic,’ i.e., ‘rhetorical devices’), and *gongshang* 宮商 (‘two musical modes,’ i.e., ‘rhythm and prosody’). Furthermore, debate about the melding of *xin* 心 (‘mind’) and *wu* 物 (‘matter’), as found in the *Wenxin diaolong*’s “Wuse” 物色 chapter (“Matter and Its Colors,” i.e., the material world and its sensible apprehension), was to influence Wang Changling 王昌齡 and his *Shige* 詩格 (Poetry Standards).

Dr. Kōzen’s work surpasses that of earlier scholars in its profound analysis of the *Wenxin diaolong*.

(B) In reference to the second of the first three mentioned texts, the *Wenxuan*, Dr. Kōzen discusses earlier scholarship and develops his own well and fully reasoned conclusions as to why, given the political position of its compiler Xiao Tong (as ‘Zhaoming taizu’ 昭明太子, the Zhaoming Crown Prince), the work was not initially circulated and only became widely disseminated in Sui and Tang times.

(C) In reference to the third text, Zhong Rong’s *Shipin*, Dr. Kōzen argues that this work, more than the *Wenxin diaolong*, for centuries served as the starting point and virtual ‘grid’ for literary critiques. Whereas the *Wenxin diaolong* took the Chinese classics to be the traditional ideal, Zhong Rong, in contrast with Liu Xie, placed emphasis on original expression, amplitude of *qi* 氣 (‘vital breath’), individuality, and literary creativity. To support his argument, he makes the following seven points.

1. The *Shipin*, with an aesthetic oriented more to the ‘unusual, the strange, the original’ (*qi* 奇) than to the ‘harmonious,’ formulated critiques of poetry focusing on unusual couplets and on fine prize-couplets, with the occasional insertion of detail about the circumstances of poetic composition. The result was an overall characterization of a poet and his style. Later *shihua* 詩話 (talks on poetry) of the Song dynasty were direct heirs to this mode of criticism.
2. The *Heyue yingling ji* 河岳英靈集 (Poetry Collection of the Finest Spirits of Our Rivers and Mountains) by Yin Fan 殷璠 of the Tang, which treats poets of the High Tang, quotes prize-couplets and melds them into poetic critiques. In this, in the emphasis it places on the ‘unusual, the strange, the original,’ and in the value it gives to *fenggu* 風骨 (‘wind and bones,’ i.e., force of feeling and structuring of language), the work carries on the evaluative method and standards of the *Shipin*.
3. Mid-Tang poetry is the subject of the work by Gao Zhongwu 高仲武 of the same dynasty, the *Zhongxing xianqi ji* 中興間氣集 (Poetry Collection of an Age of Revival in an ‘Intermediary Atmosphere,’ i.e., one where ministers are successful in reverting government to its proper functioning). The work frequently employs the vocabulary of the *Shipin* in its critiques, devising its own critical standard based on the qualities of *fengya* 風雅 (‘classical elegance’) and *qingxin* 清新 (‘freshness and purity’). As such, it is clearly heir to the spirit of *Shipin*.
4. Jiao Ran 皎然 of the Tang is also in the lineage of the *Shipin*, for in his *Shishi* 詩式 (Poetic Forms) he cites prize-couplets as part of his system of five categories.
5. During the first half of his life, Bai Juyi 白居易 of the Tang praised poetry of social criticism highly. But later his interests shifted to the transcendental. In this he displays *Shipin* proclivities.
6. Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 of the Northern Song is well known for his *Liuyi shihua* 六一詩話 (Talks on Poetry by ‘One of Six’—the latter being a tongue-in-cheek self-reference as one with five companions: books, inscriptions, zither, chess set, and pot of wine). The work has no unifying structure nor any clear basis for selection, and it follows no particular order. Rather, poets and their prize-couplets are the successive topics of discussion. The work is heir to the *Shipin* in the way it inserts in its critiques details about the circumstances of poetic composition. *Liuyi shihua* became the defining model over following centuries for the *shihua* 詩話 (talks on poetry) type of literary criticism.
7. Quite different from the desultory style of these works is that found in the treatise by the Southern Song author, Zhang Jie 張戒, the *Suihantang shihua* 歲寒堂詩話 (Talks on Poetry by ‘Suihantang’—the latter being the author’s studio-name, which refers to the season’s turning cold). With a broad perspective that encompasses all of poetic history, the *Suihantang shihua* critiques a large number of poets from Han through Tang times. Zhang Jie downplays Bai Juyi, who excelled at the vivid portrayal of both poetic scene and sentiment. Rather, he gives Du Fu highest honors as a poet of ‘vital breath’ (*qi* 氣) whose forte is the expression of the ineffable. With its emphasis on the ‘unusual, the strange, the original’ and its accompanying ‘vital breath,’ the *Suihantang shihua* is heir to the *Shipin*

in its standard of evaluation.

As is evident from the above, Dr. Kōzen has constructed an original and well-organized genealogy of Chinese literary theory, one of broad vision and profound scholarship, that outlines the formation and influence of the *Wenxin diaolong*, *Wenxuan*, and *Shipin*. Among later works in Japan that he addresses by way of insightful comparison are those by Kūkai 空海, the *Bunkyō hifuron* 文鏡秘府論 (A Mirror of Writing: Discussion of Its Secret Store), and Ki no Toshimochi 紀淑望, the “Manajo” of the *Kokinshū* 古今集の真名序 (“Chinese Preface” to the *Anthology of Poetry Ancient and Modern*). Regarding both, he makes incisive remarks about their relationship to the *Wenxin diaolong*.

Dr. Kōzen’s creative scholarship has also received the highest of praise in China, where it has been broadly disseminated in translation.

In view of the above, the research of Dr. Kōzen is judged to be fully deserving of a Japan Academy Prize.