
The latter is also available online:

http://www.toyo-bunko.or.jp/newresearch/upload/2010011510213931.pdf
translation) are the overall tone, style, and rhythm of a rendering. This is not to mention the special problems with this project. One problem was the Chinese poems. Many are only “parsed” with *kundoku* readings in the Yoshikawa original, and so are not really translated into modern Japanese (nor are they translated into modern Chinese in Zheng Qingmao’s Chinese-language version).

Another challenge was rendering Yoshikawa’s prose into appropriate English. I happen to think that this work by Yoshikawa, although quite good, is not stellar scholarship; why I admire it, more than for its being the first real treatment of the subject in any language, is for two reasons: one, because Yoshikawa has made it interesting (unlike most sinological studies), and two, because his style as an essayist in Japanese is so engaging. The following is what I wrote in the “Translator’s Preface” to the volume:

Many (indeed, most) Japanese scholars of traditional China write works in a turgid style, seldom straying from the use of learned Chinese compounds to write in a Japanese that can seem more intended to impress the reader with the author’s earnest scholarliness than to communicate material clearly in what is supposed to be the author’s native language…. By the same token, with the admirable intent of writing in a Japanese that contemporary readers can understand, a number of other Japanese sinologists have taken to writing in natural, modern Japanese…. What not infrequently happens [with the latter], however, is that their writing becomes terribly prolix.…

Yoshikawa Kōjirō belongs to neither of these categories. Writing in a particularly plain modern Japanese by sinological standards, he does not hesitate to insert the occasional *bon mot* in the form of an apt, but unusual (for modern readers) Chinese compound. Many of his sentences are quite short, being interspersed with longer ones; and occasionally there is the involved or convoluted sentence. The combination makes for fluid pacing. Clearly the author wanted his audience to enjoy what he has to say while reading it. He is never prolix; if anything, he errs in the opposite direction. In a word, he strikes a pleasing stylistic balance. Yoshikawa Kōjirō’s renown among Japanese intellectuals in fields totally unrelated to his own stems largely from the informed readability of his writing.

I would like to turn now to research I have done on *ci* 詞 poetry. As an M.A. candidate at Stanford University more than forty years ago, I only
knew that I wanted to concentrate on traditional Chinese poetry; I did not know what area I would focus on. Since there had been comparatively little work done on early-ci poetry in the West, and since the Stanford M.A. program then required an annotated translation for an M.A. thesis, I decided to work on the poet Wei Zhuang 韋莊, whose poetry was included in the Huajianji 花間集. I read the scholarship on the Huajianji then available in Chinese, Japanese, and Western languages; translated Wei Zhuang’s forty-eight poems in the Huajianji; and provided an introduction, notes, and a bibliography. In the process, reading all 505 poems in the Huajianji, I came to realize that I did not want to do a doctoral thesis on early-ci poetry. I got tired of Huajianji verse with its narrow range of themes. As I later wrote about the “boudoir” poetry of Wei Zhuang:

Beautiful women, heartbroken in elegant chambers, keep cold, lonely beds, their lovers having gone or soon to depart. Beside a single lamp or solitary screen, like a parrot in a fancy cage, they are presented in the context of the passage of time. Spring is well advanced or on the wane; candles are dimming or spent; the waterclock drips on; warblers announcing the dawn mark the passing of night. Surrounded by tokens of wealth, they are impoverished in love. The world of nature—with spring just past its peak, playful bees amid the flowers, the grasses lush—forms a setting painfully alive when contrasted with their dreary forlornness.

Now let us skip ahead twelve years. It was then that I decided to revise the M.A. thesis on Wei Zhuang to try to get it published. With more Chinese-language experience behind me, and with a “fresh” start editing the English text, I extensively revised the earlier manuscript. It resulted in a published volume that came out a year later, The Song-Poetry of Wei Chuang (836–910 A.D.) [Wixted 1979]. It has a simple, clear introduction; translation of the forty-eight poems into English, with facing Chinese text in the calligraphy of my colleague at Arizona State University, Eugenia Y. Tu (Du Yangzhen 杜颯珍); notes on the poem-translations; a finding list to other translations of the poems, both into European languages and Japanese; and a bibliography.

Let us skip ahead another ten years. Because of the volume that had appeared on Wei Zhuang, I was asked to take part in a special conference on ci poetry. I thought that by writing on the combined topic of Li Qingzhao 李清照 and Western feminist literary theory, I would read and learn more about both. I was particularly interested to see how useful feminist theory would be when applied to Li Qingzhao and her work. The
published result was “The Poetry of Li Ch’ing-chao: A Woman Author and Women’s Authorship” [Wixted 1994].

In the course of researching the topic, several items became clear, which are discussed in the article. The view of Li Qingzhao as being a poet of quintessentially feminine sensitivity is really quite recent; and the image of her first marriage as being an ideal one only gains currency four centuries or more after her death. The fact that she was a woman was focused on by many later literary critics, some negatively; but perhaps more surprisingly, she was generally admired as a poet, by men as well as women. Indeed, ironically enough, she was literally called a “patriarch” (zong 宗) of ci poetry; but that was a double-edged compliment, when one considers that ci poetry to a large extent was considered the “distaff side,” the alternative (or female) side, to shi poetry. It is more from Li Qingzhao’s shi poetry and other known circumstances of her life, than from her ci poetry, that one can glimpse what a formidable woman she probably was. In researching the project, I read all of the poems by women in the Quan Song ci 全宋詞 and Quan Jin-Yuan ci 全金元詞 and found no identifiable “women’s voice,” in terms of written style, in the women writers of the period or in the genre. Indeed, few women until modern times seem to have taken Li Qingzhao as a poetic model, still less as a “role model.”

When preparing the article on Li Qingzhao, I read the ci of Su Shi 蘇軾, Liu Yong 柳永, Xin Qiqi 辛棄疾, and Wu Wenying 吳文英 and came to appreciate the range of the genre during the Song, especially as compared with the Huajianji.

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Before discussing one final work, I would like to make a short detour and talk about the process of producing a book-length study. My own research habits are perhaps idiosyncratic: after intense work for two, three, or four years in one area, I like to leave it “fallow” for several years and work on other things; then I can return to it “fresh” years later, for another extended stretch. On Chart J, please note the time-lapses between completion or near-completion of an initial manuscript, and the rewriting and final revising of it for publication: twelve years for the Wei Zhuang volume, five for the one on Yuan Haowen, fifteen years for the Yoshikawa translation, and nine for Japanese Scholars of China. To my way of thinking, the lapsed time is an important part of the gestation process. Much research in East Asian studies is so difficult that one needs a “second wind” to complete it. After an extended break, one can revise and rewrite things much better. (The only problem is that, as is illustrated by the Shipin manuscript, so many studies can appear in the meantime that