

of its readers may be moved to ponder some of the complexities that distinguish the age described from our own. If so, the credit will still be due to the editors for providing such a rich feast of material to start them thinking.

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**Joshua A. Fogel and Matthew Fraleigh (eds):  
Sino-Japanese Reflections: Literary and Cultural Interactions  
between China and Japan in Early Modernity**

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Although maritime neighbours, from the sixteenth to the late nineteenth centuries Japan and China maintained no diplomatic and only limited commercial ties. The Japanese did not journey to China and only a small contingent of Chinese merchants, numbering at most 5,000 souls, lived in a walled compound in the Japanese port of Nagasaki. This volume explores how, despite the centuries-long limitations on direct contacts, Japanese and Chinese intellectuals remained interested in, and engaged with, each other's language, literature, and culture. Chinese scholars analysed the Japanese language and Japanese poetry while their Japanese counterparts studied Chinese literature without learning to speak Chinese. Across ten chapters, all but three previously published in scholarly journals, this book presents a range of cultural, literary, and linguistic examples of early modern Japanese and Chinese interacting from afar.

In the volume's first chapter, Joshua Fogel examines late Ming-period Chinese scholars who analysed facets of Japanese poetry and developed classifications and word lists to better understand the Japanese language. William Hedberg follows with an examination of the activities of Chinese residents in Nagasaki who put to paper their impressions of Japanese culture and translated into Chinese the famous Japanese puppet play, *Treasury of Loyal Retainers* (*Chūshingura*). Most of the subsequent chapters explore Japanese engagements with Chinese culture and literature, beginning with Fumiko Jōo's analysis of Buddhist commentators who read and applied to their religious practices a fourteenth-century collection of Chinese ghost stories, Qu You's *New Tales for the Trimmed Lampwick* (*Jiandeng xinhua*), a text popular throughout much of early modern East Asia. William Fleming discusses the surprising number of Japanese writers who drew inspiration from a limited number of imported copies of a Chinese text, Pu Songling's *Strange Tales from Liao-zhai Studio* (*Liaozhai zhiyi*). Two subsequent chapters profile nineteenth-century Japanese scholars who engaged in intellectual negotiations with Chinese texts and literary models, the first being Mari Nagase's study of Ema Saikō, a well-known female poet active in Sinitic poetic circles dominated by men. Nagase explains that Ema often found herself drawn in conflicting directions by Rai San'yō, her mentor. Rai praised what he identified as the feminine quality of her verse while simultaneously encouraging her to engage with the then dominant aesthetic



trend in Japanese Sinitic poetry: presenting depictions of truthful events drawn from one's personal experiences. Matthew Fraleigh's chapter focuses on the fascinating life of Yaguchi Kensai, who along with thousands of Tokugawa samurai retainers, chose to follow the deposed, last shogun, Yoshinobu, and relocate to Shizuoka prefecture, roughly 200 km southwest of Tokyo, following the Meiji Restoration of 1868. Unlike many of his counterparts, Yaguchi declined to adopt another profession or serve in the new Meiji central government, instead pursuing a life in seclusion. Fraleigh challenges the standard conclusion that Yaguchi chose that path inspired by works of classical Chinese literature which portray vassals of a deposed emperor going into seclusion to display their opposition to the new regime. Through a close reading of his poetry, Fraleigh concludes that Yaguchi lived apart from society because of personal factors beyond a singular, political motivation.

The final four chapters oblige the reader to overlook the book's subtitle – stating that the volume is a study of interactions during *early modernity* – and consider first, through John Timothy Wixted's chapter, specific linguistic challenges and approaches in translating Sinitic poetry (*kanshi*). Wixted discusses at some length the translations of Mori Ōgai, a prominent Japanese poet and translator active in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a period when Japanese and Chinese grappled with ways to engage with the modernity emerging from the West. The establishment of state-to-state Sino-Japanese commercial and diplomatic ties in the 1860s and 1870s made possible in-person meetings by Japanese and Chinese elites, allowing them to discuss face-to-face each other's culture and literature. In his chapter, Robert Tuck examines the exchanges of Sinitic poetry that occurred during such encounters, often seen as convivial affairs. Tuck concludes instead that Japanese intellectuals approached such meetings as opportunities to employ Sinitic poetry to challenge China's place of supremacy within the Sinosphere. Michael Facius also focuses on the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, highlighting the significance of contemporary China for Japanese scholars at the time. In the volume's final chapter, Tao De-min explores the well-known Japanese historian, Naitō Konan, and how his examination of the work of the eighteenth-century Chinese historian, Zhang Xuecheng, shaped Naitō's early twentieth-century interpretations of the Chinese and East Asian pasts.

Scholars of early modern East Asian interactions, spanning the disciplines of history, literature, and linguistics, will find much of value in this volume's interdisciplinary approach to engagements between China and Japan. All chapters are well-researched and effectively support their assertions with copious footnotes, several with close to one hundred in a short chapter. Most chapters also include numerous in-text quotations, often in the original Chinese or Japanese. Scholars will welcome these details but unfortunately, they make access to the volume challenging for non-specialists, thereby hindering a stated aim of the volume: to offer a course reader for university level classes in Sino-Japanese studies, which the editors view as an emerging subfield. By providing an introduction of just seven pages devoted primarily to summaries of each chapter, the editors missed an opportunity to expound more on this book's place in the subfield of Sino-Japanese studies. In addition, the introduction would have benefitted from more discussion of previous research on the history of Sino-Japanese interactions, both during the early modern era and during the transition to modern East Asia that unfolded across the final decades of the nineteenth century. Such additions would have enhanced a book that curates significant but already published research articles.

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