

## THE CHANGING VIEWS OF THE *ZHUANGZI* IN KAGAMI SHIKŌ'S *HAIKAI* THEORY

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The use of Daoist ideas in *haikai* during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was a prominent phenomenon in Japanese literary history. While presenting different interpretations, three major *haikai* schools of the period, the Teimon, the Danrin, and the Shōmon, shared a conspicuous interest in using Daoist ideas to justify *haikai* and to construct its themes, theories, and values. The Shōmon School, in particular, sought inspiration in the correspondences between Daoist principles and the Chinese recluse tradition, and the leader of the school, Matsuo Bashō (1644-1694), made the *Zhuangzi* a fundamental source of his poetry that went against worldly values. The Shōmons' interest in Daoist sources continued after Bashō's death, but there was a general shifting away from the spiritual and literary values the master had emphasized, and Daoist texts used in Shōmon writings after Bashō often were regarded as no more than catchphrases to show the author's Chinese learning.

This paper looks closely at such a seemingly meaningless use of Daoist sources in the works of a productive but controversial Shōmon theorist, Kagami Shikō (1665-1731). Tracing Shikō's changing interpretations of the *Zhuangzi*, it examines how his view of the fundamentals of *haikai* gradually moves away from Bashō's concept that is deeply informed by Daoist ideas, and how his replacing Daoist principles with Confucian values at the center of his *haikai* theory reflects an impulse to meet the taste of the populace and to popularize *haikai* at the time.

Shikō joined the Shōmon School in 1690, around the time when Bashō moved into the "Unreal Dwelling" (*Genjūan*). In the fall of the following year, he accompanied Bashō on his journey to the east, arriving in Edo at the end of the tenth month. During that period, a group of poets in the area, including Bashō's disciples Takarai Kikaku (1661-1707) and Matsukura Ranran (1647-1693), in addition to his close friend Yamaguchi Sodō (1642-1716), enthusiastically studied the Daoist classic, the *Zhuangzi*. The Shōmons' interest in the *Zhuangzi* traces back to the beginning of the school. The preface to *Inaka no kuawase* (*Hokku Contest in the Boondocks*, 1680), a collection of 50 verses by Kikaku arranged in the form of a contest with Bashō's comments, for example, contains clear references to the

*Zhuangzi*, “Master Tō<sup>1</sup> taught us the *haikai* doctrines of boundlessness in his ‘Flitting and Fluttering Study’ (*Kukusai*)... His comments captured the quintessence of Zhuang Zhou’s thought.”<sup>2</sup> *Kuku*, or flitting and fluttering, is a description of the butterfly in the famous story about Zhuang Zhou’s (*Zhuangzi*) dream in the *Zhuangzi*.

It is remarkable that Bashō named his study after a term from the *Zhuangzi* and his teaching was characterized as having “captured the quintessence of Zhuang Zhou’s thought.” The Shōmons’ early interest in the *Zhuangzi* was the extension of a larger *haikai* movement that strived for truthfulness and profundity, a movement that went against the artificiality and vulgar laughter of earlier *haikai*. Over the years, Bashō continued to use the *Zhuangzi* as inspiration in building *haikai*’s theoretical, aesthetic, and epistemological framework. Shikō’s travels with Bashō and his encounter with poets of Edo exposed him to the Shōmons’ general interest in the *Zhuangzi*. This influence is clearly reflected in his *Kuzu no matsuhara* (*Arrowroots on the Pine Plain*, 1691), a work that mainly records Bashō’s remarks on *haikai*. At the beginning of the book, Shikō writes of his master:

One day Master Bashō appeared vacant and far away, and with a serious expression he said: “Since *haikai* became popular in the world, it has been like a piece of cloud in the wind. It changes constantly, now turning into a black dog, and now turning into a white fabric. Yet there is one principle running through all the changes.”<sup>3</sup>

The peculiar description of Bashō, “vacant and far away,” is borrowed from the beginning of the second chapter of the *Zhuangzi*, “Discussion on Making All Things Equal.” The original text reads:

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<sup>1</sup> Tōō, the term in the original Japanese text, literally means “Old Gentleman Tō.” “Tō” comes from Tōsei, one of the literary names Bashō used at the time.

<sup>2</sup> Hattori Ransetsu (1654-1707), Preface to *Inaka no kuawase, Kōhon Bashō zenshū* [The Complete Works of Bashō: An Edited Collection], 10 vols., eds., Imoto Nōichi, Miyamoto Saburō, Kon Eizō, and Ōuchi Hatsuo (Tokyo: Kadokawa shoten, 1962-1969), 7: 357 [hereafter KBZ].

<sup>3</sup> Kagami Shikō, *Kuzu no matsubara*, in Minami Shinichi, ed., *Sōshaku Shikō no hairon* [Comprehensive Explanations of Shikō’s *Haikai* Theory] (Tokyo: Kazama shobō, 1983), p. 15 [hereafter SSH].

Ziqi of South Wall sat leaning on his armrest, staring up at the sky and breathing – vacant and far away, as though he'd lost his companion.<sup>4</sup>

The second chapter of the *Zhuangzi* was familiar reading among the *haikai* poets of the seventeenth century. As early as 1671, it was cited by the Teimon poet Yamaoka Genrin (1631-1672) in his pioneering work of *haibun*.<sup>5</sup> Bashō also alluded to the same passage in praising a *haikai* sequence.<sup>6</sup> The Chinese term *taran* that translates into “vacant” originally meant “despondent,” but the term is used in the *Zhuangzi* to imply a state of mind that has no subjective consciousness. Both Genrin and Bashō use the term following the usage of the *Zhuangzi*.

Evidence shows that during the late 1680s and early 1690s, the Shōmon poets seriously studied the *Zhuangzi*, particularly the second chapter. One of the extant letters Bashō wrote to his disciple Dosui<sup>7</sup> indicates that in the early spring of 1691, Dosui was teaching the *Zhuangzi* to other Shōmon poets. Another letter Bashō wrote during the same period strongly encourages his disciples to study the *Zhuangzi*.<sup>8</sup> “I am very glad to hear that you have studied about half of the ‘Discussion on Making All Things Equal’ of the *Zhuangzi*,” says Bashō, “and I wish you more accomplishments in your study. The way of life and the way of *haikai* can also be made equal; in fact, they are one.”

The fusion of art and life here is consistent with Bashō’s assertion of one fundamental principle running through all arts in his famous travel account, *Oi no kobumi* (Essay in My Pannier, 1687): “In the *waka* of Saigyō, the *renga* of Sōgi, the paintings of Sesshū and the tea ceremony of Rikyū,

<sup>4</sup> Burton Watson, *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1968), pp. 36-37 (romanization of the names has been altered).

<sup>5</sup> Prose written with the spirit and stylistic features of *haikai*, usually accompanied by a *haikai* verse or verses.

<sup>6</sup> Imoto Nōichi, Yayoshi Kanichi, Yokozawa Saburō, and Ogata Tsutomu, eds., “Kasen no san,” KBZ, 6: 303-304.

<sup>7</sup> Dosui’s name consists of two characters from the sentence, “Who does the sounding?” which appears at the end of the conversation between Ziqi and Ziyou in the second chapter of the *Zhuangzi*.

<sup>8</sup> Ogino Kiyoshi and Kon Eizō, eds., “Shiyū Kyosui ate” [To Shiyū and Kyosui], KBZ, 8: 146.

the fundamental principle is the same. Those who dwell in art follow *zōka* (the creative, *C. zaohua*) and have the four seasons as their companion.”<sup>9</sup> In both cases the poet returns to the *Zhuangzi* for rationale and inspiration. It has been suggested that Bashō’s concept to “follow *zōka*” could well have formed around the same time, and his notion of *zōka*, which embodies the fundamental principle he asserts, is rooted in Daoist assumptions.<sup>10</sup>

One draft of “On the Unreal Dwelling,” dated early autumn of 1690, a few months earlier than the letter cited above, contains a similar passage about the “fundamental principle” in the last paragraph of the prose:

In the poetry of Saigyō and Sōgi, the painting of Sesshū, and the tea of Rikyū, despite the differences of their talents, the fundamental principle is one.<sup>11</sup>

Although in this excerpt Bashō does not mention what the fundamental principle is, the similar wording points to his idea revealed in *Oi no kobumi*. Shikō’s use of an expression from the *Zhuangzi* in describing Bashō

<sup>9</sup> KBZ, 6: 75.

<sup>10</sup> For earlier studies on the issue, see Nose Asaji, *Bashō kōza* [Studies on Bashō] (Tokyo: Sanseidō, 1943), 6: 34; Nonomura Katsuhide, “Bashō to Sōji to Sōgaku” [Bashō, the *Zhuangzi*, and Song Confucianism], *Renga haikai kenkyū* [Renga Haikai Studies] 15/11 (1957): 33-39; Hirota Jirō, *Bashō no geijutsu – sono tenkai to haikai* [Bashō’s Art – Its Development and Background] (Tokyo: Yūseidō, 1968), pp. 372-444; and Konishi Jin’ichi, “Bashō to gūgensetsu” [Bashō and Zhuangzi’s Parabolical Phraseology], *Nihon gakushiin kiyō* [The Japan Academy Bulletin] 18/3 (1960): 151-158 (this is part of a larger article, Konishi, “Bashō and Chuang-tsu’s Parabolical Phraseology,” *Nihon gakushiin kiyō* 18/2 (1960): 97-118, also 18/3 (1960): 145-184). See also, Peipei Qiu, “Daoist Concepts in Bashō’s Critical Thought,” in Steven Totosty de Zepetnek and Jennifer Jay, eds., *East Asian Cultural and Historical Perspectives* (Research Institute for Comparative Literature and Cross-Cultural Studies: University of Alberta, 1997), pp. 323-340.

<sup>11</sup> Bashō, *Genjūan no ki*, in KBZ, 6: 474. A complete translation of a different draft of the *haibun* can be found in Donald Keene ed., *Anthology of Japanese Literature from the Earliest Era to the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (New York: Grove Press, 1960), pp. 374-376.

speaking of “one principle running through all changes” further demonstrates the Daoist impact on Bashō’s concept of the fundamental principle of arts. In *Kuzu no matsubara*, Shikō also draws upon Zhuangzi’s name to praise the good quality of poetry. In a comment on Kikaku’s following poem,

<i>Kabashira ni</i>	A floating bridge
<i>Yume no ukihashi</i>	of dreams, hanging on
<i>Kakaru nari.</i>	swarming mosquitoes.

Shikō writes, “To compose a verse that captures an illusory world, a world that is neither dream nor reality like this one, we need someone we can only hope to see once in a millennium like Zhuangzi.”<sup>12</sup> Shikō’s use of Zhuangzi as a synonym of supreme poetic quality here was a common practice of the Shōmon School at the time. Along with the development of Shōmon *haikai*, the reading of the *Zhuangzi*, which had a deep impact on the themes of the school in the 1680s, was given more theoretical significance, and the *Zhuangzi* was cited frequently in the Shōmon’s compositional theory. Yet, Shikō’s *Kuzu no matsubara* didn’t go beyond sporadic citations of terms and names from the *Zhuangzi*, and his understanding of the Daoist classic was far from that of Bashō’s.

*Kuzu no matsubara* was published when Bashō was still alive and it was Shikō’s first full-length book on *haikai* theory. After Bashō’s death, Shikō remained the most productive theoretician among Bashō’s disciples. In addition to four lengthy books on *haikai* theory – *Kuzu no matsubara*, *Zoku goron* (Sequel to the Five Essays, 1699), *Haikai jūron* (Ten Essays on *Haikai*, 1719), and *Nijūgo ka jō* (Twenty-Five Issues, 1736) – and a number of shorter *haikai* treatises, he also compiled two huge *haikai* collections, *Honchō bunkan* (Selected Works by Contemporary Writers, 1717) and *Wakan bunsō* (Best Writings in Japanese and Chinese, 1727). Despite his impressive accomplishments in publication, however, many of Shikō’s works written after Bashō’s death have been criticized as having forged writings in Bashō’s name. One notable change in Shikō’s theory construction after Bashō was his view of the *Zhuangzi* in relation with *haikai*, while the name and ideas of the *Zhuangzi* continued to appear in Shikō’s verses and prose, Confucian values gradually replaced the Daoist

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<sup>12</sup> Shikō, *Kuzu no matsubara*, in SSH, pp. 41-42.

principles at the center of his *haikai* theory. In his “Preface” to *Honchō monzen*, a collection of *haibun* published in 1706, he writes:

All writings transmit the heart of the Kings of the Zhou<sup>13</sup> and Confucius, and elaborate in the way of the *Zhuangzi* and *Mengzi*; works in both Japanese and Chinese convey that spirit, but it is rare to have a work that also conveys their style.

Unlike Bashō, who asserts the fundamental principle of all arts in light of Daoist thought and rarely includes Confucian teaching in his theoretical framework, Shikō now sees the meaning of the *Zhuangzi* primarily in its elaborative writing style. He places Confucian values above the Daoist classic and often treats them as an overarching rubric that encompasses the thought of Lao and Zhuang. In *Nijūgo ka jō* he defines “The Way of *Haikai*” as the following:

Someone asked, “For what purpose do we compose *haikai*?” I replied, “It is to put vernacular words and daily language in an appropriate way.” Someone asked again, “What is the way *haikai* should follow?” I answered, “It is to break the existing way, like what Bodhidharma did to Buddhism and Zhuangzi did to Confucianism. *Haikai* follows the way of *waka* in the same manner. Based on this understanding we can see that departing from the way is to follow the way. Although *haikai* as a poetic form stands after *waka* and *renga*, its heart must follow the way toward enlightenment.”<sup>14</sup>

While stating that the *Zhuangzi* broke the existing Confucian way, in the final analysis he synthesizes the way of Lao-Zhuang and Confucianism, comparing them to the relationship between Bodhidharma and Buddhism. Shikō concludes ultimately that the way of *haikai*, though appearing anti-conventional, is consistent with the Buddhist and Confucian way toward enlightenment. Shikō’s point of view further develops into a frame of reference for his discussion on *kyō* (emptiness) and *jutsu* (substantiality),

<sup>13</sup> The first rulers of the Zhou dynasty (1122 BCE-249 BCE).

<sup>14</sup> Shikō, *Nijūgo ka jō*, in SSH, p. 601. The work was circulated privately among *haikai* poets before its publication around the end of the 1690s and the beginning of 1700.

which forms the foundation of his *haikai* theory. In *Haikai jūron*, a comprehensive book of theory produced later by Shikō, he describes the evolution of *haikai* as the following:

The way of *haikai* is originally about the monopoly of *kyo* and *jitsu*. It was handed down from the three emperors and five sovereigns to the mighty rulers Yu, Tang, and King Wen and King Wu of the Zhou Dynasty [in China], and its name takes its current form in Sima Qian's *Shi ji* (Records of History). Indeed, ever since Confucianism, Buddhism, and Lao-Zhuang parted ways from the way of Tai ji, *kyo* is substantialized by *jitsu*, and *jitsu* is canceled out by *kyo*, as seen in examples such as Zhuang Zhou who negated Confucius' benevolence and righteousness, and Bodhidharma who broke the transmission of Sakyamuni's scripture. The same is the change of *haikai*. We can say that *haikai* makes Confucianism and Buddhism easier to understand and it is a medium of Japanese and Chinese poetry.<sup>15</sup>

The discussion of the terms *kyo* and *jitsu* in *haikai* theories began long before Shikō. As indicated in Shikō's passage above, these terms are used widely in Confucian, Daoist, and Buddhist writings, and therefore have different connotations in different contexts. Earlier discussions of the terms in *haikai* literature, including the writings by the Danrin School in the 1670s and the remarks by Bashō in the 1690s, all spoke of these concepts in close relationship with the *Zhuangzi*. Nishiyama Sōin, the founder of the Danrin School, for example, used the terms in the following famous statement, "The art of *haikai* places falsehood (*kyo*) ahead of truth (*jitsu*). It is the *gūgen* of *waka*, the *kyōgen* (comedy) of *renga* (linked verse)."<sup>16</sup> The intertextual source of Sōin's statement, though not mentioned explicitly, is the *Zhuangzi*. *Gūgen*, or *yuyan* in Chinese, literally means fable, allegory, or parable. In the *Zhuangzi*, it refers to words said through the mouth of historical or fictional figures to make them more compelling. The Danrin

<sup>15</sup> Shikō, "Haikai jū ron," in SSH, p. 714.

<sup>16</sup> Nishiyama Sōin, "Orandamaru nibansen" [Holland II], in Iida Masakazu, Esaka Hironao, and Inui Hiroyuki eds., *Koten haibungaku taikai* [A Collection of Classical *Haikai* Literature] (Tokyo: Shueisha, 1971), 4: 439-440 [hereafter KHT]. The translation is from Donald Keene, *World Within Walls* (New York: Grove Press, 1976), p. 49.

School *haikai* poets took it as the essence of the *Zhuangzi* and used it as an essential literary device in composing *haikai*. Sōin himself made this clear elsewhere, “*Haikai*, a form of miscellaneous style, is the *gūgen* of *renga*. How can we not learn from Zhuang Zhou’s writings and revere Moritake’s tradition?”<sup>17</sup> Indeed, *kyo* and *jitsu* in Sōin’s *haikai* theory are based on the following discussion in the *Zhuangzi*:

What does the Way rely upon, that we have true (C. *shi*; J. *jitsu*) and false (C. *xu*; J. *kyo*)? What do words rely upon, that we have right or wrong? How can the Way go away and not exist? How can words exist and not be acceptable?<sup>18</sup>

The *Zhuangzi* declares that the Way does not rely upon concepts such as “true” and “false;” words do not rely upon concepts such as “right” and “wrong.” Both “true” and “false” and “right” and “wrong” are equally an individual universe of infinite proportion. This assumption of the *Zhuangzi* provided a good argument for Sōin when he was defending himself against accusations from the contemporary Teimon School. Around 1674, a conflict occurred between the Teimon and the Danrin schools. When Nishiyama Sōin published a hundred-verse sequence entitled *Kabashira hyakku* (Swarming Mosquitoes: One Hundred Verses), the Teimon responded with a criticism called *Shibuuchiwa* (An Astringent Fan), whose metaphorical title means a powerful fan to beat off the mosquitoes of the Danrin.<sup>19</sup> The work criticized Sōin’s verses as “having lost the essence (*hon’i*) of poetry while simply spitting out whatever he wanted to say.”<sup>20</sup> Defending his leader’s work, Sōin’s disciple Okanishi Ichū wrote *Shibuuchiwa hentō* (A Response to “An Astringent Fan”). Thus, the two schools began a lengthy quarrel unprecedented in Japanese literary history. The focus of the debates was whether the essence of *haikai* was “to assist government and to edify

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<sup>17</sup> Nishiyama Sōin, “Sōji zō san” [Eulogy of the Picture of Zhuangzi], quoted in Hirota Jirō, *Bashō no geijutsu – sono tenkai to haikai* (Tokyo: Yūseidō, 1968), p. 217.

<sup>18</sup> Watson, *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*, p. 39.

<sup>19</sup> The work is attributed to Saruhōshi, whose identity is not clear. He might be a person from Nara. Some scholars suspect that the author might be Kitamura Kigin.

<sup>20</sup> KHT, 4: 41.

people,”<sup>21</sup> as the Teimon, following the Confucian view of poetry, insisted, or “to make free exaggerations and create the most deluding falsehoods,”<sup>22</sup> which the Danrin saw in the essence of both *haikai* and the *Zhuangzi*.

It needs to be noted that *kyo* and *jitsu* as bipolar structures in the *Zhuangzi* have no impassable boundary between two opposites and *kyo* as an extremely important concept in Daoist epistemology is more often used to mean “emptiness.” For example, the *Zhuangzi* says, “The Way gathers in emptiness (C. *xu*; J. *kyo*) alone. Emptiness is the fasting of the mind.”<sup>23</sup> Here “emptiness” refers to a mental condition totally free of subjectivity, a state appropriate for attaining the *Dao*. The *Zhuangzi* stresses that supreme cognition occurs when one has completely eliminated subjectivity and let the self become one with the cosmos. This notion of *xu/kyo* had a profound impact on Chinese literary theories and Bashō’s remarks on *haikai* in his last years also used the term in this sense. He describes the appropriate state of mind in poetic composition as, “Staying in emptiness (*kyo*) while dealing freely with substantiality (*jitsu*), or to capture substantiality by entering emptiness.”<sup>24</sup> His famous statement, “Learn about pine from pines and learn about bamboo from bamboos,” according to his disciple, also is to teach his students how to empty their minds and “eradicate subjectivity.”<sup>25</sup>

Comparing Shikō’s interpretation of *kyo* and *jitsu* with that of the Danrin and of Bashō, it is clear that Shikō’s view is fundamentally different from Bashō’s and closer to the Danrins’ view. Yet, while defining *haikai* as an art monopolizing false and true as the Danrin did, Shikō differs from the Danrin in that he denies the oppositional nature of *haikai*’s liberal expressions and supports his view through synthesizing Confucianism, Buddhism, and Lao-Zhuang teaching. In *Haikai jūron*, there is a more elaborate discussion of “The Way of *Haikai*”:

The Way of *haikai* lies primarily in the freedom of *kyo* and *jitsu*, in staying away from the worldly concepts and following the truth of

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ichū, “Haikai mōgyū,” in KHT, 4: 83.

<sup>23</sup> Watson, *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*, p. 58.

<sup>24</sup> Zushi Rogan (?-1639), “Kikigaki nanoka gusa” [Notes Taken During the Seven Days with the Master], KBZ, 9: 269. The work records Bashō’s words during his stay at Haguro in 1689, when he was on his journey to the far north.

<sup>25</sup> Hattori Dohō, “Sanzōshi,” in KBZ, 7: 175.

poetry. People who don't truly understand this way cannot see the breadth of *haikai* and focus only on wild expressions or enchanting language. However, we should know that the principle point of *haikai* is to let one's heart wander freely between *kyo* and *jitsu* and to have an appropriate judgment of using language. *Kyo* and *jitsu* originate from the heart and manifest in language. Some people say that *haikai* represents the style of the *Laozi* and the *Zhuangzi*. Those people do not know the difference between yellow and white. The way of Zhuang and Lao places the heavenly wandering above the sage's benevolence and righteousness, twists the right and wrong of the common world, and indulges in the primitive state of *kyo* and *jitsu*. *Haikai*, on the other hand, deals with the right and wrong of the common world and pacifies the present life of common people. Therefore, *haikai* finds its way in the changes of *kyo* and *jitsu*, and seeks its principle in the harmony of common world....In this sense, the way of *haikai* conveys what exists among Confucianism, Buddhism, and Lao-Zhuang, and its principle exists in the balance of *kyo* and *jitsu*. We should know that the great ways of Confucianism and Buddhism are distinguished by where they place *kyo* and *jitsu*, and that *haikai* is a medium of both.<sup>26</sup>

Although obscure and not without contradictions at times, Shikō makes it clear in the passage that *haikai* as a medium of *kyo* and *jitsu* is not the same as the Way of Lao and Zhuang; rather, it conveys “what exists among Confucianism, Buddhism, and Lao-Zhuang.” Although Shikō repeatedly emphasizes that his work is based on Bashō's teaching, the difference between his position and Bashō's principle of following *zōka* and returning to *zōka* is unmistakable. It was not a surprise that Shikō was condemned by his fellow Shōmon poets not long after Bashō's death. The criticism toward Shikō must have been very harsh. In 1711 Shikō pretended to be dead. He wrote an essay, “On My Deathbed,” and even compiled a volume in memory of himself. Afterward he published either under different names or in the name of his own disciples. These acts only worsened Shikō's reputation among contemporary *haikai* poets and his works were often regarded as phony. Modern *haikai* scholars also generally hold a negative view of Shikō's writings after Bashō's death, dismissing them as expressions of Shikō's self-glorification that are beneath consideration.

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<sup>26</sup> Shikō, *Haikai jūron*, in SSH, pp. 727-728.

However, putting it in historical context, Shikō's peculiar theory construction and his replacing Daoist principles with Confucian values at the center of his *haikai* theory were not accidental. Shikō's theory sheds light onto the literary tradition from which *haikai* evolved. It also yields insights into the social and cultural environment of the time. Shikō's use of Confucian themes and vocabulary in his *haikai* theory first mirrors the increasing interest in Confucian thought in Tokugawa society in general. Early Japanese chronicles indicate that Confucianism was introduced to Japan in the third century CE, but over the centuries it was eclipsed by the doctrines of Buddhism, which were linked first to an aestheticism that enchanted courtly circles and later to a popular appeal that captured the faith of a broad audience.<sup>27</sup>

With the establishment of the Tokugawa government in the early seventeenth century, Confucianism began to enjoy official recognition as one of the most important schools of thought that affected the political and intellectual discourses, and rapidly penetrated the emergent popular culture in early modern Japan. The penetration of Confucian thought into the popular sphere was propelled by the popular education of the time. Before the seventeenth century, knowledge of Confucian texts was transmitted as esoteric learning and was open only to a few privileged families, typical of the Japanese tradition of secret transmission of art and learning. Since the Tokugawa period, Chinese classics with punctuations for Japanese reading became available to audiences consisting of lower classes. At the same time, public lectures on Confucian classics also opened the way for common people to learn the Confucian teaching.<sup>28</sup> The remarkably quick and wide spread of Confucian teaching was clearly documented in the emerging popular literature, including the works of the popular fiction writer Ihara Saikaku (1642-1693), the playwright Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653-1725), and some of the *haikai* masters.

The general popularity of Confucianism in Tokugawa literature made Bashō's extensive use of the *Zhuangzi* in his *haikai* particularly significant; it demonstrated a conscious effort to reinvent popular linked

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<sup>27</sup> Peter Nosco, "Introduction," in Peter Nosco, ed., *Confucianism and Tokugawa Culture* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, rpt. 1997), p. 5.

<sup>28</sup> For the presence of Confucianism in Tokugawa literature, see Donald Keene, "Characteristic Responses to Confucianism in Tokugawa Literature," in Nosco, ed., *Confucianism and Tokugawa Culture*, pp. 120-137.

verse through a carefully chosen classical frame of reference. As the latter half of the seventeenth century witnessed the renaissance of *haikai*, the *haikai* poets faced paradoxical demands in revitalizing *haikai*. On the one hand, they had to go beyond the limits of the classical linked verse tradition to reach a popular audience and to establish *haikai*'s identity as a commoners' poetic form. On the other hand, they needed codified poetic signifiers and intertextual structures to transform the vernacular *haikai* language (*haigon*) into poetry. Bashō's interest in the Daoist classic was rooted in the intersection of deconstructing and reconstructing the classical Japanese poetic tradition. He used the *Zhuangzi* as an authoritative source to help both turn the parodic and vernacular *haikai* expressions into poetic language and to translate the classical poetic conventions into the vernacular in the popular linked verse.<sup>29</sup> Bashō's emphasis on classical references in

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<sup>29</sup> For studies in Japanese on the relationship between the seventeenth century *haikai* and the *Zhuangzi*, see Yamamoto Heiichirō, "Haikai to Sōji ga gūgen" [*Haikai* and *Zhuangzi*'s Parable], *Kokugo to kokubungaku* [Japanese Language and Literature] 14/1 (1937): 60-87 and 14/2: 167-192; Kon Eizō, "Danrin haikai oboegaki – gūgensetsu no genryū to bungakushiteki jittai" [Notes on Danrin *Haikai* – The Origin of *Gūgen* Theories and its Presence in Japanese Literary History], *Kokugo kokubun kenkyū* [Japanese Language and Literary Studies] 7 (1953): 1-27; Nonomura Katsuhide, "Danrin haikai no gūgenron o megutte" [On the *Gūgen* Theories in Danrin *Haikai*], *Kokugo to kokubungaku* [Japanese Language and Literature] 33/11 (1956): 36-44; Konishi, "Bashō to gūgensetsu"; Hirota Jirō, *Bashō no geijutsu – sono tenkai to haikai* [Bashō's Art – Its Development and Background] (Tokyo: Yūseidō, 1968); and Peipei Qiu, "Haikai no kakuritsu to Sōji – Nihon shiika koten jūshi no dentō no kanten kara no bunseki" [The Establishment of *Haikai* and the *Zhuangzi* – In the Context of Japanese Poetic Tradition], *Nihon kenkyū* [Bulletin for Japanese Studies] 20 (2000): 261-291. For studies in English on the subject, see Peipei Qiu, "Onitsura's *Makoto* and the Daoist Concept of the Natural," *Philosophy East & West* 51/3 (2001): 232-246; "Bashō's *Fūryū* and the Aesthetic of *Shōyōyū*: Poetics of Eccentricity and Unconventionality," *Japan Studies Review* 5 (2001): 1-36; "Inventing the New Through the Old: The Essence of *Haikai* and the *Zhuangzi*," *Early Modern Japan* 9/1 (2001): 2-18; "Adaptation and Transformation: A Study of Taoist Influence on Early Seventeenth Century *Haikai*," in Amy V. Heinrich, ed., *Currents in Japanese Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp. 185-

his *haikai* reform warrants our particular attention here. Shikō's shifting away from the *Zhuangzi* to Confucian values, although a departure from Bashō's legacy, followed the same tradition of constructing literary theories on the basis of classical references.

As seen in the debate between the Teimon and the Danrin, the different schools of *haikai* poets all looked to classical references for authority. This emphasis on classical references, which is evident throughout the history of Japanese literature, does not suggest an inability to theorize. Rather, it indicates a tradition that derives authority from classical texts. Not only the fundamental purpose of poetry but also the legitimacy of a new genre and sub-genre, the criteria of a style, and the appropriation of significance, have to be justified through proper reference to canonical texts. When a classical reference was not available in their native texts, Japanese writers often used Chinese classics as the source for authority. Although *haikai* as a popular poetic form broke the classical conventions with its parodic and vernacular expressions, it carefully carried out the tradition of classical reference in its theory construction. From the Teimons' insistence on the Confucian definition of poetry, to the Danrins' interest in the free fabrication of the *Zhuangzi*, to Bashō's seeking inspiration in Daoist ideas, all three major *haikai* schools relied on the canonical texts to legitimize their theories. It was precisely in line with this tradition that Shikō constructed his theory in the peculiar way we have seen above. His synthesis of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Lao-Zhuang thought, although not always logical, was to help him justify the shift of emphasis in *haikai* from Bashō's lofty literary and spiritual values to more pragmatic and earthy interests. This shift was necessary to attract an audience among the commoners at the time.

Ogata Tsutomu characterizes the period from the Genroku (1688-1703) to Kyōho Era (1716-1735) in *haikai* history in terms of commercialization and vulgarization.<sup>30</sup> During that period, which roughly coincided with Shikō's *haikai* activities, *tentori* (point-garnering) *haikai* and *maekuzuke* (verse-capping) overshadowed the poetic and spiritual communities formed at the *renku* (linked verse) compositions among urban *haikai* practitioners. At the same time, provincial *haikai* schools geared their *haikai* production to meet the taste of a growing audience among the

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<sup>30</sup> Ogata Tsutomu, "Haikai," *Shinchō Nihon bungaku shōjiten* (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1968), pp. 916-919.

populace. The *haikai* of Shikō and his followers at Mino was representative of this trend. This trend, as Horikiri Minoru points out, was a product of the time. In his discussion of the changes Shikō promoted after Bashō's death, Horikiri notes that "the vulgar and straightforward style was not a characteristic limited only to *haikai* at the time. It was a period that witnessed the contradiction and refraction of the Tokugawa system, which was reflected in the rapid growth of the commercial economy that shook the feudal government, the increased oppression on townsmen, and the dissociation of the peasant class. The commoners' aspiration for freedom and pressing demands were gradually turned into leisurely hedonism and practical wisdom, which determined the general tendency of arts and culture of the time."<sup>31</sup>

Amid the high waves of the popularization and commercialization of *haikai*, the poetic idea and practice Bashō had promoted – to do away with worldly concerns by living as an aesthete-recluse and perpetual traveler – became somewhat too high-brow for the commoner's taste. Consequently, the Daoist ideas in which Bashō found the inspiration for his *haikai* ideal were less fitting to Shikō, who sought a *haikai* style that could appeal to the ears of common people. As seen earlier, Shikō spelled out this change clearly in his *Haikai jūron*, "The way of Zhuang and Lao places heavenly wandering above the sage's benevolence and righteousness, twists the right and wrong of the common world, and indulges in the primitive state of *kyo* and *jitsu*." The *haikai* of Shikō's time, on the other hand, "deals with the right and wrong of the common world and pacifies the present life of common people." Therefore, Shikō stressed the need to find the way of *haikai* "in the changes of *kyo* and *jitsu*, and to seek its principle in the harmony of common world." It is not a surprise that Shikō describes the function and practice of *haikai* as being, "to pacify the minds of common people, and to teach the principle of the five cardinal articles of morality (*gorin*)," the same as the way in which "the *Analects* enlightens Confucius' disciples."<sup>32</sup>

As demonstrated above, Shikō's *haikai* theory mirrors his time. As Bashō's disciple, Shikō could not completely deprecate the Daoist classic in his theorization, but he consciously incorporated Confucian values, which

<sup>31</sup> Horikiri Minoru, *Shōfū hairon no kenkyū – Shikō o chūshin ni* [A Study of the Bashō School *Haikai* Theories – Focusing on Shikō] (Tokyo: Meiji shoin, 1982), p. 18.

<sup>32</sup> Shikō, *Haikai jūron*, in SSH, p. 815.

addressed issues in the daily life of the common people, in order to attract wider public interest. In this effort, although he was denounced by Buson as “a boondocks Shōmon,” his “easy and vulgar” approach played an important role in popularizing *haikai* in the provincial areas.



