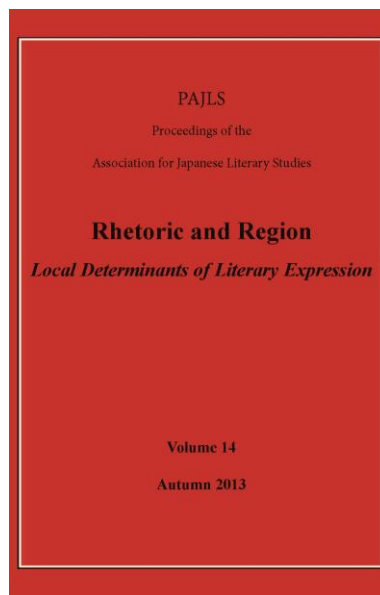


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Struggling Between Nostalgia and Reality: The Association of Chinese Literature Studies and Takeda Taijun's *Fūbaika*

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Introduction

Takeda Taijun (1912-1976) is well-known for his China-related writings. As a former specialist in Chinese literature, he was familiar with Chinese literary traditions and highly appreciated Chinese culture. Nevertheless, the emotions that resulted from his wartime experience and his involvement in The Association of Chinese Literature Studies reshaped his understanding of China and helped him realize the diversity of political views on China in postwar Japan. This paper will examine Takeda's Chinese experience, including his years as a core member of the Association, and analyze how his diverse views are shown in his first novel, *Fūbaika* (Wind-Pollinated Flowers).

Takeda Taijun and His Chinese Experience

Takeda Taijun was born on February 12, 1912, the second son of Ōshima Yasunobu, who was a Buddhist priest of the Pure Land Sect. He was raised in the Shioizumi Temple in Tokyo. Later he became the adopted son of his father's master and changed his last name to Takeda (his original name was Oboe). He developed an interest in Chinese literature when he was in high school, where he spent most of his time reading *Dream of the Red Chamber* and the available works of Lu Xun and Hu Shi. He also joined a left-wing organization and participated actively in the group's political agenda, despite the fact that the government at that time dealt harshly with radicals.

After graduating from Urawa Higher School, Takeda entered Tokyo Imperial University in 1931 and chose to major in Chinese literature. There he met Takeuchi Yoshimi and Okazaki Toshio. Because of his involvement in several major left-wing activities, he was expelled from school. In 1934, Takeda Taijun, Takeuchi Yoshimi, Okazaki Toshio, Masuda Wataru, and others founded the Association of Chinese Literature Studies (中国文学研究会). In the same year, the first volume of their official journal, *Monthly Journal of Chinese Literature* (中国文学月報) was published. Takeda started publishing essays on contemporary Chinese literature and translations of Chinese literature works.

In addition to his textual experience with China and Chinese literature, his direct experience of China during wartime greatly influenced his attitude towards China and set the

fundamental tone of his literature. Takeda was drafted into the army and sent to the Chinese front. As he described later in his works, he literally saw *jigoku* (hell) when he was in China. Living amongst and walking over corpses every day challenged his original understanding of human nature and led him to start questioning the true meaning of war, death, and survival. After he returned from China in 1939, he published *Shiba Sen*, one of his most representative works. In this critical biography of Sima Qian, the well-known historian of the Han Dynasty, Takeda describes him as a "man who lives with shame and disgrace." This statement reveals the shadow on Takeda's psyche that was left when he participated in the invasion of China in spite of the fact that he was a specialist in Chinese studies.

In 1944, Takeda went back to Shanghai and found a position at The Society of Sino-Japanese Culture, where he stayed until returning to Japan in 1946. In Shanghai, he anticipated the fact that Japan would be defeated in the war. His war experience changed his view of life as well as his view of the world. As for literature, Takeda published the short story "Shinpan" (The Judgment) in 1947, which is a reflection of his own war experience. In the same year, he became an assistant professor at Hokkaido University. However, he quit the job the next year because he decided to focus on becoming a professional writer.

His novel *Fūbaika* ((Wind-Pollinated Flowers) was published in 1952. The main storyline is based on his experience at The Association of Chinese Literature Studies. Several main characters in this novel are modeled on real people. Most of the subplots reference social events that actually happened in contemporary Japan and China. This novel is full of intellectual conversations, which show vividly how a group of Japanese intellectuals were struggling with guilt about the war with China and with failing to see the future of Japan as a defeated country.

Takeda gained fame as a writer in the early 1950s. In the postwar period, his writings tended to focus less specifically on China and more on broader ideas of human nature. In 1954, he published a short story called "Hikarigoke," which is his own interpretation of The Incident of Hikarigoke¹. Another representative novel, *Mori to mizuumi no matsuri* (The Festival of the Forest and the Lake) was published in 1958. This narrative deals with the lives of the Ainu minority in Hokkaido.

In 1971, the novel *Fuji* was published. The setting of the story is a mental hospital at the foot of Mount Fuji during the Pacific War. He passed away in 1976 due to liver cancer. He was the most

¹ The Incident of Hikarigoke: In December 1943, a Japanese Army transport ship wrecked on Shiretoko Peninsula (Northeastern Hokkaido), which is famous for its cold and snowy winters. The Captain and a young sailor were separated from the other sailors and stayed temporarily in a *banya* (a facility that fishermen build near the areas where they fish to use as a workshop and lodging). Due to the shortage of food, the young sailor died, and the Captain survived by eating his flesh. The bones of the dead young sailor were discovered in May 1944, and the Captain was arrested for murder.

important writer in the 1950s and 1960s who dealt with Chinese experience and concept of China in Japan as well as the psychological effects of war.

The Association of Chinese Literature Studies and Translation

The Association of Chinese Literature Studies was founded as a small literary group. It was the first association to start using the name "chūgoku" instead of "shina" to refer to China in the prewar period. Their name reflected their desire to focus their research specifically on contemporary Chinese literature, as opposed to other associations that studied older works. Their name is considered a unique statement by this literary association.

The activities of the association started in March 1934 and continued until October 1943. During these ten years, translation was their central activity. However, their work was not limited to translating modern Chinese literary works. The members also participated actively in discussion on the theory of translation. Many of them were dealing with the problems of translating foreign literature. For example, in the postscript of the first volume of the *Monthly Journal of Chinese Literature*, Takeuchi Yoshimi states that they translated "China" as "chūgoku" and not "shina" because their research targets include both classical and modern Chinese literature, and because they are trying to include not only literature, but also Chinese culture (Xiong, 16). At the time, a commonly used traditional translation of "Chinese literature" was "shina bungaku." However, according to the Association, this term was outdated and represented the old methodology of Chinese literary studies and sinology. Abandoning the old term and adopting a new one indicates their motivation to set a new trend of modern Chinese literary studies and make a clear distinction between them and other previous sinology associations.

Another important reason for the unique name of their association was their concern for Chinese intellectuals' feelings. From the May Revolution to the 1930s, Chinese students in Japan continued to object to people referring to China as "shina." Two such students were Guo Moruo (郭沫若) and Yu Dafu (郁達夫), who later founded the left-wing literary society Chuangzao She (創造社, Creation Society) and became close friends with some members of The Association of Chinese Literature Studies. Takeuchi Yoshimi and other fellow members realized that maintaining a good relationship with Chinese left-wing writers was very important to the development of their association (Xiong, 17). Therefore, they chose to adopt the translation "chūgoku" as a part of their association's official name, even though later both "chūgoku" and "shina" were used in the Association's writings.

Volumes 6 and 7 of the *Monthly Journal of Chinese Literature* were special volumes

dedicated to translations of modern Chinese short essays. Those Chinese writers whose works were translated included Lu Xun (魯迅), Lin Yutang (林語堂), Zhou Zuoren (周作人), Laoshe (老舍), Yu Dafu (郁達夫), and Liu Bannong (劉半農). They were all supporters and practitioners of vernacular Chinese literature. The six translators are Okazaki Toshio, Masuda Wataru, Takeda Taijun, Takeuchi Yoshimi, Matsueda Shigeo and Sanetō Keishū (Xiong, 19). Those members of The Association of Chinese Literature believed that vernacular writing would become the mainstream of future Chinese literature. At that time, the majority of the scholars of the Chinese literary tradition in Japan showed no interest in modern Chinese literature. In contrast, the association focused on translating vernacular Chinese literature that was written after the May Fourth Movement (1919). Unlike traditional sinology, they embraced those modern Chinese writers (such as Lu Xun) as a part of their research project (Xiong, 20).

Their translations built the foundation for studies of modern Chinese literature in the postwar period. Nevertheless, except for those of a few Chinese writers (Lu Xun, Zhou Zuoren), most modern Chinese literary works that were translated by the members were not highly evaluated by the Association. To them, translating those works was a way to show their neutral attitude towards Chinese literature. Their main purpose of translation was to introduce modern Chinese literature without any prejudice (Xiong, 22). The reasoning behind this purpose seems to have been to discover the future of their own literature based on the experience of translating and studying modern Chinese literature.

The activities of The Association of Chinese Literature Studies were greatly affected by the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War. After the Incident of Lugou Bridge (July 1937),² Takeuchi Yoshimi was dispatched by the Ministry of Education and went to China on a research tour. Four other members (Takeda included) were drafted into the army and sent to the battlefield in China. From 1937 to 1939, those members who stayed in Tōkyō took turns being the editor of the journal. However, due to the political atmosphere and the suppression of freedom of speech at that time, the quality of the journal was greatly diminished (Xiong, 23). After Takeuchi returned to Japan in 1939, he decided to reorganize the Association and changed the name of the journal to *Journal of Chinese Literature*, focusing on translations of Chinese literature. Before the war started, translations of about 60 works were published in the journal, of which about 40 works were written by contemporary authors. In addition, some members of the association also published stand-alone translations of novels and anthologies (Xiong, 20)..

The Association was originally founded as a research association, and their goal was to create

² Refers to a battle between the Republic of China's National Revolutionary Army and the Imperial Japanese Army (July 7, 1937), often used as the marker for the start of the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945).

a new school of Chinese studies. However, under the authority of the academic tradition, it was hard to achieve their ambitious goal. From 1937 on, the opinions of some members of the Association began to differ from its founding principle. Some of the members suggested that it might be better to switch from pure literary translation to academia. The disagreement inside the association led to several members leaving (Kita, 65). Eventually, due to the Japanese domestic political atmosphere (where the government was dominated by the right wing and military) and the internal divergence of opinions, The Association of Chinese Literature Studies was dissolved in 1943.

***Fūbaika* and Diverse Views on China**

Takeda's first novel, *Fūbaika* (Wind-Pollinated Flowers) was based on his experience in China and as a member of The Association of Chinese Literature Studies. It was published in *Gunzō* from January to November 1952 in the middle of the Korean War (June 1950-July 1953). It was also his debut as a postwar writer. The story is set in Tokyo during of the Korean War, a time with a very sensitive socio-historical background (Shan, 75). Although the previous war had ended only a few years earlier, the direction of postwar political development had already turned conservative. Japan participated in the Korean War and played the role of killer again. It was hard for most intellectuals to accept the “conservative turn of Japan's domestic and international politics” (Shan, 76). During this time, different groups had different opinions on China-related issues. In *Fūbaika*, Takeda tries to expose the diverse views on China, war, and human nature in postwar Japan.

The story takes place over the course of three days and focuses on a group of Japanese intellectuals. The intellectual conversations between those characters stand out as a distinct characteristic. For example, what happened to a specific character is indicated in other characters' conversations rather than being narrated directly. Takeda's concern and uncertainty about the postwar political atmosphere in Japan is also implied in conversations. Characters in this novel are from different groups based on their political views and their relationship with the main character. The center of the plots is The Society of Chinese Cultures Studies and the members. Why and how other characters are connects to them strings the subplots together. Although none of these characters are fully developed, Takeda displays a group of figures who show different types of individual views on China.

Many characters in this novel are based on real models. The model for The Society of Chinese Culture Studies is The Association of Chinese Literature Studies. Takeda himself is the model for the main character, Mine, who is a writer who has given up serious writing and has switched to erotic fiction. In this novel, he is apparently suffering from disillusion with politics and is avoiding

reality by indulging in decadence. The model for Gunchi, who is the leader of the Society, is Takeuchi Yoshimi. Mine's lover, Mitsue, is based on Takeda's wife, Suzuki Yuriko. The model for Fumio is Takeda's brother-in-law, Fujita Kanga (Kawanishi, 327).

Four Groups in *Fūbaika* Based on Political Views about China

The main male characters depicted in this novel can be categorized into four groups based on their different political views about China: the leftist group called the Chinese Culture Research Society; Conservative and right wing group; anarchist group; and the Marxist group. These four categories represent the four main political views about China among Japanese intellectuals during the postwar period. Mine, the main character, has been a core member of the Chinese Culture Research Society for fifteen years. However, according to the narrative in the novel, he tends to distance himself from the group's political idealism. He even gave up serious writing and switched to erotic fiction because of his failed political ideals (Shan, 77). Mine's struggles seem to represent the experience of a great many Japanese intellectuals at that time, especially those who once studied Chinese literature and longed for Chinese culture.

The central figure of the leftist group is Gunchi, who is based on the model of Takeuchi Yoshimi. He has devoted himself to promoting Sino-Japanese friendship. In the first chapter of this novel, Takeda describes the original goal of founding the society, "to build a new bridge between Japan and China" (Takeda, 4: 109). Although the picture of the future of Sino-Japanese relationship seems very beautiful in this group of people's imagination, their power is extremely weak. Leftist ideology is opposed and threatened by right-wingers, and the group does not have enough economic and social support. Therefore, Mine, who realizes that it is impossible to achieve their goal, often criticizes Gunchi's idealism. Gunchi's idealism is expressed in his understanding of the word "China," as he explains in the following passage: "To us, the word 'China' once was the crystal of beautiful spirit, which represents our infinite suffering and yearning" (Takeda, 4: 110).

For Gunchi, "China" is a sacred word. Any kind of disrespect is unforgivable. Therefore, even Mine, who seems to accept the fact that "China" has become a popular word during the postwar period, is considered an accomplice in the blasphemy. Gunchi is obsessively pure in his idealism among those leftist individuals who had immersed themselves in an imaginary beautiful future for the Sino-Japanese relationship without realizing the cruel and disappointing reality. By using Mine's voice, Takeda shows his reluctance to accept the idealism about China. However, in terms of how to deal with the reality, he does not provide a solution. Much as in his depiction of Mine in the story, Takeda was still struggling and searching for the future of Japanese intellectuals' relation

to China.

On the other hand, the character Hinoya represents the right-wing group of intellectuals in the postwar period. He used to be Mine and Gunchi's friend, but now he is the leader of a right-wing group which supports anti-communist activities. Unlike the leftists, he has strong financial backing. Hinoya's attitude towards the Sino-Japanese relationship is totally different from Gunchi's. Instead of building a new bridge of friendship between Japan and China, Hinoya supports war. His thoughts are described in the following passage:

I am not going to become an antiwar person. I am not going to be deceived by Mao Zedong and Q³ and give up the preparations for war. Why can't Japanese troops enter Manchuria? Manchuria is the land that was taken back from Russia by my grandfather, my father, and hundreds of thousands of grandfathers and fathers from Japanese farm villages, who bled away their lives. Why do only Chinese people have the right to own that broad land and use its resources? Why do only Chinese people own the majority of Asian land while the land for Japanese people has to be narrowed down to a few small islands? (Takeda, 4: 208)

Hinoya's right-wing political views seem very obvious here. His attitude towards China is based on the logic that Japan is in need of acquiring land. He resents the inequity, by which China possesses the majority of land in Asia and Japan has only a few small islands. This simple reasoning has caused this faction to set China as a target for its political agenda of Japanese expansion. Like most right-wing individuals at that time, Hinoya believes that his argument is reasonable. He also expresses his strong criticism of Chinese studies. He points out that the tradition of Chinese studies made Japanese people become "slaves" of Chinese culture during the war and argues that those institutes which conducted China-related research should take responsibility for the loss of Japan's own culture (Takeda, 4: 209). Not only due to land and resources, but even in terms of culture, China and Japan are incompatible according to the right-wing political views that Hinoya articulates.

The anarchist character, Mitamura, is depicted as different from the other characters. He is a half-Japanese half-Chinese person, who is of both Japanese and Chinese heritage. The possible reason that Takeda made this character a person of mixed heritage is to reply to Gunchi's goal of "building a new bridge between Japan and China." For Mitamura, "the bridge was already built in the flow of my blood" (Takeda, 4, 157). On the other hand, he is struggling between his two

³ Here Q refers to a famous contemporary left-wing Chinese writer, based on the model of Guo Moruo (1892-1978).

identities: the victim (Chinese) and the victimizer (Japanese). However, because of his particular double identity, he seems to have a certain level of "superiority" (Wang: 154). Compared to Gunchi's idealism, Mitamura apparently has a deeper understanding of the reality of the contemporary Sino-Japanese relationship based on his previous wartime experience. As he argues, "Japan developed because of its exploitation of China. This is the fate of Japan. No matter how much Gunchi reflects on and criticizes it, Gunchi himself is a part of it" (Takeda,4: 157). By depicting the character Mitamura and describing the conversation between him and some members of The Chinese Culture Research Society, Takeda reemphasizes his divergence from the ideas of Takeuchi (the model of Gunchi) about what China means. Takeuchi's idealism could not deal with the real problems in the Sino-Japanese relationship. In the end, the project of "building a bridge" is hindered by "the fate of Japan." Mine's suffering stems from his knowledge of the real conditions in China. He represents Takeda's uncertainty about the future relationship between China and Japan. Compared to Gunchi's exclusively idealistic views, Mine's paradoxical vision of China seems deeper and more vibrant because it touches the cruel and depressing reality.

The Marxist, Mamoru, is Mitsue's brother. He believes in Marxism and considers China a model for Japan's revolutionary future (Shan, 78). He believes that Japan is in need of a revolution and is longing for one. However, he ends up being beaten up while distributing antiwar fliers to the workers at the PD factory.⁴ The choice of political direction in postwar Japan was closely related to Japan's views on China. Should Japan support the new China, oppose it, or follow its pattern of revolution? The reality is that both leftists and Marxists saw China as a model. However, right-wing thought was becoming the mainstream of Japanese politics at that time and threatened leftist and Marxist activities. The portrayal of the failure of leftist and Marxist activities reflects Takeda's confusion and uncertainty about what was the best solution for postwar Japanese politics.

Reflections on China and the Wartime Experience

As discussed above, in this story, different characters (groups) have different attitudes towards the contemporary Sino-Japanese relationship and different ideas about what China means. As for the main character, Mine, unlike those who study China for political or economic purposes, his view of China is based on his own wartime experience. By recalling the details of his experience in China, he expresses his deep sense of guilt. His sense of guilt leads him to criticize those intellectuals who participate in China-related activities but have "no sympathy toward China"

⁴ A weapons factory which reopened after the end of WWII because of the increasing orders from the American military during the Korean War. In this novel, it is referred to as the PD factory.

(Shan, 84). Mine argues that, for those who have killed Chinese people during the war, it is ridiculous to become so-called "Chinese experts" and translate the publications from the new China. He questions their intentions in being involved in Chinese affairs. This explains why Mine tends to distance himself from China-related activities and groups in Japan (Shan, 85).

In addition to the sense of guilt and sympathy towards China, Takeda also emphasizes individual responsibility for the war in China through Mine's reflections. Mine's visit to the PD factory is a significant incident in this novel. The PD factory reopens because of increasing military orders from America during the Korean War. Mine is invited to give a speech to the workers there. When Mine visits, he learns that three workers died because the drinking water had been poisoned. After that, Mine decides to change the topic of his speech from romantic love to "invisible killing." This speech reveals Takeda's attitude towards the war and his awareness of guilt.

In the speech, Mine talks about a mass killing incident: the Teigin incident in 1948, which caused the death of twelve employees at a bank in Tokyo. Then he points out that two characteristics of killing in the modern period are sheer number of deaths and the unconscious involvement of "ordinary people" (Shan, 87). He also suggests that it is difficult to identify the victimizer because the boundary has become unclear. Here Mine uses the Teigin incident to hint at the Korean War:

The most horrible thing about the modern period is that the killer not only sometimes forgets what he has done, he sometimes does not even know that he is a killer. As long as the killer and the killed do not know each other, guilt or punishment is not a problem. Those who do not know their crimes can believe that they are good citizens until their death . . . However, I am not giving this speech because I want to stop the munitions production immediately. (Takeda, 4: 184)

In this speech, Mine argues that it is difficult to identify the killer in the modern period because this kind of mass killing involves a lot of people who do not even know they are killers, like the workers at the PD factory, whose job is to make weapons for the Korean War. In this way they are participating in the activity of killing Koreans and Chinese on the battlefield. The workers are indirectly involved in the mass killing without even realizing that they are a part of the slaughter.

Mine's speech has a strong antiwar tone and spirit. During the war, Japanese invaded most parts of East Asia. They were the aggressive killers. However, now they are killing again by indirect involvement in the mass slaughter conducted by the United States in the postwar period. Through this speech, Takeda strongly criticizes Japan's unconscious repetition of the historical

tragedy in the present postwar context. From this point of view, the novel *Fūbaika* connects the past wartime experience and the contemporary situation between Japan and East Asia. Takeda argues that although the war has already ended, Japan has not stopped being involved in killing because it is under the control of American military power. Where Japan is going remains unknown. Although Takeda does not provide a solution in this novel, he shows an intellectual's concerns about the past war and Japan's future.

Chinese Literary References

As a specialist in Chinese literature, Takeda employs elements of Chinese literature, especially modern Chinese literature, in this China-related novel. Chinese literary references appear in the intellectuals' conversations to support their different views on China and Chinese literature. Such references also appear in some subplots and the main characters' self-reflections. The use of Chinese literary references enlarges the literary and philosophical dimensions of this politically oriented novel. It also highlights the points Takeda tries to make in the novel. The following two examples explain the purpose of using these references.

In Chapter 9, after Mine leaves for the PD factory, Mitsue feels depressed and ends up entering a Shinjuku night club and working for one night as a prostitute by using Momoyo's name. There she encounters Hinoya and several other young right-wingers, who are heading for Taiwan the next day. They order Mitsue to write a Chinese poem from memory. She writes down a poem composed by Lu Xun in 1931:

I've gotten used to the long night of spring time,
 My hair grows white as I hide with my wife and children.
 In dreams I saw my dear mother in tears,
 The chieftain's flags on the city walls are always changing.
 It's hard to see my friends turned into ghosts,
 I turn to the sword and compose these lines.
 Then I frown, because there is no place for me to write them down,
 The moonlight glimmers like water on my black gown. (Takeda, 4: 211-212)

This poem was written by Lu Xun after some of his young left-wing friends were executed in Shanghai. It shows Lu Xun's grief and indignation, and his sympathy towards those young intellectual students. This poem actually represents Mine's indirect condemnation of Hinoya

(right-wing group). Although Mine never appears in this side story, he "encounters" Hinoya and his right-wing group through Mitsue's involvement with them. Takeda indicates that Mitsue learned to write this poem from Mine. Although she does not know the historical facts behind the poem, nor the meaning of each line, she still writes down the poem correctly and neatly. After she finishes, Hinoya repeats the name of "Lu Xun" twice, with a "gloomy face" (Takeda, 4: 212). It might indicate that Hinoya understands the code of this poem, as a kind of indirect criticism from Mine.

In Chapter 12, during his conversation with Momoyo, Mine mentions a Chinese contemporary novel, *The Changes of the Li Village*. It was written by Zhao Shuli in 1945. Mine claims that the most unforgettable character in this novel is Xiaomao. He is a villager who always bullies the other villagers by flattering people with power, both the landlord and the Eighth Route Army. Therefore, he is despised and hated by both sides. In Mine's eyes, he is a "completely weak person." That same night, Mine has a dream about turning into Xiaomao himself. In the dream he is surrounded by angry villagers who are trying to kill him with weapons in their hands. After describing those angry villagers and the desperate Xiaomao, Mine (Xiaomao) yells out: "What if the person you are judging now is not only myself? What if you're judging all human beings? If that is true, then I probably can die like a human being, no matter how leisurely my life had been" (Takeda, 4: 244).

It should be noted that in this description, Mine (Xiaomao) does not show any dissatisfaction about the fact that he is going to be killed. What he cares about more is the shame because he is the only one who is going to be punished by the majority. Xiaomao is considered weak because he has no courage to confront his own "individual responsibility." He does not want to admit it because it is "shameful." However, if the responsibility lies with all human beings, he can feel comfortable with it because there is no "shame." Here Takeda raises an important issue about the national responsibility and individual responsibility for the war. The logic seems to be that if the responsibility is ascribed to the whole country, then there is no individual responsibility. Takeda argues, nevertheless, that to refuse to admit individual responsibility is proof of "weakness." By referring to this character, Xiaomao, Takeda expands his philosophical outlook concerning the responsibility for the war.

Conclusion

Takeda's personal experience during the wartime period and his involvement in the Association of Chinese Literature Studies provided the material for *Fūbaika*. What Takeda tries to achieve in this

novel is to depict the political chaos in the postwar period, as well as the suffering and anxiety of contemporary Japanese intellectuals, who are represented by the main character, Mine. Clearly, the external chaos was formed by the conflict between different political views, especially those on China. Even though the problems that cause the crisis in conscience on the part of Japanese intellectuals are indicated, the possible solutions, however, are not provided. The open ended nature of the novel indicates the main character's uncertainty about the future of Japan's political direction). In his essay “*Fūbaika ni tsuite*” (About *Fūbaika*), Takeda explains the title *Fūbaika* (風媒花). He states it refers to “the vast numbers and the ephemerality of pollen.” The pollen indicates political chaos, which “can be collected by the wind and transformed into fruit” (Takeda, 12: 252). The “wind (風)” might indicate China, which serves as a medium (媒) between the past and the present, the present and the future. The “fruit (実)” might indicate the possible solution to the problematic situation and the future of Japanese politics. The title of the novel, however, indicates that the flowers are still just flowers (花) and the fruit has not been produced yet. It is a sign of Takeda’s uncertainty about the future but also of his hope. Chinese literary tradition and culture seems to be a sacred space that a great many Japanese intellectuals have longed for. On the other hand, the contemporary reality of postwar China is also a mirror, which reminds them of the necessity of solving the dilemma and striving for a new Japan.

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