

# The Development of Naitō Konan's Progressive View of History: A Point of Convergence with Zhang Xuecheng's *Wenshi tongyi*\*

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## Abstract

An important feature of Naitō Konan's historiography is his progressive view of history. The development of this progressive view came not only from modern Western scholarship but also from early-modern Chinese and Japanese traditional scholarship. Examples of such Chinese scholarship are Du You's *Tong dian*, Zhu Xi's *Zhuzi yu lei*, Wang Yinglin's *Kunxue jiuwen* and Zhang Xuecheng's *Wen shi tong yi*, which were all works that Naitō liked to read. This essay will show Naitō's points of convergence with Zhang Xuecheng's scholarship, in particular, his advocating that the Six Classics are all historical works, and will evaluate Naitō's attempts to find spiritual similarities between Chinese and Western scholarship.

**Key words:** Naitō Konan, Hu Shih, Zhang Ertian, Jin Xingxiang, Zhang Xuecheng, Du You, Tominaga Nakamoto, *Wenshi tongyi*

On January 26, 1931, the well-known East Asian historian Naitō Konan (1866–1934) gave a lecture to Emperor Hirohito in the Imperial Palace as part of the New Year's celebrations. He lectured on historical changes in customs concerning preparation of a corpse for sacrifice, following a lord in death, marriage within the same family name, etc., as found in volume 48 of *Tongdian* (A Comprehensive Collection of Laws and Regulations), by Du You (735–812), a grand councilor during the Tang dynasty. In Naitō's notes for the lecture, there is the following comment:

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Selected in his prime [for office in the central government] by Yang Yan, the mid-Tang grand councilor who extensively reformed finances and made epochal changes in the tax system, Du You, in my opinion, was the first Chinese historian after Sima Qian to be thoroughly familiar with practical affairs. Hence, his reasoning was always well founded, and he never lapsed into specious argument. . . . As a historian, Du You really excelled in giving clear expression to the outlook that denigrates the past and affirms the present. In particular, he regarded China as superior to the countries around it because it had advanced its traditional culture, and this, he thought, was because the Chinese, a racially superior stock, continually produced talent that gradually reformed pernicious customs.

Moreover, Du You's views were not limited to recognizing advances in culture, but also encompassed superior Chinese methods of research. When studying the rites mentioned in the classics, which had been revered in China since ancient times, Du You would compare them with the native customs of peripheral peoples. Thus they used the research methods of modern ethnology; that is, already more than 1,200 years ago they used the very same scientific methods that contemporary French Sinologists use in studying China. Such brilliance is truly admirable. Hence, I would like respectfully to present to Your Majesty passages in which Du You repeatedly argued for this view of his and passages in which Zhu Xi and Wang Yinglin too draw attention to this idea.<sup>1</sup>

As is well known, *Tongdian*, on which Du You spent over 30 years arduously compiling, is a 200-volume work describing in detail historical changes in the economy, the selection process, offices of government, rites, music, the military, punishments, administrative divisions, border defense, etc. Up until that time, most of the imperial lectures on Chinese works were on Confucian classics, but Naitō, late in life, selected this famous work on the history of the Chinese early-imperial system, and he praised Du You for the practical scholarship, progressive view of history, and pioneering methodology anticipating the methods of modern Western ethnology that appeared in this work.

Come to think about it, the strong points that Naitō praised in Du You's scholarship were, in a sense, also the stance adopted by Naitō, who spent a lifetime explaining Chinese classics and history. Well, how did Naitō arrive at this stance? In particular, how did he come to develop his progressive view of

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1 "Shōwa roku nen ichi gatsu nijūroku nichi Gokōsho hajime Kansho shinkō an" (Draft of a New Year's Imperial Lecture on a Chinese Book, January 26, 1931), in *Naitō Konan zenshū* (Complete Works of Naitō Konan) (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō: 1970), vol. 7, p. 228.

history? Below I will look at Naitō's education in his youth and his contact with Zhang Xuecheng's scholarship in his prime, in order to find the clues to resolve these questions.

### I. Initiation into Chinese and English Studies in His Youth

Born shortly before the Meiji Restoration, Naitō, like many of his contemporaries, received training in the Chinese classics and was initiated into English studies. His father and his mother's father were both teachers in local rural schools. Hence, during his youth, Naitō was blessed with a good educational background. Late in life Naitō recalled his early education as follows:

At the age of five, with brush in hand, I began to learn to write. My father wrote my copybook, and I began learning the numerals and the alphabet. . . . Also, shortly before my mother's death, I began to learn how to read. First I had to read the *Twenty-four Filial Exemplars* in Chinese. My father would point to the character, and I would read. Because I was a smart student, I remembered my lessons well. My father had memorized many poems and would often recite them at night and at other times. The poems included descriptive poems of Rai Sanyo and even such long poems as Bai Juyi's "Changhenge" (Song of Everlasting Sorrow), all of which he recited by heart. Since he had a good voice, he was especially pleased to do this. As I was at his side listening, I memorized many poems this way. . . . Next I learned from my father how to read the Four Books [*Great Learning, Doctrine of the Mean, Analects, and Mencius*] by rote.<sup>2</sup>

Thus being uncommonly intelligent and willing to work twice as hard as others, Naitō made smooth progress in his studies. After elementary school, he took the entrance exam to the middle-school-teachers department of Akita Normal School, scoring first in the exam. In 1885 he graduated from the school's high-school-teachers department. Soon thereafter he was hired as the deputy head of the elementary school in Tsuzureko Village, Kita Akita District (now Kita Akita City).

In English studies, during his elementary school years, "Because *Yochi shiryaku* [World History] included history in detail, I read this work in its entirety. . . . The twenty-volume *Modern Western History* was the most detailed book on world history, so I read through it."<sup>3</sup> At the normal school, "In the

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2 "Waga shōnen jidai no kaiko" (Reminiscences of My Youth), in *Naitō Konan zenshū*, vol. 2, pp. 700–701.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 705.

curriculum for teachers there was no English-language instruction, but among the teachers was a kind one named Kawana Yōkin, who knew a little nonstandard English and could teach from a reader. Together, Kishida Kichizō and I went to his house for instruction.” On the side, Naitō also attended lessons in English studies under Mori Yoshitsugu, a middle-school teacher who failed to get into Tokyo Imperial University and a friend of Miyake Setsurei. Of the two teachers, Kawana had more of an influence on the young Naitō. Later in grieving over the death of Kawana, Naitō said the following:

A benefit that I can never forget is that Mr. Kawana, through his teaching, opened up a new chapter in my academic development. Being isolated, we had no way to learn of new scientific theories in those days, but Mr. Kawana would kindly explain them to us and lend us books so that we could read up on them. He covered the gist of the theory of evolution, and I first learned English from him.<sup>4</sup>

Later during his stint as a teacher at Tsuzureko Elementary School, Naitō picked up Rousseau’s *Social Contract*. It is said that a signed copy of the Japanese translation of this work has been preserved in the family of the mayor of Tsuzureko Village.<sup>5</sup>

Western history and geography, English, the theory of evolution, Rousseau’s *Social Contract*—the great wave of Western studies during the Meiji Enlightenment thus washed ashore of even a remote area like Akita, enabling the young Naitō to quench his thirst for knowledge. Once he became aware of the modern West, Naitō, throughout the rest of his career, maintained a steady interest in Western scholarship and theories, especially in the methods of the gradually emerging field of Western Sinology.

## II. Encounters with Qing Scholars and Scholarship on Trips to Mainland China

Mitamura Taisuke, Naitō’s student and biographer, wrote, “From the Meiji period on, it has been a practice of this country’s scholars and thinkers to look to Western Europe for theoretical sustenance, but Naitō was unique in turning to Japan and China for intellectual sustenance and made himself a great scholar.”<sup>6</sup> A major Japanese scholar that Naitō turned to was the Osaka merchant-scholar Tominaga Nakamoto (1715–1746), who developed the method of “augmenting and superseding” for classical study in such works of

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4 Mitamura Taisuke, *Naitō Konan* (Tokyo: Chūō kōron sha, 1972), pp. 87–89.

5 Ibid., p. 101.

6 Ibid., p. 127.

his as *Shutsujō kōgo* (*Emerging from Meditation*) and *Okina no fumi* (*Writings of an Old Man*). Since I have already discussed Naitō's research on Tominaga elsewhere,<sup>7</sup> I will omit further discussion here. The issue before us is what Qing scholars and scholarship Naitō encountered on his trips to the Asian Continent.

As mentioned above, after graduating from Akita Normal School, Naitō soon became the deputy head at Tsuzureko Elementary School, but in August 1887, a short two years later, he quit this position. For the next twenty years, he worked as a prolific journalist, becoming well known for his *Kinsei bungaku shi ron* (*Essays on the History of Modern Literature*, first appearing as a series in the *Osaka Asahi shinbun* [Osaka Asahi News] under the title *Kansai bun'un ron* [Essays on the Kansai Literary Movement]). He worked as an editor or columnist at a succession of newspapers, including the Buddhist papers *Meikyō shinshi* and *Daitō shinpō*, two papers of the Seikyōsha group *Nihonjin* (the Japanese) and *Ajia* (Asia), the *Osaka Asahi shinbun*, the *Taiwan nippō* (Taiwan Daily), and *Yorozuchōhō* (Yorozuchō News), finally returning to the *Osaka Asahi shinbun*. From 1907, for nearly twenty years, he served as lecturer and later professor of East Asian history at Kyoto Imperial University, retiring in 1926. During this time he produced much research and published two influential books on modern China's politics and culture: *Shina ron* (*A Treatise on China*) and *Shin Shina ron* (*A New Treatise on China*). Over the forty years of his career as a journalist and as a professor at Kyoto Imperial University, he traveled abroad twice to Taiwan and once to Korea, both Japan's colonies, a total of nine times to Mainland China, and once to Europe. In October 1933, toward the end of his life, he traveled to Manchuria for the founding of the Japanese-Manchurian Cultural Association.

Here I would like first to look at the circumstances of Naitō's first two trips to Mainland China, which played a key role in the formation of his stance toward historiography.

### The first trip

From September to November of 1899, Naitō traveled around North China and the Yangzi River region, visiting Yan Fu, Wen Tingshi, Zhang Yuanji, and Luo Zhenyu and conversing with them by exchanging notes. For example, "In my conversation with Luo Shuyun [Luo Zhenyu], he pulled out various

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7 Tao De-min, "Neiteng Hunan de Zhongji yanjiu" (Naitō Konan's Research on Tominaga Nakamoto), in Tao De-min, *Nihon kangaku shisōshi ronkō: Sorai, Nakamoto oyobi kindai* (*Essays on the History of Japanese Sinological Thought: Ogyū Sorai, Tominaga Nakamoto, and the Modern Age*) (Suita, Japan: Kansai Daigaku Shuppanbu, 1999).

rubbings, saying a little bit about this one and a little bit about that one. Though we communicated well, the conversation included many minutiae and hence was difficult to record. Luo gave me volumes 1 and 2 of *Miancheng Jingshe zawen* (Miscellaneous Writings of the Miancheng Study), *Dubei xiaojian* (Notes on Reading Stelae), *Cunzhuozhai zha shu* (Philological Studies on the Classics of the Cunzhuo Study), and *Yanxue oude* (Things Learned through Observation), all of which he authored. I returned the favor by giving him a copy of my *Kinsei bungaku shi ron*.<sup>8</sup> They also exchanged valuable rubbings and copies of calligraphy on bronzes and stelae, and gave their opinions on the same. They thus formed a close friendship based on a common interest.

Naitō, grasping the trends of Qing scholarship from this first trip to China, reacted strongly to the state of Sinology in Japan. This can be seen in two of his essays, written in March the following year.

In the first essay, “Shina chōsa no ichi hōmen: Seiji gakujutsu no chōsa” (An Aspect of China Studies: Investigation into Politics and Scholarship), Naitō, reflecting on the fact that Japanese scholars were not familiar with the *Qianlong code* and the fact that they had to depend on Western sources to grasp the state of Chinese finances, advocated that the focus of political studies of China should be on China’s financial institutions. And to reform Japanese Sinology, which since the Edo period was limited to studies of the classics and the masters (two of the four branches of traditional learning), he emphasized the importance of a focus on history in surveys of Chinese scholarship, and encouraged the collection of materials, such as anecdotes and

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8 Naitō Konan, “Uiki kōsō ki” (Traces of China’s Past), *Enzan sosui* (The Mountains of Yan and the Rivers of Chu), in *Naitō Konan zenshū*, vol. 2, p. 105.

In “Shinajin no tokugaku” (The Chinese Devotion to Study), Naitō left the following impression of this trip: “When it comes to the Chinese devotion to study, Japanese have trouble matching up in some respects. . . . Zhang Jusheng [Zhang Yuanji], at home, had the massive *Encyclopedia Britannica* arrayed on the table and various expensive scientific charts displayed on his four walls. . . . Although he is not a specialist, I can feel his love of learning. Leaving aside the great *Guyi congshu* [Unofficial Collection of Writings of the Past], planned by Yang Shoujing and published by Minister Li Chunzhai [Li Shuchang], there is also the Japanese bibliographic work *Jingji fanggu zhi* [A Survey of Rare Books of the Past], published during the time of Minister Xu Chengzu in the series *Pangxizhai congshu*, edited Pan Zuyin, who was the author of *Riben jinshi nianbiao* [A Japanese Chronology of Bronzes and Stelae]). It is thus most regrettable that a work that scholars of the late Edo period devoted their entire careers to is known only by title by a few people in Japan while it was already published in China” (*Naitō Konan zenshū*, vol. 2, p. 125).

records of events from the Qing dynasty on; bronze and stele materials; Han, Tang, Jin, and Yuan inscriptions on stelae from outside the Great Wall; and inscriptions on ancient bronzes. In this essay Naitō's starting point was his understanding of movements in early-modern, especially late Qing, Chinese scholarship:

In China, philosophy and ethics had been thoroughly researched by the Song and Ming dynasties, and textual criticism reached its most detailed level during the Qianlong period. Hence, scholars turned to other fields to exercise their cleverness. For example, they sought the spirit of the classics in divination literature and Buddhist literature, and they engaged in textual criticism of historical works. And in the areas of bronze and stele inscriptions (*jinsi*, not to be confused with mineralogy) and linguistic studies (*xiaoxue*, not to be confused with the elementary studies of Zhu Xi and Lü Zuqian's *Jinsilu* [Reflections on Things at Hand]), scholars produced unprecedentedly thorough studies.<sup>9</sup>

In the second essay, “Dokusho ni kansuru hōjin no heishū, fu Kangaku no monkei” (The Bad Reading Habits of Japanese, and a Method for Traditional Chinese Studies), Naitō pointed out the following:

Scholarship of the East and West are converging in Japan. No other country is better situated to gather such learning, find a happy medium, merge the traditions, develop new trends, and change the course of world civilization. . . . For the most part, our senior Sinologists were trained in the zeitgeist of the end of the Tokugawa era, and except for one or two insightful scholars, such scholars still do not know even the general trends of modern Chinese scholarship. . . . Chinese traditionalism notwithstanding, the development of scholarship is in spirit the same in China as in the West. Hence, if someone familiar with the outlines of the development of scholarship in the West were to take up Chinese studies and follow a sound approach, he would no doubt benefit considerably by comparing differences and similarities in scholarship between China and the West, making good use of his memory, and coming up with new ideas.<sup>10</sup>

As can be seen from this passage, when observing the development of

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9 Naitō Konan, “Uiki ronsan” (Essays on China), *Enzan sosui*, in *Naitō Konan zenshū*, vol. 2, p. 164.

10 *Ibid.*, pp. 168–169.

early-modern Chinese scholarship, Naitō always compared it with developments in the West. In addition, he sought to make this approach a new paradigm for Sinology in Japan. Accordingly, it was no accident that when Naitō gave the above-mentioned lecture to Emperor Hirohito, he noted the similarity of Du You's methodology for studying customs to that of modern French scholars of East Asia carrying out ethnological research on China.

### The second trip

In the autumn of 1902 Naitō was dispatched by the *Osaka Asahi shinbun* to report on Manchuria. After completing this assignment, he met Shen Zengzhi, Liu Tiejun, and Cao Tingjie in Beijing and inspected the copy of the *Siku quanshu* (Complete Library in the Four Branches of Literature) kept in the Wenlan Pavilion in Hangzhou. Among these scholars, Shen Zengzhi was the one who, through conversation, broadened Naitō's scholarly vision.

Shen Zengzhi (1850–1922) was from Jiaying in Zhejiang Province, his courtesy name was Zipei, and he became a presented scholar in 1880. He held a succession of local and central government posts, participated in important late-Qing domestic and diplomatic policy decisions, and was considered an exemplary scholar-official of the period before and after the Russo-Japanese War. In *Qishishou xu*, a congratulatory description of Shen's accomplishments in his seventieth year, Wang Guowei wrote as follows: "Mr. Shen is thoroughly familiar with the views of scholars of the early Qing, Qianlong, and Jiaqing periods, all of which he read in his youth. In his prime, he mastered the histories of the Liao, Jin, and Yuan dynasties, as well as the geography of the peripheral areas of the empire. And he also studied works by authors of the Daoguang and Xianfeng periods. . . . Scholars, by fleshing out a passing remark of his, could create a thesis and make a name for themselves." A truly great scholar, Shen brought together all the learning of the Qing dynasty into one person. His major works were *Han lü jibu* (Han Dynasty Law, Collected and Supplemented), *Jinshu xingfazhi bu* (Supplement on the "Chapter on Criminal Law" in the *History of the Jin Dynasty*), *Yuanchao mishi jianzheng* (Commentary on the *Secret History of the Yuan Dynasty*), *Menggu yuanliu jianzheng* (Commentary on the *Origins of the Mongols*), and *Hairilou shiwen ji* (Poems and Prose of Hairi Tower). Early in the Republican period, when he was the chief editor of *Zhejiang tongzhi* (General Gazetteer of Zhejiang), he employed his juniors Wang Guowei and Zhang Ertian as subeditors. Not only in Germany and Russia but also in Japan, he created a name for himself in scholarly circles. In 1889 he taught Naka Michiyo how to pronounce the Mongolian script, and in 1920 he explained the *Book of Documents* to

Nishimoto Shōzō.<sup>11</sup> In his lecture *Shina shigaku shi* (The History of Chinese Historiography) of the early 1920s, Naitō himself recalled, “*The Secret History of the Mongols*, in Mongolian, first came to Japan when I was given a copy by Wen Tingshi, and Dr. Naka was the first to study it. . . . Wen Tingshi, before he passed away, said that Shen Zengzhi was the best Chinese historian of the age.” He also recalled, “Shen Zengzhi wrote a manuscript titled ‘Menggu yuanliu shi zheng’ (Commentary on the *Origins of the Mongols*). I first asked him to send me a copy in 1899, but he has not sent it, and the work is still unpublished.”<sup>12</sup> Hence, it appears that Shen and Naitō began a correspondence as early as 1899.

According to Naitō's journal *Uiki kōsō kōki* (Traces of China's Past, Pt. 2), in 1902 the 53-year-old Shen and the 37-year-old Naitō had the following interaction in Beijing:

November 15. At 11 a.m. I again visited Shen Zipei. [When Naitō first visited Shen, Naitō could not see him, since he was not feeling well.]

I spoke with him until the evening. Xia Suiqing [Xia Zengyou] also happened to drop in. On my way back, I visited Cao Tingjie.

November 17. I sent a servant over to Mr. Shen Zengzhi's place to give him two pens, a Jakutō-hitsu brush and a Engi-hitsu brush.

November 23. . . . While I was out, Shen Zipei visited and gave me a rubbing from Xixia Gantongta Bei (Western Xia Gantong Pagoda Stele).<sup>13</sup>

In late autumn in Beijing, evenings come early. Hence, a rough calculation indicates that Shen and Naitō discussed a broad range of history from before noon to evening, over seven hours. Kanda Kiichirō, Naitō's student and a scholar known for his studies of the Dunhuan materials, has written that the two scholars, at their meeting on November 15, “really hit it off. [Shen] was familiar with not just the geography of the Northwest but all fields of Chinese study. Naitō discerned that he was a great and perceptive scholar. From that moment Naitō became enamored of Shen Zengzhi and other thinkers of his ilk.” The man who dropped in on the conversation, Xia Zengyou (1863–1924), was a talented literatus who had just become a presented scholar in the spring of that year. Kanda and Kaizuka Shigeki

11 Zhongguo Shehui Kexue Yuan Jindai Shi Ziliao Bianji Bu (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Editorial Department for Modern Historical Documents), ed., *Minguo renwu beichuan ji* (Stele Inscriptions of Noted Persons of the Republican Era) (Chengdu: Sichuan Renmin Chubanshe, 1997), pp. 367, 376.

12 Naitō Konan, *Shina shigaku shi*, in *Naitō Konan zenshū*, vol. 11, pp. 412, 414.

13 Naitō Konan, “Uiki kōsō kōki,” in *Naitō Konan zenshū*, vol. 6, pp. 359–360.

recalled the following about him: “Professor Naitō regarded Xia Zengyou very highly.” “For premodern history, [Naitō] recommended that one first read Xia Zengyou.”<sup>14</sup>

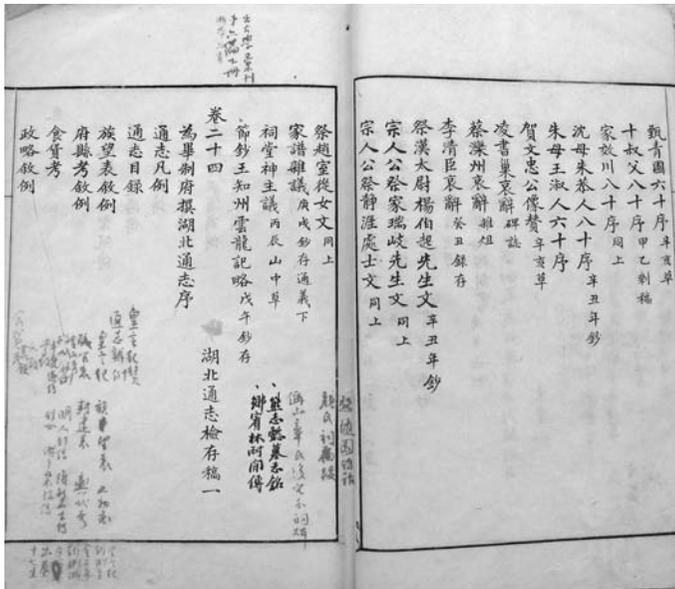
### III. Encounter with Zhang Xuecheng’s *Wenshi tongyi*

Naitō’s second trip to the Mainland had an important result. This was his chance encounter with Zhang Xuecheng’s *Wenshi tongyi* (The General Meaning of Literature and History) and its basic methodology for research in the humanities. In “Shō Gakusei no shigaku” (The Historiography of Zhang Xuecheng), an essay written twenty years later, Naitō tells of his first encounter with Zhang’s writings and subsequent developments:

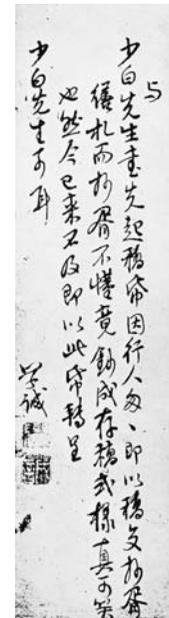
I first read his essays *Wen shi tong yi* and *Jiaochou tong yi* [The General Meaning of Textual Studies] in 1902. At that time, because I thought it was very interesting, I bought two copies in Hangzhou, one of which I gave to Dr. Kano [Naoki], who at the time was a foreign student in China. Later I strongly commended Zhang’s scholarship at universities and in other forums, and as a result, his writings became relatively widely read in Japan. More than ten years ago I unexpectedly got his complete works prior to publication. After reading through his works I compiled and published a chronology of his career. On the basis of this chronology, a Chinese scholar by the name of Hu Shi revised and expanded my chronology and published his results. As a result, young scholars in China began to notice Zhang. Though previously Chinese scholars trained in traditional scholarship, people such as Zhang Ertian and Sun Deqian, favored his style of scholarship and studied him extensively, recently, in addition to Hu Shi, scholars such as Yao Mingda, who trained at Qinghua Academy, and Liu Xianxin, a Sichuan scholar, are pursuing studies of Zhang with greater vigor and are publishing their results. While today there is no need to commend Zhang’s scholarship, formerly the outstanding features of his scholarship were not generally appreciated, or if they were appreciated, they were seldom correctly understood. Hence, I took it upon myself to commend his scholarship.<sup>15</sup>

14 Kanda Kiichirō and Kaizuka Shigeki, “Naitō Konan hakase” (Dr. Naitō Konan), in *Sengaku o kataru* (1) (Discussion of Pioneers, Pt. 1), vol. 1 of *Tōhōgaku kaisō* (Recollections on East Asian Studies), edited by Tōhō Gakkai (Institute of Eastern Culture) (Tokyo: Tōsui Shobō, 2000), pp. 96, 94 respectively.

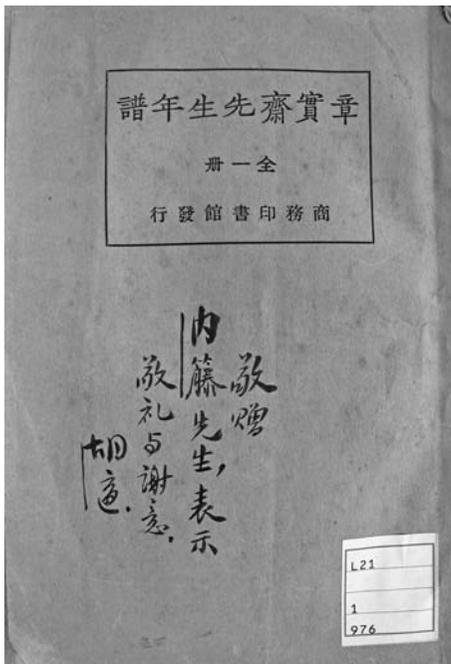
15 Naitō Konan, “Shō Gakusei no shigaku” (The Historiography of Zhang Xuecheng), in *Naitō Konan zenshū*, vol. 11, an appendix to *Shina shigaku shi*, p. 472.



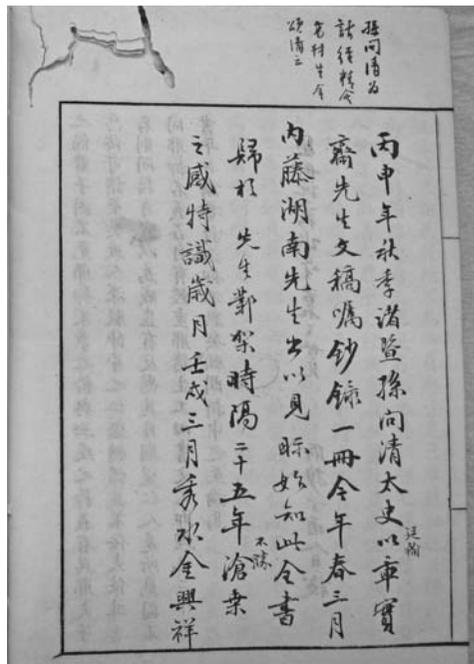
A precious copy of *Wenshi tongyi* that Naitō possessed and studied. From the Naitō Collection, Kansai University Library (KUL).



Zhang Xuecheng's handwriting, from *Naitō Konan zenshū*, vol. 7.



*A Chronicle of Mr. Zhang Shizhai's Life* by Hu Shih, presented to Naitō in 1922 with Hu's acknowledgements. From the Naitō Collection, KUL.



Jin Xingxiang's comment on Naitō's obtaining of the precious copy of *Wenshi tongyi*, written in 1922. From the Naitō Collection, KUL.

湖南先生有道一昨由弘文堂寄到承賜史學  
 論叢華甲壽言各書並書示嘉章祇頌感  
 謝區々不腆之文荷  
 先生獎納汗顏無地惟益祝  
 先生神明湛固永為吾黨泰斗耳田年二十餘與  
 孫隘堪同學得章實齋六經皆史之說好之彼時  
 國內學者頗無有人注意及之者而豈知  
 先生於三十年前在海外已提唱此學上漢學於竹汀東  
 原諸家無不博采兼收覃及域外較諸實齋  
 更精更大即以文藝論淵雅逾逸亦遠在北宋之  
 上此非田一人之私言實天下之公言也田生平無他嗜  
 好惟以學問為生涯以朋好為性命此後  
 先生耄學日勤續有纂述無吝鄙賜尤所盼也寫  
 呈近作小詞一章變雅之音固與鼓吹承平六籍者不同  
 先生讀之倘亦哀其志乎專此肅復敬頌  
 起居康泰不一  
 張爾田

湖南先生有道一昨由弘文堂寄到承賜史學  
 論叢·華甲壽言各書，並書示嘉章，祇頌感  
 謝。區々不腆之文荷  
 先生獎納，汗顏無地。惟益祝  
 先生神明湛固，永為吾黨泰斗耳。田年二十餘與  
 孫隘堪同學，得章實齋六經皆史之說，好之。彼時  
 國內學者頗無有人注意及之者，而豈知  
 先生於三十年前在海外已提唱此學，且於竹汀·東  
 原諸家，無不博采兼取。覃及域外，較諸實齋  
 更精更大。即以文藝論淵雅逾逸，亦遠在北宋之  
 上。此非田一人之私言，實天下之公言也。田生平無他嗜  
 好，惟以學問為生涯，以朋好為性命。此後  
 先生耄學日勤，續有纂述，無吝鄙賜，尤所盼也。寫  
 呈近作小詞一章，變雅之音，固與鼓吹承平六籍者不同。  
 先生讀之，倘亦哀其志乎。專此肅復。敬頌  
 起居康泰。不一  
 張爾田

Zhang Xuecheng (1728–1801), whose courtesy name was Shizhai, was from Shaoxing in Zhejiang Province. He became a presented scholar at the age of 41, but he never assumed office, devoting himself instead to education and writing. Though living through the Qianlong period (1736–1795), the height of the textual-criticism movement, he devoted himself to constructing his own distinct theory of the humanities, writing *Wen shi tong yi* and *Jiaochou tong yi*. Zhang's influence was sparse, both during his lifetime and after, but toward the end of the Qing dynasty, supporters did eventually appear, for example, Tan Xian (1830–1901). But Tan's support was not expressed publically. Rather, it was limited to what he wrote in his diary, *Futang riji* (Futang's Diary), Futang being his sobriquet.

Well, how did Naitō come to know about the theories of Zhang Xuecheng?

On June 23, 1972, the conference “Sengaku o kataru: Naitō Konan sensei” (A Discussion of Pioneers: Prof. Naitō Konan) was held at the Prince Hotel in Kyoto under the auspices of the Tōhō Gakkai (Institute of Eastern Culture). Participating were the above mentioned Mitamura Taisuke, Kanda Kiichirō, and Kaizuka Shigeki, as well as Yoshikawa Kōjirō, Miyazaki Ichisada, and Naitō Kenkichi. The issue before us (how Naitō came to know about the theories of Zhang Xuecheng) was also discussed at that time. Kanda proposed the Tan Xian route as one hypothesis, but this view cannot be correct, because Naitō got a hold of *Futang riji* toward the end of the Meiji period or the beginning of the Taishō period, that is, after 1902.

Later Prof. Joshua Fogel, a well-known scholar in the field of Naitō studies, inferred that Naitō came to know about Zhang Xuecheng perhaps through Shen's students Zhang Ertian (1874–1945) and Sun Deqian (1873–1935), or perhaps through Shen Zengzhi, whom he had already met in 1902.<sup>16</sup> Fogel's basis for this assertion may be the conference proceedings and a passage from Naitō's “Shō Gakusei no shigaku.”

However, if we look at a letter from Zhang Ertian to Naitō dated July 8, 1930, which I recently found in the Naitō collection of Kansai University library, it seems unlikely that Zhang Ertian or Sun Deqian introduced Zhang Xuecheng to Naitō. For in this letter appears the following self-introduction and praise of Naitō:

Having studied together for over twenty years, Sun Aikan [Sun Deqian] and I learned Zhang Shizhai's thesis that the six classics [the *Book of Changes*, *Book of History*, *Book of Songs*, *Book of Rites*, *Book of Music*,

16 Joshua Fogel, “On the ‘Rediscovery’ of the Chinese Past: Cui Shu and Related Cases,” in his *Cultural Dimension of Sino-Japanese Relations* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1995), p. 16.

and *Spring and Autumn Annals*] are all historical works, and we liked it. At the time, Chinese scholars took hardly any note of his thesis. How could one anticipate that you, though residing abroad, would already advocate this thesis thirty years ago? Moreover, you have absorbed all there is to Zhuting [Qian Daxin] and Dongyuan [Dai Zhen], and have spread the thesis to Japan in more detail and to a greater extent than Shizhai [Zhang Xuecheng]. Literarily, you argued elegantly and vigorously, much more than even the Northern Song writers. This is not just my personal opinion but the received opinion of all of China.

Since both Zhang Ertian or Sun Deqian were born in the early 1870s, that would mean that they learned Zhang's thesis in the late 1890s. That is, these two scholars learned and accepted the thesis that the six classics are all historical works before Naitō bought Zhang Xuecheng's works in 1902. However, the two scholars probably admired Zhang Xuecheng but were cautious about publically expressing sympathy and support for the thesis. Naitō saw the reason clearly. Namely, the thesis of the six classics being historical works was "a considerable shock to the ordinary Chinese scholar." "At the time, it was easy to invite misunderstanding and opposition from classicists and others. Since classicists regarded the classics as at a level above all other works, viewing the classics as histories would be to sully them, for it would be placing the classics, which convey the assertions of the sages, on the same level as histories, which were written by scholars and literati who came later. Such would be the misunderstanding of the classicists."<sup>17</sup> This was the social and cultural zeitgeist of China during the Qing dynasty. Hence, it is unlikely that Naitō got hints about Zhang Xuecheng from Zhang Ertian and Sun Deqian, whom he never met. If I may add a postscript, in the letter where Zhang Ertian wrote that Naitō had already advocated the thesis thirty years ago, he was only speaking roughly. The letter was dated 1930. Since thirty years ago would be the end of the nineteenth century, Naitō, who first got Zhang Xuecheng's works in 1902, could not have advocated the thesis in the late 1890s.

Well, what about Prof. Fogel's hypothesis of a Shen Zengzhi route of transmission? My own view is that this route is possible. First, Naitō and Shen definitely met in Beijing in 1902, and they had sufficient time to exchange views on history. Moreover, both Shen Zengzhi and Xia Zengyou were from the eastern portion of Zhejiang Province, and since Naitō planned to go to Hangzhou soon and Zhang Xuecheng was a revered intellectual

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17 Naitō Konan, "Shō Gakusei no shigaku," *Naitō Konan zenshū*, vol.11, pp. 476–477.

where they were from, it is quite possible that they would mention him to Naitō. If this was the case, then Naitō's purchase of *Wenshi tongyi* and *Jiaochou tong yi* in Hangzhou was perhaps motivated by Shen and Xia's mention of Zhang Xuecheng.

#### IV. Naitō's Evaluation of Zhang Xuecheng's Progressive View of History

Well, what did Naitō think of Zhang Xuecheng's views? And what was Naitō's view of history as presented in his understanding of Zhang Xuecheng? Below I would like to explore these issues by looking at Naitō's comments on the progressive view of history found in *Wenshi tongyi*.

As I mentioned above, in considering early-modern Chinese intellectual developments, Naitō regularly compared them with modern Western intellectual developments. Naitō's consideration of Zhang Xuecheng was no exception. Naitō, on the one hand, appraised him as a scholar with a unique research program in the intellectual climate of textual studies of the Qianlong and Jiaqing periods and, on the other hand, perceived his scholarship as similar in spirit to modern Western scholarship. At the Kyoto conference mentioned above, Kaizuka Shigeki recalled, "Prof. Naitō said to me that Zhang Xuecheng was sort of like a sociologist, in Western terms, and that the sociological aspect of his research was quite good. That was really true. He was quite sociological, in the vein of Herbert Spencer." The "sociology" that Naitō had in mind here was perhaps social Darwinism, and this is the main point of Naitō's appreciation of Zhang Xuecheng. A concrete example of this appreciation can be seen in the following comment of his on the account of the development of historiography in the chapter "Shu jiao" (Teaching on the *Book of History*) of *Wenshi tongyi*.

Works of history have gradually changed through the ages. The *Book of History*, China's earliest history [with chapters titled and organized by topic], is the most ideal in terms of organization. . . . Later this format changed to that of the *Zuo Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals*. The *Book of History* does not have a fixed format, but the *Zuo Commentary* does, namely, the chronicle format. The chronicle format of the *Zuo Commentary* then became the biographic format of Sima Qian's *Records of the Grand Historian*. . . . Still later, historians from Ban Gu on continued the biographic format divided into periods. During the Song dynasty, Sima Guang adopted the chronicle format of the *Zuo Commentary* for his *Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government* (*Zizhi tongjian*). Then during the Southern Song period, a historian by the name of Yuan Shu reorganized Sima Guang's work into *Tongjian jishi*

*benmo* (Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government, Topically Arranged)... Thus, in the development of historiography, even the work of this unimportant historian [i.e., Yuan Shu] naturally followed the oldest premodern history in historical format. Zhang Xuecheng's view, to summarize, naturally agrees with the format of the most recent histories. Even well-known contemporary Western historical works are written in the topically arranged format. Zhang Xuecheng, 150 years prior to the present, thought that historiography naturally takes on this format.<sup>18</sup>

In this quote, the description of changes in the format of histories—from the indefinite format of the *Book of History*, to the chronicle format of the *Zuo Commentary*, to the biographical format of the *Records of the Grand Historian*, to the periodized biographical format of the *History of the Former Han* (*Hanshu*) and later dynastic histories, to the chronicle format of the *Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government*, and finally to the topical format of the *Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government, Topically Arranged*—summarizes Zhang Xuecheng's argument, and the statement that the Chinese topical arrangement matches the organization of well-known modern Western works of history is Naitō's comment. Referring to his points on the *Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government, Topically Arranged* in the "Shujiao" chapter of *Wenshi tongyi*, Naitō then appraises Zhang Xuecheng's arguments as follows: In the topical arrangement, "the prose is more concise than in the biographic format, and events are clearer than in the chronicle format." "By sorting events topically, causal connections are linked up." This way of topically organizing history, "even today, is the most suitable way of presenting progress in history. It allows one to focus on the events that occur in human society without being restricted by a person's biography or the calendar. What Zhang Xuecheng said here is true."<sup>19</sup>

It is important to note that while Zhang Xuecheng and Naitō alike see historiography as developing toward a progressive view of history, there are differences in their views. Thus, Zhang Xuecheng viewed the development of the presentation of history from the *Book of History* to the *Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government, Topically Arranged* as the latter work's returning to the format of the former. This is somewhat of a cyclical or restorative view of history. This outlook was a limitation of the age and

18 Naitō Konan, "Shō Gakusei no shigaku," *Naitō Konan zenshū*, vol.11 pp. 478–479.

19 Naitō Konan, "Sōdai ni okeru shigaku no shinten: Tsugan no eikyō" (The Development of History in the Song Period: The Influence of the *Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government*), in *Shina shigaku shi*, in *Naitō Konan zenshū*, vol. 11, pp. 217–218.

society in which Zhang Xuecheng lived. Even if this outlook was not fundamental to his thesis, he had to develop his thesis within the logical confines of an intellectual culture that revered the Confucian classics. In contrast, Naitō, who was nourished in the intellectual climate of Meiji Japan, clearly looked to modern Western styles of writing history as a standard for judging whether the early-modern Chinese style of topical presentation matched that of the West, and whether Zhang Xuecheng's arguments contained precursors of later views of historiography.

Zhang Xuecheng thought that the development of society brought not only changes in historiography but also a style of writing history that showed the formation and appearance of the Way in history. To explore this topic, let us look at Naitō's summary of the relevant passage in the chapter "Yuandao" (Finding the Source of the Way) in *Wenshi tongyi*:

He [Zhang Xuecheng] considered the order of the appearance of the Way to be as follows: The Way is produced by Heaven. When Heaven and Earth produce humankind, this gives rise to the Way, but it is not yet manifest. The Way begins to appear when three people are in a room. When three people are together in a room, it becomes possible to divide up responsibilities or work. Or each can tend to his own business. Or they can take turns performing tasks. Then notions like equality and order crop up. Because equality and order can be lost, elders need to enforce them by adjudicating various claims. This situation gives rise to distinctions of elder versus youth and noble versus base. There is an increase in numbers, and people divide into groups. Groups are led by people of talent, and from among them comes a charismatic individual to unite them. In this way we get rulers and teachers.<sup>20</sup>

Considering the intellectual currents that influenced Naitō—his Confucian education, social Darwinism, and Rousseau's *Social Contract*—it should not have been hard for him to accept Zhang Xuecheng's arguments concerning the Way, and indeed it was not. Holding such views of societal evolution and cultural progress, he fully supported Zhang Xuecheng's thesis in the "Yan gong" (Words Are Public) chapter of *Wenshi tongyi*, as can be seen in the following passage:

The first writings were words written on concrete objects to clarify the Way. Hence, they were not the expressions of any particular individual. If the creator of a thesis wrote something down to transmit his way,

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20 Naitō Konan, "Shō Gakusei no shigaku," *Naitō Konan zenshū*, vol. 11, p. 473.

someone could come after him and add to what he wrote. If the latter's writing amplified the former's, there would be no objection... To understand the development of an argument, one needs to pay attention to the relationship of the thesis creator and the successors... This is roughly the gist of the argument in the "Yan gong" chapter. Zhang Xuecheng laid out the particulars of the six classics and other works and presented a critique of premodern writing. This way of critiquing premodern works was new and extremely important in the study of the classics and history.<sup>21</sup>

The relationship of the "thesis creator" and "successors" (supplementers) referred to in this passage is that of founder and augments (Tominaga Nakamoto's "augmenting and superseding"), working on a common intellectual enterprise to advance culture. Viewed thus, one can see Naitō's commending Zhang Xuecheng as parallel with his commending Tominaga Nakamoto. That is, Naitō, as a historian, was not so limited in his vision that he could not see the forest for the trees. Rather, this philosophically minded historian could grasp the progress and causal connections in history as if from a bird's-eye view. He approved of Sima Qian's ideal of the historian who could "penetrate the connections between Heaven and humankind, work out the sequence of events past and present, and found a school of thought." This is no doubt the main reason for his praise of Zhang Xuecheng and Tominaga Nakamoto for their originality in creating a logical methodology for studying the classics. We must keep in mind that Naitō was not just a cultural historian but also an institutional historian. This can be seen from his interest in the finances of Taiwan, Manchuria, and Mainland China, as well as from the handwritten manuscript "Shina zaisei shi hensan kōryō" (Guidelines for Compiling a History of Chinese Finances), in the Naitō Collection of the Kansai University Library.<sup>22</sup> All of these facts, taken together, indicate that it was no accident that Naitō selected Du You's *Tongdian* as the text for the lecture that Naitō gave to Emperor Hirohito.

21 Naitō Konan, "Shō Gakusei no shigaku," *Naitō Konan zenshū*, vol.11, p. 476.

22 See Tao's essays, "Naitō Konan ni okeru *Shina ron* no naritachi: Minkoku shoki no Yū Kirei naikaku to no kanren ni tsuite" (The Formation of Naitō Konan's *A Treatise on China: The Connection with the Xiong Xiling Cabinet in the Early Republican Period*) (*Tōhōgaku*, no. 108 [July 2004]), and "Naitō Konan no Hōten chōsa ni okeru gakujutsu to seiji: Naitō Bunko ni nokoru 1905 nen hitsudan kiroku ni tsuite" (The Scholarship and Politics of Naitō Konan's Mukden Survey: The Record of the 1905 Written Conversation in the Naitō Collection) (*Ajia bunka kōryū kenkyū* [Kansai University], no. 1 [March 2006]).