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Thomas Wade's *Yü yen tzü êrh chi* and the Chinese Language Textbooks of Meiji-Era Japan

In 1874, the Japanese made unexpected acquaintance with a British diplomat stationed in China who spoke good Chinese. A trade ship from the Ryukyu Islands had wrecked on Taiwan, and most of its crew members were killed by aborigines. Japan, demanding reparations from China, dispatched home minister Ōkubo Toshimichi 大久保利通 to Peking to attempt a peaceful settlement, but was unsuccessful. However, Thomas Francis Wade (1818-1895) stepped in and used his diplomatic experience in China and his considerable Chinese language skills to negotiate a settlement. Through Wade's diligent efforts, a reparations figure of 500,000 taels was finally reached, and both the Zongli Yamen and Ōkubo attributed the settlement to Wade's diplomatic prowess. The Japanese emperor even summoned the then minister to Tokyo Harry Parkes to a special audience to show his appreciation.¹ Unbeknownst to many, Thomas Wade went on to play an important though little known role in Japan's relations with China during the Meiji era (1868-1912).

In the early-Meiji period, Japan found itself in dire need of textbooks for the study of the Peking dialect of Chinese. Japanese like the entrepreneur and adventurer Kishida Kinko 岸田吟香, who first ventured to Shanghai in 1866, found a country entirely different from what many in Japan had been imagining in previous centuries. Modern China was backward and uninspiring, but promising for commercial exploitation. However, in order for the Japanese to conduct commercial activities in Shanghai, Tientsin, Peking, and other key cities, they had to learn to speak the Peking dialect, and no appropriate language textbooks existed. Moreover, the Peking dialect was now of key importance to the Meiji state itself. In 1870, the Japanese government had begun preliminary negotiations with China concerning the establishment of

¹ J. C. Cooley, *T. F. Wade in China: Pioneer in Global Diplomacy, 1842-1882* (Leiden: Brill, 1981), p. 114.

diplomatic relations, and this meant the exchange of documents and considerable oral communication with the Qing government. While the Japanese had been teaching and learning Chinese for centuries in Nagasaki, they had paid little attention to the Peking dialect, which during the Qing had started to come into wider use even south of the Yangtze, the area with which the Japanese were most familiar. By the 1870s, the Japanese were scrambling for an adequate Chinese curriculum that suited the changing state of world affairs.

Japanese educators would turn for inspiration to Thomas Wade and his 1867 Chinese textbook series titled *Yü yen tzü êrh chi: A Progressive Course Designed to Assist the Student of Colloquial Chinese as Spoken in the Capital and the Metropololitan Department* (referred to below as *Colloquial Series*).² This paper briefly describes Wade's diplomacy and scholarship in China from 1842 to 1867 that led to the publication of his *Colloquial Series* and goes on to introduce four Meiji-era Chinese texts that the *Colloquial Series* indirectly spawned.

On one level, this international borrowing reflected fundamental changes in Japanese attitudes toward modern China in the early-Meiji period. The eighteenth-century Confucian scholar Okajima Kanzañ 岡島冠山 had not only venerated the Confucian classics but he also studied the Chinese vernacular used in Nagasaki, even having compiled a textbook of oral Chinese in 1716. Now, a century and a half later, Chinese textbooks were being used to take commercial advantage of a weakened China. Moreover, the texts in Peking dialect also show us a Japan that had begun to see China in sheerly political terms. Negotiating in the Peking dialect meant that Japanese government was dealing with the Qing on an equal, official, nation-to-nation footing that mimicked the relationship between the Western powers and the Zongli Yamen. Nonetheless, although Meiji-era Japanese were beginning to see Chinese language education through British eyes, the textbooks were no mere imitations of Wade's *Colloquial Series*. The Japanese liberally adapted the series to their own needs, ending up with a Chinese curriculum remarkably different from Wade's. This article also explores the significance of some of these similarities and differences. What did the Meiji textbooks borrow from Wade's *Colloquial Series* and what did they ignore? I argue that while both textbook traditions show an interest in understanding the local Chinese and in exploiting Chinese language studies for national advantage, the Japanese texts also reflect Japan's

² I have consulted a copy of the 2d edn., pub. 1886 in Shanghai by The Statistical Department of the Inspectorate General of Customs, and kept at the Osaka University of Foreign Studies. See appendix, below, for further publishing details.

unique historical relationship with the mainland, which was based to no small extent on a shared set of Chinese written characters.

THOMAS WADE AND HIS *COLLOQUIAL SERIES*

Thomas Wade's name is a familiar one. His name appears frequently in discussions of Chinese history in the last half of the nineteenth century, particularly in the context of British diplomacy and its struggles with the Zongli Yamen; Wade was appointed minister to Peking in 1871. And one occasionally hears reference to the collection of books he donated to the Cambridge University Library when he was appointed its first professor of Chinese there. Virtually everyone is aware that the Wade-Giles romanization scheme originated with him. However, few people know of his *Colloquial Series*, arguably his most important accomplishment, and even fewer are aware of the impact his activities had on Japanese educators, businessmen, and diplomats.

Thomas Wade arrived as a soldier in China at a time when Sino-Western relations were in the hands of the British and were quite rocky. Wade and his cohort were in China in 1842 to help clean up the first Opium War. Because he had spent his whole trip from England aboard the crowded old *Belleisle* studying Chinese, by the time he reached Hong Kong, his Chinese had progressed far enough that he was appointed interpreter for his regiment.³

In 1845 Wade became a student interpreter in the Chinese Department of the Hong Kong colonial government and in 1848 private secretary to Britain's chief agent in China, George Bonham. This led to Wade's promotion to first-class interpreter with an additional position as acting Chinese secretary at Victoria. During this period, he had begun expressing his theories about the necessity of institutional understanding and intercultural compromise in British diplomacy, and published a paper called "On Conditions and Government of the Chinese Empire" in 1849. He was finally promoted to vice-consul in Shanghai in 1853, putting him squarely in the diplomatic mainstream.

In 1854, the Shanghai Customs Service came under joint Sino-Western supervision due to political instability brought about by the Taiping Rebellion, and Wade became chief inspector of the newly established Customs House. This experience convinced him that the key to coexistence among the Chinese, the British diplomats, and the aggressive British merchants lay in education, and that the British must

³ Cooley, *T. F. Wade in China*, p. 9.

approach trade in China from the perspective of Chinese diplomatic priorities. He was also frustrated by the fact that the interpreters could only process the simplest of documents. Wade quit the inspectorship to complete his Chinese language program and in 1856 and 1857 prepared an exhaustive report on the status of the training of interpreters.

To Wade, there were four major reasons why the British were unable to train competent interpreters: 1. there were no decent language textbooks or dictionaries; 2. the British insisted on hiring cheap, poorly qualified teachers; 3. students were not allotted enough time for study; and most importantly, 4. no attention had been paid to the role of interpreters in China. Interpreters weren't merely language translators, he argued, they were the link between the Chinese bureaucracy and the British government. They had to make crucial judgments concerning phraseology and terms used in correspondence and they had to understand the nuance of Chinese communications with the British. No effort had been made, Wade lamented, to instruct students in subjects such as history, philosophy, and religion, which would give them crucial insights into Chinese values.⁴ As time would show, the Japanese were to come to similar conclusions about the necessities of understanding China, but their methods were to be different.

Lord Elgin, who was sent from England (1856-1860) during the Arrow War to smooth out relations with the Chinese, took Wade on in the role of interpreter and advisor concerning Chinese affairs. In 1858, Elgin led a squadron of ships up the Yangtze to evaluate the trade potential of the river valley, and Wade became chief interpreter, advisor, and commissioner of the ships' commissary, a position where his Chinese ability and his accrued knowledge of Chinese history and culture played an indispensable role. Wade's diplomatic work with Elgin allowed him to spend the first half of the 1860s as Chinese Secretary at Peking, Britain's chief negotiator with the Zongli Yamen. In 1866, he left Peking, devoting himself to the publication of his *Colloquial Series*.

Thomas Wade's *Yü yen tzü êrh chi: A Progressive Course Designed to Assist the Student of Colloquial Chinese* was published three times – in 1867, 1886, and 1903 (see appendix). The course was gradually consolidated from the original four volumes, to three volumes in 1886, and finally two in 1903. Beginning with the second edition, Walter Caine Hillier is credited with the modifications that he made to Wade's original text, thus the series became published under both authors' names.

⁴ Ibid., p. 26.

While the 1867 version is rare, we know a considerable amount about it through its preface, which is preserved in the introduction to the second edition.

The Contents of the Wade Series

Wade created the *Colloquial Series* for the educated British elite who had passed the civil service examinations, and who boasted some experience with European languages. As table 1 shows, the still massive second edition was broken into eight parts.

Table 1. Content of Wade's Colloquial Series, Second Edition (1886)

	ENGLISH NAME	CHINESE NAME	CONTENT
Part I	Pronunciation		Pronunciation Exercises
Part II	The Radicals		Character Practice
Part III	The Forty Exercises	<i>San Yü Chang</i>	Fixed Phrases
Part IV	The Ten Dialogues	<i>Wen Ta Chang</i>	Basic Dialogue
Part V	The Hundred Lessons	<i>Tan Lun Pien</i>	Intermediate Dialogue
Part VI	The Graduate's Wooing	<i>Chien Yö Chuan</i>	A Tale of Protracted Courtship
Part VII	The Tone Exercises	<i>Lien Hsi Yen Shan</i> <i>Ping Tse Pien</i>	Tone Practice
Part VIII	The Parts of Speech	<i>Yan Yü Li Luo</i>	Grammar Explanation

Part one dealt with the vagaries of Chinese pronunciation. On one hand, the pronunciation section was nothing new. Wade created a "sound table" in the traditional Chinese style based on what he saw as the 420 "syllables." He also provided a pronunciation for each phoneme in Roman letters that approximated English pronunciation, something that had been done for decades by British specialists on the Chinese language. However, the pronunciation chapter was no small achievement. In creating his own orthography, he had taken on such authorities in the field such as Robert Morrison and Walter Henry Medhurst, creating the first authoritative orthography for the Peking dialect. The fact that almost a century and a half later it has not completely disappeared attests to its success.

Part two on the radicals was a thorough dissection of Chinese characters, designed so that students could use the radicals to both understand the meaning of the characters, as well as learn written Chinese.

Parts three, four, and five comprise the main content of the *Colloquial Series*, and include elementary to advanced oral communica-

tion exercises. "The Forty Exercises" ("San Yu Chang" 散語章) contain no cohesive dialogues, but are a stock of words and sentences based on a grammar-centered European style of language teaching popular

Figure 1. The Tone Exercises

Exercise 30, from Wade's Colloquial Series, p. 289.

[CH'ŭ-CH'ŪEH.]		PART VII.—THE TONE EXERCISES.															289	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33		
車	道	真	臣	正	成	吉	奇	家	恰	楷	江	槍	交	巧	街	且		
是車馬之車	是道塊兒之道	是真假之真	是君臣之臣	是邪正之正	是成敗之成	是吉凶之吉	是奇怪之奇	是住家之家	是恰巧之恰	是楷書之楷	是大江之江	是槍奪之槍	是交代之交	是巧妙之巧	是街道之街	是况且之且		
車	○	真	○	正	稱	難	七	家	掐	○	江	腔	交	敵	街	切		
○	○	○	○	○	成	吉	奇	夾	卡	○	○	腔	嘲	橋	結	茄		
扯	○	枕	○	整	癢	已	起	甲	價	○	楷	講	搶	巧	解	且		
敬	道	震	趁	釋	釋	記	氣	氣	卡	○	匠	匠	叫	借	借	姜		
車	○	真	真	正	稱	難	七	住	招	○	大	腔	交	敵	街	切		
馬	○	假	怪	月	呼	犬	八	家	花	○	江	調	代	打	道	肉		
○	○	○	君	○	成	吉	奇	夾	○	○	○	牆	嘲	橋	完	茄		
○	○	○	臣	○	敗	國	怪	帶	○	○	○	壁	過	梁	結	子		
拉	○	枕	○	整	癢	已	起	盜	卡	○	講	搶	手	巧	解	况		
扯	○	頭	○	齊	辦	己	初	甲	書	講	完	拳	腳	妙	開	且		
裁	道	地	趁	邪	斗	記	氣	價	恰	○	匠	銀	叫	借	借	姬		
撇	塊	雲	若	正	拜	載	血	錢	巧	○	人	木	賊	皮	貸	妾		

for Japanese editors in the 1880s. But more importantly, as this paper will show, these three parts became key concepts that fundamentally changed Japanese ideas about language teaching.

Part six, "The Graduate's Wooing," a story of a protracted courtship Wade designed as a Chinese-style love story, was new to the second edition. Wade realized that his content would be better served by means of a more coherent story, so he used someone's revision of one that had appeared in his first edition, titling it "The Graduate's Woo-

at the time, that normally began with articles, noun declensions, and verb conjugation.⁵ "The Ten Dialogues" ("Wen Ta Chang" 問答章) were ten short dialogues created by Wade but rendered into natural Chinese by Wade's teacher. "The Hundred Lessons" ("Tan Lun Pien" 談論篇) came from a Chinese text designed for Manchus and originally compiled some two centuries before Wade. Rather than mere "dialogues," "The Hundred Lessons" were more complex conversations based around one theme. The Japanese editors were most interested in parts three, four, and five of Wade's course. Collectively, they form the backbone of the *Colloquial Series*, and became ready-made lessons

⁵ Wade and Hillier, *Yü yen tzü erh chi* 1, p. xxi.

ing.” It would have been read aloud to reinforce previously learned material. Walter Caine Hillier supplied copious notes to the chapter, which one can surmise was one reason he was credited in the last two editions.

Part seven, “The Tone Exercises,” would have blended with pronunciation practice in part one and character practice in part two. Exercises were arranged in vertical rows, reinforcing the relationship between the characters and the four tones. For example, see figure 1 (above), in which exercise 30 for the character *jiao* 交 and its tones had the student begin by reading “*jiao: shi jiaodai zhi jiao*” (a definition encompassing *jiao* as spoken in first tone); then reading three other two-word definitions that encompassed the other three tones for *jiao*: “*jiaoguo* 嚼過,” “*shoujiao* 手腳,” and “*jiaohan* 叫喊.”⁶ Designating the tones with numerals had already been done by Thomas Taylor Meadows, but connecting the tones naturally with 420 sounds and as many characters was no small accomplishment.

Part eight, “The Parts of Speech,” was perhaps the most important of all. Other European scholars had analyzed Chinese grammar in academic terms before, and Wade would have had Joseph Edkins’ 1857 publication *Grammar of the Colloquial Chinese Language: Commonly Called the Mandarin Dialect* from which to work. Nonetheless, Wade was not working with a language where terms like case, number, mood, tense, and voice, which had so preoccupied European grammarians, could be easily applied. In any case, Wade was not satisfied with applying a set of abstract European grammatical rules to the Chinese language and leaving students to muddle through by themselves. Instead, Wade approached grammar from the perspective of the Chinese speaker. Wade comments,

It occurred to me, nevertheless, shortly after I had put my hand to the elementary course now published, that if [grammar training] were accomplished by a collection of examples that should give some notion ... of the contrasts and analogies of [Chinese and English], it might avail to remove some of the stumbling blocks common to beginners in either, without committing them to the bondage of rules fashioned too strictly after our European pattern; and taking the simplest school grammar I could find, I went through its etymology with [my teacher], translating the examples to him *vivâ voce*, and expounding to the best of my ability the rules and definitions these examples were intended to illustrate.⁷

⁶ Ibid., p. 289.

⁷ Ibid., p. xxiii.

In effect, Wade was looking backwards. Instead of struggling to fit the Chinese language into a preexisting European grammatical framework, he adapted the grammatical framework to fit atop the Chinese language. Treating the Chinese and English systems as unique was an early example of something we might now call comparative linguistics.

It is hard to overstate the importance of Wade's *Colloquial Series*. While Wade would have been drawing on the likes of Robert Thom's and Joseph Edkins' pioneering works, he had come up with a first comprehensive Mandarin curriculum. And though by today's standards Wades "Parts of Speech" may seem dated, Wade actually employed European grammatical theory in Chinese language pedagogy to great effect. At the same time, it is hard to imagine a language curriculum less suited for nineteenth-century students of non-European origin. Its translations and explanations were all written in English. Moreover, the convoluted style of the grammatical explanations and the lengthy introduction to the first edition would have been quite inaccessible to anyone but the nineteenth-century Oxford and Cambridge-educated elite.⁸ Much of the content would have been superfluous for anyone with previous experience with classical Chinese, through which much of Chinese grammar would have been absorbed passively. What, then, could the Japanese students of Chinese have wanted from the *Colloquial Series*?

JAPAN'S MEIJI CHINESE TEXTBOOK EXPERIMENT

In 1870, only two years after the Meiji Restoration, Japan had already entered into preliminary discussions with the Qing government about normalizing diplomatic relations, and Chinese translators were now urgently needed to conduct formal communications. The Gaimushō 外務省 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) set up two official schools in 1871 and 1873 called the Kango gakusho 漢語學所 and the Tōkyō gaikokugo gakkō 東京外國語學校, respectively, to deal with the urgent need for Chinese language education. However, neither could fulfill the needs of the fledgling Meiji state for speakers of the Peking dialect, and the Gaimushō was forced to send two groups of students to the embassy in Beijing in 1874 and 1875.

It was not as if the Japanese lacked experience in teaching Chinese. On the contrary, Japan had a program for the teaching of modern

⁸ The Japanese students would not have easily understood Wade's rambling style: in the copy I have consulted at the Osaka University of Foreign Studies, a student has tackled the Preface, glossing unfamiliar vocabulary, but gives up part way through. The preface to the 1st edn. is left virtually untouched.

Chinese complete with trained teachers and locally produced textbooks already in place for several hundred years. From 1603 to the fall of the Bakufu 幕府 in 1868, the Tōtsūji 唐通事, which at the time consisted of Chinese language translators in Nagasaki, had been the interpreters, trade experts and key intermediaries between Japan and China. Moreover, the Tōtsūji had been immediately thrown out of work at the end of the nineteenth century when ports such as Yokohama supplanted Nagasaki as Japan's key trade centers. It was logical for the Tōtsūji to be pressed into service to develop Japan's modern Chinese education system, and in fact, as discussed in this article, below, two editors of Japanese textbooks based on the work of Wade were old Tōtsūji stock. Indeed, the Nagasaki-translator tradition was to become a backdrop for Japanese studies of China for generations to come.

The real problem was dialect and, as we argue later, ideas about dialect. History books commonly state that the Nagasaki translators used the Nanjing dialect, and that to Edo-period Japan, the spoken Chinese language was the Nanjing dialect. The actual situation was more complex. More than one country or one geographical place, the China that Japan encountered during that time was a series of ports that stretched from Shanghai down the South China coast, the Eastern coasts of Vietnam and Thailand, all the way to Indonesia. Thus, even though the Nanjing dialect may have been ultimately the most important, the Zhangzhou and Fuzhou dialects were also key dialects,⁹ and one can expect there was considerable variation beyond that, depending on the origin of the particular junk with which the Tōtsūji were dealing. One might say that the "Chinese language" with which the Japanese had hitherto been dealing had so broad a meaning that it almost did not exist. The Meiji Japanese educators, then, were forced to create a language curriculum for *Pekin kanwa* 北京官話, or the language of the modern Qing government. Furthermore, the old Nagasaki education had been monopolized by a series of families originating in China, and they taught in their traditional Chinese way for generations with little input from the Japanese. It was clearly time for the Japanese to create their own Chinese curriculum.

In part, the result was four Meiji-era Chinese language texts, which this article argues took their inspiration from Wade's *Colloquial Series*:

Ajia gengoshū, Shina kanwabu 亜細亞言語集支那官話部 by Hirobe Ku-washi 広部精; volume 1 first published 1879; volumes 2-7 in 1880;

⁹ Rokkaku Tsunehiro 六角恒廣, *Chūgokugo kyōikushi no kenkyū* 中国語教育史の研究 (Tokyo: Tōhō Shoten, 1988), p. 12.

published in 7 stringbound volumes¹⁰ by Aoyamatō 青山堂 (Tokyo).¹¹
Kanwa shinan 官話指南 by Gokeitai 吳啓太 and Teieibō 鄭永邦 (these were the two aforementioned, who belonged to Tōtsūji families); first published 1882 in 4 stringbound volumes by Yō Ryutarō 揚竜太郎 (Tokyo).¹²
Danron shinpen 談論新編 by Jin Guopu 金國璞 (a Chinese) and Hiraiwa Michitomo 平岩道知; first published in 1898 as a single 22 x 15 cm 菊判 volume of 100 untitled chapters by Sekiranranrō Shoya 積嵐樓書屋 (Tokyo).¹³
Kyūshūhen 急就篇 by Miyajima Daihachi 宮島大八; first published in 1904 as a 15 x 11 cm handbook by Zenrin Shoin 善隣書院 (Tokyo).¹⁴

It might be noted that simply to list Japanese titles from the Meiji era presents unique romanization problems. Contemporary Japanese would have pronounced most Chinese place and personal names with the Japanese pronunciation. It is true that the contents of the Chinese language textbooks under discussion here were entirely Chinese, however only a tiny part of this content would have been pronounced outside a classroom context. Thus, this article renders the names of the texts and other widely used concepts such as *kanwa* 官話 and *Shina* 支那 in the Japanese pronunciation and uses Pinyin for the rest.

The earliest Japanese imitation of the *Colloquial Series*, titled *Ajia gengoshū*, *Shina kanwabu*, was part of a larger series planned for instruction in Asian languages. In 1876 the editor, Hirobe Kuwashi, disturbed by Western capitalism, military power, and colonization encroaching on a Confucian Asia, set up the Nisshinsha 日清社, part think-tank, part language school, to teach Chinese language.¹⁵ He would have come into contact with the *Colloquial Series* in 1877 when his mentor Nakamura Masanao 中村正直 donated a copy to his school.¹⁶

The work was a relatively faithful reproduction of Wade's *Colloquial Series*. Pages were designed with an upper register that was set off from the main text; see figure 2, below. These were called *jōran* 上欄. Volumes 2, 3, and 4 also contained an abbreviated version of Aesop's fables printed inside the *jōran*, and the rest of the volumes include Edo-

¹⁰ Rokkaku Tsunehiro, *Chūgokugo shoshi* 中国語書誌 (Tokyo: Fuji Shuppan, 1994), p. 36.

¹¹ Rokkaku Tsunehiro, ed., *Chūgokugo kyōhonrui shosei* 中国語教本類書成 (Tokyo: Fuji Shuppan, 1994; hereafter cited as *CKS*), *shū* 1, *kan* 1, pp. 217–321.

¹² *CKS*, *shū* 1, *kan* 2, pp. 79–132.

¹³ *CKS*, *shū* 1, *kan* 4, pp. 1–36.

¹⁴ Miyajima Daihachi 宮島大八, *Kanwa kyūshūhen* 官話急就篇 (Tokyo: Bunkūdō, 1904).

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹⁶ Rokkaku Tsunehiro, *Kango shikaden*, *Chūgokugo kyōiku no senjin tachi* 漢語師家伝中国

period content that the Tokugawa philosopher Okajima Kanzan (mentioned above) had compiled early in the eighteenth century.

It was not long before the Japanese began to modify the *Colloquial Series* further. *Kanwa shinan*, *Danron shinpen*, and *Kyūshūhen* together comprised a textbook set that ranged from beginning to advanced levels, and forming the standard spoken-Chinese language curriculum until World War II. They were even used by the *Shinagogaku kenteishiken* 支那語學檢定試験, the Chinese language test used by the South Manchurian Railway Company 滿鐵.¹⁷ The texts were all based on “The Forty Exercises,” “The Ten Dialogues,” and “The Hundred Lessons” (that is, Parts 3, 4, 5) of the *Colloquial Series*, and each went through many publications.

While *Ajia gengoshū* had developed in Japan, *Kanwa shinan* developed from the Gaimushō student expeditions. From 1879 to 1880, Gokeitai and Teieibō spent two years as apprentice translators in the embassy in Beijing, where they would have begun to compare the content of Wade’s *Colloquial Series* with the Peking dialect they themselves experienced living with Japanese merchants and diplomats. The intermediate level *Kanwa Shinan* was based on Wade’s “Ten Dialogues,” and introduced the student to all levels of interaction in Beijing society.

Table 2. Contents of *Kanwa shinan*

(Rokkaku, *Chūgokugo shoshi*, p. 41.)

	NAME	CONTENTS
Volume 1	Yingdui xuzhi 應對 須知	Simple dialogues: asking one’s age, name, job, etc.
Volume 2	Guanshang tudu 官 商吐獨	Business-related dialogue: New Year’s greetings, bargaining with traders, selling grain to merchants, etc.
Volume 3	Shiling tonghua 使 令通話	Dialogues to accomplish things in local Chinese society
Volume 4	Guanhua wenti 官 話問題	Dialogue with Chinese officials

Kanwa shinan formed a crucial connection between the old Edo Nagasaki junk trade and Japan’s commercial push into China in the Meiji period. While the editors had Chinese names, they were sons of the old Nagasaki Tōtsūji.¹⁸ These proud heirs of the Tōtsūji tradition,

語教育の先人たち (Tokyo: Tōhō Shoten, 1994), p. 64.

¹⁷ Uzawa Akio 鱒澤彰夫, “*Kanwa shinan soshite shōmuinkan no Nicchū gōben kaishō*” 官話指南そして商務印書館の日中合弁解消, in *Chūgoku bungaku kenkyū* 中國文學研究 23 (December, 1997), p. 46.

¹⁸ Most of the Tōtsūji had Japanese names, but some were allowed to use Chinese names to mark their rank in the Tōtsūji hierarchy and to identify themselves with a founding family.

studying the *Colloquial Series* at the Japanese legation in Peking, remind us that the Meiji textbooks grew out of both Japanese and European traditions and that no clear-cut distinction can be made between Edo and Meiji Chinese language studies.

Danron shinpen also appears to have blossomed from the official student missions to Beijing. Jin Guopu was a Chinese teacher who taught students at the embassy in Beijing in the 1870s, and later taught Chinese in Japan at the Tokyō Gaikokugo Gakkō 東京外國語學校. Hiraiwa Michitomo participated in a later mission sent to Beijing by the General Staff Headquarters (Sanbō Honbu 參謀本部) in 1880. The book was modeled after Wade's "Hundred Lessons," though the actual content differed significantly. While Wade borrowed his content from a Manchu textbook, *Danron shinpen* contains upper-intermediate conversations based on language study and daily life in Tianjin and Beijing at the end of the nineteenth century. Contents included newspaper stories, business transactions, official communications, and so on.

Kyūshūhen had completely different origins. Its editor Miyajima Daihachi went to China in 1887 and studied under a Confucian teacher until 1894 when he was forced to return due to the Sino-Japanese War.¹⁹ On his return, Miyajima published the *Kyūshūhen* from the Chinese school he set up in Tokyo for private citizens, the Zenrin Shoin 善隣書院 where he had been using the *Colloquial Series*.

Table 3. Contents of *Kyūshūhen*

(Rokkaku, *Chūgokugo shoshi*, p. 36.)

SECTION	CONTENTS
Mingci 名辭	Numerals, names, pronouns, time, weather, food, clothes, place names
Wenda zhishang 問答之上	Basic dialogue; begins with the famous " <i>Lailema? Laile.</i> "
Wenda zhizhong 問答之中	Intermediate level dialogue
Wenda zhixia 問答之下	Upper intermediate long dialogues; the <i>Momotarō</i> 桃太郎 story
Appendix: Jiating changhua 家庭常話, Yinghuixuzhi 應回須知	Traditional Chinese content penned by Chinese teacher; dialogue for everyday life

Miyajima borrowed his *mondō* 問答 (*wenda*) exercises from Wade's "Forty Dialogues" and his *Momotarō* may be thought to be a native Japanese version of Wade's lengthy prose exercise "The Graduate's

¹⁹ Murayama Yoshihiro 村山吉廣, *Kangakusha ha ikani ikitaka* (*Kindai Nihon to Hangaku*) 漢学者はいかに生きたか (近代日本と漢学) (Tokyo: Taishūkan, 1999), p. 184.

Wooing.” The Mingci, Jiating Changhua, and Yinghuixuzhi sections, on the other hand, were traditional Chinese content that developed out of Japanese texts of the Edo period, and Miyajima’s experiences in China.

These Meiji textbooks were a complex mixture of influences. Hirobe Kuwashi was a Meiji patriot who saw Chinese language as a chance to help China save itself from the encroaching Western powers. The editors of *Kanwa shinan* brought to their studies of the Peking dialect a Chinese language-studies tradition that was already centuries old. Miyajima Daihachi was essentially an old-style teacher of *kangaku* 漢学, the Japanese study of the Chinese classics. Nonetheless, all of these textbooks were created with the common purpose of supplying language skills that would allow Japanese people to be fully active in late-nineteenth century Chinese society. And while all the Meiji textbooks were unique, they were all based on the *Colloquial Series*. This paper now turns to the question, what exactly did the Meiji educators do with Wade’s book?

WADE’S COLLOQUIAL SERIES AND THE JAPANESE IMITATIONS: SIMILARITIES

From today’s perspective, Wade’s romanization system, which accurately represented Chinese sounds in Roman letters, seems a marked improvement over the Japanese *kana* system. Wade also numbered the tones, and this comprised something of a new “scientific” method – deemed superior to the various conventions that the Chinese had traditionally used, and which the Japanese had inherited. Wade analyzed Chinese grammar using Western philological principles, just when the Japanese had begun analyzing Western European languages. However, the Japanese seem to have initially ignored these features.

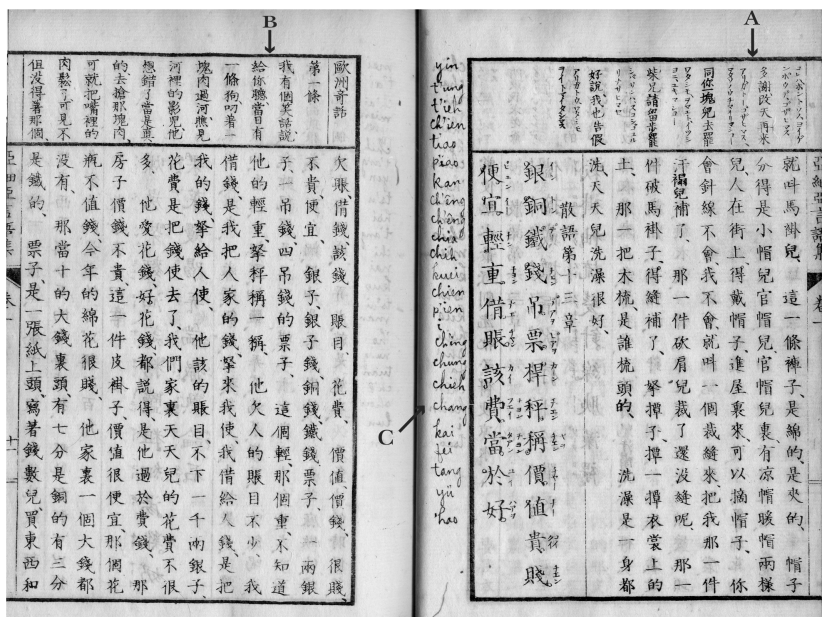
First of all, the Japanese tapped into a general European approach to Chinese language studies that had already been developing for several centuries. A few of Aesop’s Fables had been translated into Chinese by Matteo Ricci by 1608, and from then on the Fables had been used occasionally as beginning-level Chinese language-texts for foreigners active in China and as a general introduction to the Chinese on Western morality.²⁰ The most famous of these texts of course, was

²⁰ Uchida Keiichi 内田慶市, “Oubeijin no mananda Chūgokugo, Robaato Tomu no Isha-yugen wo chūshin ni” 欧米人の学んだ中国語ロバート・トームの意捨喩言を中心に, in *Seiyō kindai bunmei to Chūka sekai* 西洋近代文明と中華世界 (Kyoto: Kyoto daigaku gakujutsu shuppankai, 2001) p. 144.

Robert Thom's *Esop's Fables*, published by The Canton Press Office in 1840, a text which Wade himself drew upon. Uchida Keichi 内田慶市 observes that a slightly later Chinese version of Aesop's Fables probably arrived in Japan aboard a Russian ship in 1857,²¹ so the Japanese would have known something about Western approaches to Chinese language education long before the Meiji period. And just four months before *Ajia gengoshū* was published, a Chinese copy of Aesop's Fables by embassy student Nakata Yoshinori 中田敬義 appeared. The fact that Hirobe went to the trouble to include the Fables' contents in his *Colloquial Series* imitation suggests that Hirobe saw Wade's book as part of this tradition.

As one can see, below, from page 16 of this copy of *Ajia gengoshū* kept at the Osaka University of Foreign Studies, apart from the main text which is devoted to the *Colloquial Series* content, the left *jōran* (marked "B") contains "Ouzhou qihua" 歐洲奇話, or Aesop's Fables, which were originally borrowed from a Chinese translation of the Fables done by German embassy translator Arendt.²² The right *jōran* (marked "A"), on the other hand, is Edo-period content from texts of the Nagasaki Chinese translators. In the middle, near the gutter (or inner binding, "C")

Figure 2. A Page-Spread from *Ajia gengoshū*



²¹ Ibid., p. 102.

²² Rokkaku, *Chūgokugo shoshi*, p. 36.

in this particular edition, the learner has been using Wade's romanization system to write the pronunciation of the characters. *Ajia gengoshū*, then, can be seen as a transition from the old Nagasaki Chinese tradition to the *Aesop's Fables* and *Colloquial Series* traditions.

One sees a whole new set of vocabulary associated with the West. The full title of Hirobe's textbook linked the word *Shina* with *kanwa* or "official language" in the Japanese textbooks, laying the foundation of the Japanese concept of *Shinago* 支那語, which dominated practical Chinese language education from the Meiji period to the end of World War II. The table of contents (*fanli* 凡例) further uses the term *Zhina yuyan* 支那語言 to identify the Chinese language, dividing it into *guan-hua*, *nanbian hua* 南邊話 (language of the south), and *Lingnan hua* 嶺南話 (Cantonese). This divided Chinese into the "official language" and the southern dialects: exactly what the Europeans were doing. The use of *Shina* (Chin.: *Zhina*) with respect to the languages of China also effectively removed the traditional "Chinese" associations accompanying *Tōwa* 唐話, the designation previous Chinese language texts in Japan had used. While the meaning of *Shina* can be debated, in the early Meiji texts it clearly means what the British were calling "China." And even though Hirobe's plan never came to fruition, he was setting about making not a Chinese language textbook, but the first in a series of "Asian language" textbooks. Publishing Wade's *Colloquial Series* for the Japanese, then, was putting the Chinese language on the same level as other regional languages and doing away with the old center-periphery relationship that had always characterized the cultural interaction between Japan and China.

The second major adoption from the *Colloquial Series* was the concept of *guanhua* (*kanwa*) – from Wade's point of view the "official language." The preface to the first edition of *Colloquial Series* begins with the following passage, which would have challenged the Japanese students of Chinese language to consider something to which they hitherto had not paid much thought.

"What Chinese is it that you want to learn, sir?" asked the first Sinologue of established reputation that I consulted; "there is the language of the ancient classics, and the language of more modern books, and the language of official documents, and the epistolary language, and the spoken language, of which there are many dialects; now which Chinese is it that you wish to begin with?"²³

²³ Wade and Hillier, *Yü yen tzü êrh chi* 1, p. i.

To Wade, the answer was very clear. While the Chinese language of the “philologist,” the “merchant,” and “missionary” might also exist as objects of study, the language the British had to learn was clearly the language of Chinese officialdom, or *guanhua*.

The debate over *guanhua* had been brewing for some time before Wade appeared on the scene. The first real Western definition of the concept might be that of Joseph Edkins, in his 1857 *Grammar of the Colloquial Chinese Language: Commonly Called the Mandarin Dialect*. There, he broke the official language into three parts – south, north, and west, which corresponded to the languages of Nanjing, Beijing, and Chengdu.²⁴ However, there was considerable impetus for the Westerners to favor the Nanjing dialect. First, Catholic missionaries had begun studying it since the end of the Ming dynasty, when Catholic churches began to be built in the southeastern coastal provinces. Further, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Western traders established themselves in Canton, and so naturally emphasized Cantonese. Since it was officially prohibited to teach Chinese to foreigners, it was natural that the early students established a tradition of studying the Nanjing dialect. However, at the same time, the Peking dialect was taking hold over a larger and larger population, and the Qing court used it exclusively.²⁵ So by the time Wade wrote his textbook series in the 1860s it was difficult to ignore the Peking dialect.²⁶ In the preface to the first edition of the *Colloquial Series*, Wade comes down strongly in favor of the Beijing pronunciation, arguing that

Pekingese is the dialect that an official interpreter ought to learn. Since the establishment of foreign legations with their corps of students at Peking, it has become next to impossible that any other should take precedence. When in due time, the beginner's services are required at the Yamen of Foreign Affairs, he finds that the language he has been learning is that spoken by the chief officers of the Imperial Government. Meanwhile, his teachers, servants, and nine-tenths of the people he comes in contact with, naturally speak nothing else. Lastly, whether it be the fact or not that the peculiarities of Pekingese are, as it is alleged, by degrees invading all other dialects of the mandarin, the student may rest assured that if he speak Pekinese *well*, he will have no difficulty in understand-

²⁴ Takada Tokio 高田時雄, “Tomasu Ueido to Peking no shōri” トマス・ウエイドと北京語の勝利, in *Seiyō kindai bunmei*, p. 127.

²⁵ For a more detailed linguistic analysis of the development of *guan hua*, see W. South Coblin, “A Brief History of Mandarin,” *JAS* 120 (2000), pp. 537–52.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

ing or being understood by any mandarin-speaking native whose dialect is not a flagrant divergence from the standard under which it would be enrolled by the geographer or the philologist.²⁷

The idea of *kanwa* (*guanhua*) was, of course, not a new one to the Japanese. The word had been used somewhat interchangeably with *Tōwa* 唐話 (*Tang hua* in Mandarin) since the Edo period. The Nagasaki translators had used a text called *Kanwasan* 官話纂, and *kanwa* is explicitly mentioned in many of the other Chinese language texts, so the term was used with some currency. However, the Edo-period idea of *kanwa* was fundamentally different from Wade's Peking dialect. In one Edo text titled *Shōkaiji* 小孩兒 a teacher lectures a child about the language they are learning.

When you speak *Tanghua* it is comprehensible to anyone. People from places outside the Yellow River, such as Suzhou, Ningbo, Hangzhou, Yunnan, Zhejiang, and Huzhou, can of course talk to people from Fujian and Zhangzhou. They all know what people from outside the Yellow River area are saying. Furthermore what I am teaching you is called *guanhua* and it can be understood absolutely anywhere, including all of China's thirteen provinces.²⁸

Here the emphasis is not put on the authenticity of *kanwa* compared to all the other dialects, nor its association with any specific territory. Rather the passage emphasizes the universality of *kanwa*, which would have been the crucial concern with the Nagasaki translators who were attempting to do business with people from many linguistic backgrounds. The speaker doesn't even mention Nanking.²⁹

The Meiji Japanese were quick to respect the power of this new "language," with which they were as yet unfamiliar. All of the early-Meiji texts contain *kanwa* 官話 in their title pages, though the Japanese never took to actually calling modern Chinese *guanhua* in the textbook content, preferring words like *jingyu*, *Zhongguohua*, *Huayu*, and so on. *Kanwa shinan*, *Kyūshūhen*, and *Danron shinpen* all make much of the relative importance of not only the Peking dialect, but of Beijing itself. For example, one finds the following exchange between a Japanese merchant and a Qing official in Dialogue 18, Part 4, "Guanhua Wenti 官話問題," of *Kanwa shinan*:³⁰

²⁷ Wade and Hillier, *Yū yen tzū êrh chi* 2, p. xv (italics in the original).

²⁸ Rokkaku, *Chūgokugo kyōikushi no kenkyū*, p. 385.

²⁹ Coblin, "A Brief History of Mandarin," p. 551, argues that not only was *guan hua* not the dialect of Peking, it was not really a dialect at all. Rather it was a composite language that converged at certain points with the dialects of Nanking and Peking.

³⁰ The translation of Dialogue 18 comes from a translation of the *Kanwa Shinan* by L. C.

- A: From which district [*ken*] do you come?
B: I am a Nagasaki man.
A: Oh, then you are close to China.
B: Yes, indeed. Quite close.
A: How many years have you been in China?
B: Three years.
A: To speak *kuan hua* as well as you do, after living three years in China, you must be exceptionally clever. I am much impressed by it.
B: You are too complimentary. My knowledge is only a rough, general acquaintance. I don't pretend to have mastered it.
A: I am not paying you a mere compliment when I say that there is not the slightest difference between your pronunciation and that of my countrymen. I assure you intelligence such as yours is rare...³¹

The Japanese had been studying Chinese for many centuries without going to a particular place in China, or without actually going to China at all. This conversation shows that in order to master *kanwa*, a Japanese learner of Chinese now had to spend time in Peking. Moreover, a Peking official from the Zongli Yamen telling a Japanese learner that his *kanwa* pronunciation is indistinguishable from that of a Chinese was now the ultimate endpoint for Chinese language studies. Until the end of the Edo period, not only were spoken language skills not highly esteemed, *kanwa* had no intrinsic value that made it unique among the other dialects.

One also sees a new geographic focus on northern China. For example, in *Kyūshūhen*, the following dialogue occurs:

Dialogue 110

- A: Can you ride on a draft animal?
B: All of us northerners can ride draft animals.
A: And in the south?
B: Southerners use boats, hence the saying “nanchuan, beima”
(boats in the south, horses in the north).³²

Such facile distinctions between north and south are new to the Meiji texts, and clearly reflect Western concerns about the capital and the periphery, and the official language and the dialects.

Hopkins, *The Guide to Kuan hua: A translation of the “Kuan Hua Chi Nan” with an Essay on Tone and Accent in Pekinese and a Glossary of Phrases* (London: Kelly and Walsh, 1900). I discuss the significance of this translation, below.

³¹ Hopkins, *Guide to Kuan hua*, reproduced in *CKS, shū* 3, *kan* 2, p. 339.

³² Miyajima, *Kyūshūhen*, p. 69.

The third and perhaps most important feature borrowed by the Meiji Japanese students from Wade's series was the concept of dialogue, or a back-and-forth oral communication that got something accomplished for the speaker.

Two important qualifications must first be made. First, it would be an exaggeration to say that the Japanese had never used dialogue in their Chinese language studies when in fact a textbook like *Kanwasan* 官話纂 from Nagasaki of the Edo period is a long dialogue. However, the dialogue in the Japanese texts was essentially didactic in nature, and no more natural than the conversation between Mencius and his students (a text also used by Japanese students). Second, we cannot think of the overall content of Wade's book, and the dialogues in particular, as something Wade devised independently of the local Chinese with whom he studied. For example, almost the entire "Hundred Lessons" were borrowed from an old text that predated Wade by several hundred years, one that attempted to teach the Manchus Chinese.³³ Wade's "dialogue" exercises also didn't resemble what Western language teachers called a dialogue, because he retained the Chinese written style, in which the whole conversation is run together and the interlocutors not formally identified.

Just the same, the concept of dialogue in Wade's *Colloquial Series* was new. As mentioned before, the bulk of Wade's *Colloquial Series* consisted of "The Forty Exercises," "The Ten Dialogues," and "The Hundred Lessons," which corresponded, respectively, to "Sanyu Chang," "Wenda Chang," and "Tan Lun P'ien." However, while the names changed for each section, only the levels differed. All three chapters were essentially designed to practice using oral negotiation to get things accomplished in local Beijing or Shanghai society. The Japanese educators embraced this system, and while they used the terms *sango* (*sanyu*), *mondō* (*wenda*), and *danronpen* (*tanlun pian*) extensively, it was the word *mondō* that came to represent this new style of communication, and it became the foundation for what was to be called the *mondōtai* 問答体 in later practical language education.

Dialogue VIII from Wade's "Ten Dialogues" section is a particularly interesting example of *mondō*. The foreigner is grilling a servant who has been sent to him to guide him to Beijing. He extracts all kinds of information from the obsequious servant such as the height of the river and if it would be better to go by road; whether staying at an inn

³³ Wade and Hillier, *Yü yen tzü êrh chi* 1, p. xxi.

or in a temple would be more convenient; what food he should ask to have prepared for him at the inn, since he has never tried Chinese food, and so on.³⁴

In an excerpt from *Kanwa shinan*, Part 3, Dialogue 16, one sees a similar exchange:

A: Do you want to have a bath now, Sir?

B: I've got a question to ask you first. What did you throw the dirty water from the bath outside the stable for?

A: It wasn't thrown there. It's the mouth of the drain is stopped up, and the water has overflowed.

B: Then you will have to clean the drain out.

A: Yes, Sir; I will go and clean it at once. Isn't today the day you have a bath, Sir?

B: Have you heated any bath-water?

A: Yes, it is all ready and poured into the bath.

B: Then take the towels and soap and come with me. Step forward a pace, until I have finished making water.

A: Yes, Sir.

B: Look, here, you *must* sweep the bath-room floor clean, and not make it so slippery as this.

A: Yes, Sir. Is the water too hot, Sir?

B: It is rather; put in a little more cold, and give me a scrubbing.

A: Yes, Sir.

B: Is there much dirt on me?

A: Not *very* much.

B: Well, rub me quite clean.

A: Yes, Sir.³⁵

In the above dialogue, the foreigner finds things out, solves problems, and then gets his back washed in a rapid exchange with his servant – a pattern that Wade's *Colloquial Series* had pioneered.

Such back-and-forth exchange of information did not have to be complex. The first *mondō* exercise in *Kyūshūhen* named “Laile ma? Laile” (see figure 3) is one known by virtually all of the hundreds of thousands of Japanese who studied Chinese as part of their sojourn in China in the first half of the twentieth century. The exercise continued with “Zoule ma? Zoule,” “Xing, buxing? Xing,” “Hao buhao? Hao,” and “Dui budui? Dui.” This text gained its fame in that it had dispensed with the subject of the sentence and reduced the dialogue to a basic exchange

³⁴ Wade and Hillier, *Yü yen tzü êrh chi* 2, p. 238.

³⁵ Hopkins, *Guide to Kuan hua*, in *CKS, shū* 3, *kan* 2, p. 330.

of information. If one considers that Edo conversational Chinese texts featured a teacher lecturing students in a rambling, didactic way, one

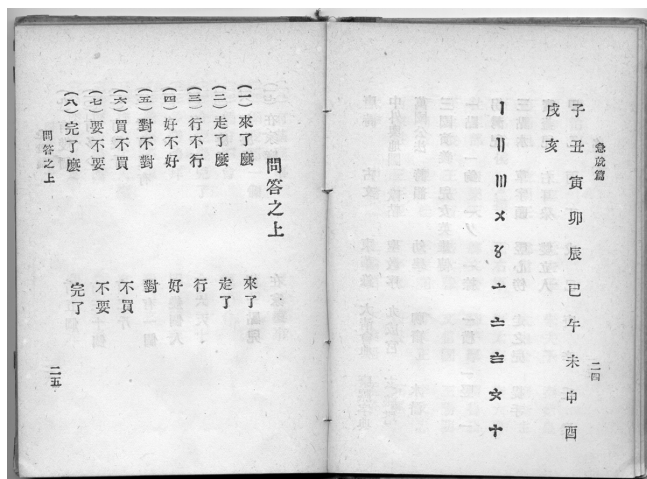


Figure 3. The “Laile ma? Laile” Exercise
From Kyūshūhen.

interlocutor demanding information in a partial sentence would have marked a whole new way of thinking about spoken Chinese.

WADE'S *COLLOQUIAL SERIES* AND THE JAPANESE IMITATIONS: DIFFERENCES

At the same time, the Japanese clearly rejected aspects of the *Colloquial Series*. First of all, the Japanese texts were different in conception. One need only look at the title Wade chose (see figure 4, below).

As previously noted, the full title of the *Colloquial Series* contained the phrase *Yü yen tzü êrh chi: A Progressive Course Designed to Assist the Student of Colloquial Chinese* (see figure 4). While a reader may have been able to pronounce the Chinese, providing he or she understood Wade's romanization scheme, it is unlikely that the meaning would have been understood, since it is an allusion to a passage from the Confucian classic “Doctrine of the Mean.”³⁶ Thus, one can only conclude that the title of the *Colloquial Series* was not so much meant to be read as appreciated, especially if one considers the fact that Wade himself had taken to calling his book the *Colloquial Series*.

³⁶ Wade explains in his preface to the first edition that the phrase comes from a quotation from the *Doctrine of the Mean* which Wade has translated at follows: “The way [in wisdom] of the *chun tsu* [model man] is that of the traveler, who to go far must start from what is near; or him that climbs, who to go high must start from what is low”; Wade and Hillier, *Yü yen tzü êrh chi* 1, p. xii.

The Japanese editors, on other hand, ignored Wade's grand vision of Chinese education and designed textbooks for simplicity and economy. Because Hirobe's *Ajia gengoshū* essentially incorporated all of Wade's content, it contained seven Chinese-style string-bound volumes, but it was already reduced in scope. By 1904, *Kyūshūhen* had been reduced to only 182 pages, and measured only 11cm by 15cm. The Japanese texts were clearly intended as handbooks that could be carried easily and that were inexpensive enough for wide distribution. The book titles also show something of their nature: *Ajia gengoshū* meant the "Asian Language Volume"; *Kanwa shinan* meant "Guide to *Kanwa*"; *Danron shinpen* meant "chats"; and *Kyūshūhen* meant something that approximated "the series for immediate application." The Japanese texts contain no long introductions to the profundities of the subject – the introduction to *Ajia gengoshū* emphasizes the need for Chinese language as a tool for communication, while *Kanwa shinan* explains the vagaries of the Beijing pronunciation. *Kyūshūhen* has no preface at all.

The second major difference between Wade's texts and the Japanese texts was the purpose for which they were designed. In the preface to the first edition of the *Colloquial Series*, Wade makes it clear that his course is for interpreters in diplomatic circles. Wade's job, he says, is

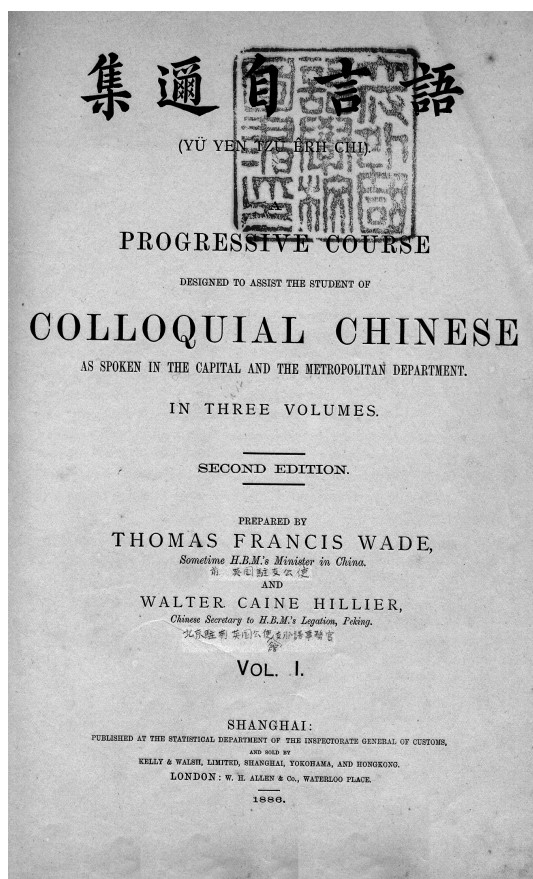


Figure 4. Title Page of Wade's Colloquial Chinese

to direct the studies of the gentlemen destined to recruit the ranks of Her Majesty's Consular Service in China; and although the work now submitted to the public will not perhaps be esteemed valueless by either the missionary or the merchant who may use it, its primary object is to assist the Consular Student in grounding himself with the least possible loss of time in the spoken government language of this country, and in the written government language as it is read, either in books, or in official correspondence, or in documents in any sense of a public character.³⁷

The Japanese texts, on the other hand, were created almost exclusively for business purposes. The contents of Wade's series was revamped in *Kanwa shinan* to contain such headings as "Yingdui xuzhi 應對須知" ("Everyday Situations"), "Guanshang Tudu 官商吐獨" ("Official and Business Utterances"), "Shiling Tonghua 使令通話" ("Giving and Taking Orders"), and "Guanhua Wenda 官話問答" ("Official Matters"). One dialogue from "Yingdui Xuzhi" begins, "The sign fell down on your shop. Why don't you fix it?" Another, in "Shiling Tonghua," begins with the speaker calling on a superior to congratulate him in formal language on a promotion. Still others in later sections deal with the details of sending telegrams, ordering and receiving goods, and so on. This was all completely new content.

The Japanese had realized something that Wade had not. The key to the Japanese putting down roots in China was not learning formal Chinese well enough to do business with the Zongli Yamen on their terms, which was not to happen for any of the imperialist powers. Rather, it was to learn the language well enough to conduct business on a day-to-day, personal level with any Chinese who might help them. Douglas Reynolds points out that the Japanese would have faced a whole host of troubles in China, including currency complexities, the unregulated issue and circulation of money certificates and credit bills by the old fashioned banks, the family, geography based mercantile guilds, and so on.³⁸ It was precisely to these kinds of business situation that the early Japanese educators applied themselves when they created textbooks.

The true measure of the Japanese success, of course, was that *Kanwa shinan* was exported back to the West. L. C. Hopkins published the text as *The Guide to Kuan hua* in English through Kelly and Walsh

³⁷ Wade and Hillier, *Yü yen tzü êrh chi* 1, p. xxii.

³⁸ Douglas Reynolds, "Chinese Area Studies in Prewar China: Japan's Toa Dobun Shoin in Shanghai, 1900-1945," *JAS* 15.5 (Nov., 1986), p. 950.

in 1889, and Henri Boucher published an official French version. The text was further adapted to the Shanghai dialect and Cantonese by other enterprising Westerners.³⁹ The preface to Hopkins' translation shows both how out of touch Wade's snobbish view of Chinese education was in the nitty-gritty of daily life in China, and how effective *Kanwa shinan* really was:

Translator's Preface

Few foreign residents of China will, I suppose challenge the position that to speak of a man as a Sinologue is to think of him as a fool.

Let me hasten, in the interests of the publishers and myself to assure the gentle, the candid, and the general reader, that the perusal of this volume need leave no one more foolish than he was before.

This firm confidence in the harmlessness of the present work may be had because from a sinologic standpoint "there is nothing in it."

Whether the Chinese of antiquity said "hwei7 guk" or "t'an5 dam" whence they came—these ancient but objurgatory speakers—from Babylon, from Accad, or Assyria, and who they were, Chaldees or Hittites, Proto-Medians or Ugro-Altaics, the Ten Lost Tribes of natives of some old-world Parish of Stepney; whether the I King is phallic gospel or pocket dictionary; where in the world Ta Ts'in and T'iao-chih could have been; and precisely how much remains of Lao Tzu after being translated by Balfour and analyzed by Giles, on these and kindred topics the Kuan Hua Chih Nan will throw no gleam of light.

Mr. Goh's text is modern, work-a-day and practical, written in excellent Pekinese of the time, not of two hundred years ago, and, by common consent of both northern natives and foreign students, is as useful as it is idiomatic.⁴⁰

Finally, there is a clear difference in the attitude one finds toward local Chinese conditions in the Japanese texts compared to their British counterpart. Wade's essential goodwill toward the Chinese did not mean that the *Colloquial Series* was not imbued with indulgent colonial attitudes toward the local Chinese. Lesson XLIII of the Hundred Lessons contains the following passage:

³⁹ See n. 17, above.

⁴⁰ Hopkins, *Guide to Kuan hua*, in *CKS, shū 3, kan 2*, p. 308.

1. Yesterday, while I was out, those rascally servants of mine began to wrangle and make a row as if the house belonged to them, and by the time I came home there was a fine uproar. Pack of monkeys! I gave a cough and walked in, and they all became dumb together, and then they sneaked out one by one, looking at each other as guilty and frightened as possible. 2. This morning, just as I was out of bed, in came the villains and dropped down on their knees as stiff as posts and began, "Oh! We deserve to die," and so on; and they kept on praying and kowtowing and begging pardon so dolefully that my wrath began to cool a little, and I said to them, "Do you feel as if you wanted the stick, that you can't be quiet? If you oblige me to give you a thrashing, what good will it do you, pray?"⁴¹

The Japanese incursion into China did not turn out to be a friendly one, but one finds no talk of "thrashing servants" in their texts, nor, in fact, any evidence of humor at all. Also gone is the leisured anecdotal prose. The Japanese too were conscious of class distinctions in Chinese society, but instead used their considerable savvy with polite language to get things accomplished. Consider the following passage from Dialogue XII in *Danron shinpen*:⁴²

A: Haven't seen you for an age, worthy brother. When did you come back? 老台久違了, 您是多咱回來的

B: I reached home yesterday. Have you been well all the time, brother? 我是昨天到的家, 老弟一向好啊

A: Thanks to you, quite well. Did you have a pleasant journey? 托福, 都好, 您路上都好啊

B: Thanks to you, quite peaceful. However on the occasion of your son's wedding I was not able to be present; I was really wanting in politeness. 托福, 都平安, 可是上次世兄樂婚大喜, 我沒能提回來道喜, 實在短體的很

A: What a thing to say! When that affair came off My Lady Sister-in-law brought your congratulatory presents. Really too many things! I am truly grateful. Thanks! Thanks! 那兒的話呢, 上回事情上, 蒙嫂夫人帶着世兄來暢賀, 又嘗許多的東西, 實在勞駕費心的很了, 謝謝

B: How can I listen to this? Really I have been rude and not respectful. 豈敢, 草率不恭

A: Too modest! Too modest! ... 太謙太謙

⁴¹ Wade and Hillier, *Yü yen tzü êrh chi* 2, p. 292.

⁴² CKS, *shū* 1, *kan* 4, p. 6.

The above passage uses the translation found in *Chats in Chinese* published in 1901 by C. H. Brewitt.⁴³ Put in the context of the rest of the *Chats*, it is clearly a conversation between two speakers who are associated through business, but who also share a personal relationship. Speaker A appears slightly junior to Speaker B, and the dialogue centers around this vaguely unequal relationship. While Englishmen at the end of the nineteenth century might have had an ear for polite language that we lack today, the above passage does not translate smoothly into English. English speakers would not call someone “worthy brother,” nor would they protest “How can I listen to this,” nor would they give credit for their own journey to someone else. However, not only is this passage perfectly understandable in Chinese, it could be translated into natural Japanese. The Japanese textbooks, then, show that the Meiji Japanese realized that Chinese society was something that had to be carefully observed and negotiated by language.

CONCLUSION

Wade spent many of his years in China out of the mainstream of British diplomatic circles, and he returned to England in 1882 essentially having failed to accomplish what he had spent a great part of his productive life trying to achieve. The British had never really engaged the Chinese on their terms, in their language, as Wade had hoped. Moreover, Wade was never able to see himself as a legitimate scholar of Chinese, having received a grooming in Greek and Latin as a student at Cambridge in his early days. However, Wade had laid a foundation for a new type of *in situ* language education where learners not only had to study language but familiarize themselves with everything from local customs to ancient history. The Japanese immediately appreciated the significance of Wade’s new education, perhaps more than Wade himself.

This analysis has shown that in the Meiji period the Japanese students of Chinese were forced, for want of anything else, to borrow heavily from Wade’s *Colloquial Series* and his European conceptions about Chinese language and culture. We have shown that by adopting Wade’s pioneering system of studying Chinese, the Japanese were able to apply his prestigious European perspective to local conditions in China. Moreover, Wade’s *Series* made the Japanese more sensitive

⁴³ C. H. Brewitt-Taylor, *Chats in Chinese: A Translation of the Tan Lun Shin Pien* (1901), reproduced in *CKS, shū 3, kan 1*, p. 418.

to the close relationship between language and the geographic place it represented. During Edo times, *Tōwa* was associated with a wider Chinese civilization, and only loosely connected to specific trading ports. Wade's *Series*, however, made it clear that in the modern world of the late-nineteenth century, it was *Pekin Kanwa*, the language of Beijing, that must be learnt. Similarly, while a hodgepodge of languages had sufficed in the Edo period when the Japanese were dealing with sailors and migrant traders, the Japanese now had to apply themselves to learning the official language, *kanwa*, if the Japanese were to comfortably interact with the Qing government. And Wade's "question and answer" format was really the beginning of a phase in Sino-Japanese relations where oral negotiation occurred among equals, and was conducted solely for profit.

At the same time, the Meiji instruction texts show a manner of Chinese language education remarkably different in conception from that of the British. Wade created his course for England's diplomatic elite to facilitate interaction with the Chinese Foreign Office. The Japanese writers, however, immediately integrated practical trading practice into their texts, which varied from banking transactions to entertaining guests. The Japanese were content to produce a number of "guides" without seeing a need to explore in depth the relationship between modern Chinese society and the language they spoke. The Japanese also realized that polite language was the key to doing business in China, just as it was in Japan.

One can only speculate about what the Meiji Japanese thought when they first thumbed through the *Colloquial Series*. We can surmise that Wade's work must have made a powerful impression. Its author spoke the Peking dialect well enough to negotiate with the Zongli Yamen regarding the Formosa Incident, something the Japanese who could boast more experience with Chinese culture had been unable to do. The textbooks would have symbolized the power of the sophisticated outsider sufficiently knowledgeable of the intricacies of the Chinese bureaucracy in order to get things accomplished on local Chinese terms. And the lavishly bound, massive, dark green volumes of the *Colloquial Series* would have stood in stark contrast to the outdated string-bound readers the students had been using in Tokyo in earlier times. In the end, though, while the Japanese may have been impressed, they clearly decided in favor of language texts that were to be put in one's pocket and not kept at the embassy library.

