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PLAN

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Introduction

1 Even-Zohar (1990) acknowledges foreign literature's crucial role in shaping national literary landscapes during periods of low vitality in target literature. He underscores the translators' tendency to assimilate foreign models, thereby revitalizing local literature, particularly when the translated works assume a central position in a given literary system—a centrality underscored by the substantial volume and

exceptional quality of the translations. However, despite the apparent dominance of foreign literature, local writers can still exhibit active resistance to its influence. This paper highlights a pre-modern Japanese writer who, while incorporating elements and models from Chinese vernacular fiction, maintained resistance according to social moral codes and personal intentions.

2 In pre-modern Japan, the English terms "translation" and "adaptation" find no direct counterparts. Instead, concepts such as "翻刻 honkoku (Japanese version of...)" and "通俗 tsūzoku (vernacular version of...)" serve as functional equivalents to translations, while the literary technique of "翻案 hon'an (turning over a case)" functions akin to adaptation. In comparison to translation, adaptation assumes a more pivotal role in digesting foreign literature and fostering the development of national literature, as it faces fewer constraints than translation. During the Edo period (1603–1867), Japanese writers created a new literary genre called "Edo yomihon" by adapting Chinese vernacular fiction. Santō Kyōden's *Chūshin Suikoden* is often considered a key milestone in the emergence of *Edo yomihon*.

3 Throughout the Edo period, Chinese vernacular fiction garnered significant attention from Japanese writers and gained widespread readership, establishing itself as a central component of the Japanese literary system. This development aligns with Even-Zohar's polysystem theory, which posits that in cases where the target literary system is in a "peripheral" or "weak" state, translated literature often assumes a dominant role. In this context, Chinese vernacular novels, as translated literature, occupied a central position, particularly within the popular literary sphere. This prominence is evidenced by the abundance of translations and adaptations, with some translators and adapters gaining recognition as novelists in their own right.

4 However, despite the significant influence of Chinese vernacular fiction within the literary system, native writers often exhibited a form of resistance during the adaptation process, asserting their creativity and originality. This resistance highlights the dynamic interplay between foreign influences and indigenous literary expression in the Edo period. It is important to clarify that the "resistance" described here does not denote an opposition or conflict with the source text, nor does it frame the source as an adversary. Rather, it refers to the

assertion of subjectivity and agency, wherein Japanese writers transcended the limitations of the source material, repurposing it to suit their own literary aims and objectives.

5 This paper centers on Santō Kyōden's *Chūshin Suikoden* (1799-1801) and delves into Kyōden's transformative approach in reshaping the imported work to harmonize with his artistic vision. Kyōden crafted *Chūshin Suikoden* drawing inspiration from the Japanese native script, *Kanadehon Chūshingura*, and the foreign story, Chinese vernacular fiction *Water Margin*. While existing studies have explored the patterns of Kyōden combining these two source works, they predominantly focus on what Kyōden inherited and creatively added, with a particular emphasis on male characters. However, this paper diverges by shining a spotlight on the establishment of female characters in *Chūshin Suikoden*. Despite their fewer numbers and relatively marginal roles, the focus on female characters offers an alternative perspective to evaluate Kyōden's literary skills. It underscores his ability to absorb *Water Margin* while simultaneously showcasing his originality through resistance to the source work. Nonetheless, as I will discuss in Section 2.2, while this paper focuses on female characters as case studies, it is important to clarify that Kyōden does not prioritize female characters over male ones. To avoid the anachronistic application of modern concepts to a premodern social context, I will refrain from using a feminist perspective in analyzing Kyōden's choices.

6 This paper begins with an overview of three works—*Chūshin Suikoden* and its two main sources—followed by a review of existing research on *Chūshin Suikoden* and the portrayal of female characters in *Water Margin*. It highlights deficiencies in current research on *Chūshin Suikoden*, particularly regarding its female characters, and suggests that studies of adaptations like *Chūshin Suikoden* can complement rigorous translation-focused research.

7 The subsequent section uses three female characters in *Chūshin Suikoden* as case studies to examine their relationships with the two source works. Each character represents a distinct approach: one adheres closely to the local storyline while incorporating new elements from the foreign source, another subverts both local and foreign storylines, and the third is entirely absent from the local narrative but

established based on the foreign source. Through comparative analysis, the paper sheds light on Kyōden's method of retaining original settings while implementing modifications. This analysis seeks to unveil the intricate ways in which Kyōden interacted with the source materials.

8 The paper concludes by highlighting Kyōden's nuanced stance on *Water Margin*: he respected its influence while challenging its constraints. Through original female character creations and innovative storytelling methods, Kyōden showcased his artistic ingenuity in three key ways. Firstly, viewing *Water Margin* as a rich repository, Kyōden reshaped its elements with strategic integration, division, and inversion of characters and traits. Secondly, his attention to female readers and prostitutes contributed to amplifying the presence of marginalized female characters. Thirdly, driven by an awareness of publishing norms and societal values, Kyōden took deliberate steps to infuse his female character portrayals with ethical guidelines, recognizing the importance of educating his female audience.

9 Through the examination of a representative Japanese adaptation as a case study, this paper explores the acts of resistance in pre-modern Japanese *hon'an* adaptations, created under the predominant influence of Chinese literature. In doing so, it enriches the field of translation studies by expanding its scope both temporally and spatially. By shedding light on the notable resistance observed alongside the assimilation of foreign literary models, this research delves into the dynamics of cross-cultural literary exchanges. It highlights how resistance serves as a crucial element in shaping the trajectory of literary assimilation and transformation.

Chūshin Suikoden and its Two Main Source Works

10 As Devitt (1979, 254) introduces, Santō Kyōden 山東京伝 is a key figure in the transition from the Kamigata literature of the An'ei and Tenmei periods (1772-89) to the Edo writings of Bunka and Bunsei (1804-30), a most brilliant writer of *sharebon* 洒落本, *kibyoshi* 黄表紙, and *yomihon* 読本.

11 *Chūshin Suikoden* 忠臣水滸伝 is a *yomihon* written by Kyōden, comprised of two volumes that were respectively published in 1799 and 1801. It is an adaptation of *Shuihuzhuan* 水浒传 [*Water Margin*] (Japanese translation is *Suikoden*), a work of Chinese vernacular fiction published in the fourteenth century. As its title shows, this adaptation "mixes, matches, and combines *Water Margin* with *Kanadehon Chūshingura* 仮名手本忠臣蔵" (INOUE, 2010, 151). Roughly speaking, the names of characters and places, and the overall flow of the story in *Chūshin Suikoden* conform with *Kanadehon Chūshingura* to a large extent, while Kyōden borrowed sentences from *Water Margin* to describe the scenes, character settings to build his own characters, and plots to enrich the storyline.

12 The story of *Chūshin Suikoden* revolves around the conflicts between two families: Kōno Moronao, the governor of Kamakura, and Enya Takasada, the Lord of Unshū. Enya Takasada is always referred to as "Hangan" in literature and research, and I will do so in this paper. In this story, Moronao framed Hangan to death because he lost his heart to Hangan's wife Kaoyo. After Hangan's death, his 47 retainers took vengeance on Moronao under the leadership of Ōboshi Yuranosuke, who was the head of Hangan's retainers. Besides the storyline of taking vengeance, the life experience of some characters also blended in as branches.

13 *Water Margin* is a full-length novel, telling the story of 108 heroes during the Chinese Northern Song dynasty (960-1127). Each getting through his hardship and ordeal, these 108 heroes gathered at Mount Liang to rob the rich and help the poor, and later they were offered amnesty from the emperor. Afterward, they resisted foreign invaders and suppressed rebel forces under the emperor's command, though most of them met tragic ends.

14 *Kanadehon Chūshingura* is a theater script first created for the puppet theater in the eighteenth century and then flourishing on Kabuki stage. The story revolves around revenge: Moronao insults Hangan after being spurned by Hangan's wife, leading Hangan to draw his sword in anger, but Moronao is only slightly wounded. Hangan is then ordered to commit suicide by the shogun for his misconduct. His head retainer, Ōboshi Yuranosuke, leads 46 other retainers in aven-

ging Hangan by killing Moronao. In the end, they are punished for defying the shogun's authority.

15 Although the title *Chūshin Suikoden* explicitly references its two primary source works, its sources extend beyond them. The local story *Kanadehon Chūshingura* is based on a historical incident from 1702, in which 47 loyal warriors spent two years seeking revenge for their lord, who had been framed by an adversary. To avoid political censorship, as their actions lacked the shogun's approval, the script incorporated characters and plot elements from *Taiheiki* 太平記 to retell the story. As Iyoda (2015) has explored, it is highly likely that *Chūshin Suikoden* drew from a broad range of works, including *Tsurezuregusa* 徒然草 and *Shuseiden* 種生伝, among others. Despite these multiple sources, this paper will focus on exploring the adapter's stance toward foreign literature by examining the relationships between *Chūshin Suikoden* and its foreign source work, *Water Margin*, with occasional references to *Kanadehon Chūshingura* as necessary.

16 Kyōden began his writing career in the genres of *sharebon* and *kibyōshi*, both forms of entertainment literature. *Sharebon* typically depicted life in the pleasure quarters, often satirizing male-female relationships. However, during the Kansei Reforms (1787-1793), three of his *sharebon* works were deemed obscene for "depicting the lewd behavior of courtesans," resulting in a 50-day period of handcuffs confinement. Following this, Kyōden became wary of official censorship and shifted his focus to producing *kibyōshi* that aimed to enlighten the public about Neo-Confucianism. He also pioneered the *Edo yomihon* 江戸読本, drawing on Chinese vernacular novels like *Water Margin* as inspiration.

17 Kyōden sought to elevate his works' social and literary value, choosing Chinese vernacular novels as a key influence for several reasons. First, both Chinese vernacular novels and Japanese non-canonical literature share roots in popular culture, aligning in their entertainment value. Second, the literary quality of these Chinese works made them appealing to Japanese writers who sought to satisfy readers and achieve economic success. As Takagi (1994, 108) notes, the post-Kansei era compelled authors and publishers to innovate more marketable works, leading to the exploration of new genres. Similarly,

Nakamura (1987, 167) attributes the adoption of Chinese vernacular novels to the "impoverishment of creative fiction" in Japan. Third, the moral retribution themes in Chinese vernacular novels were appealing to the Japanese government, as they contributed to social order. Finally, while regarded as popular literature in China, these novels were received as refined and elegant in Japan, benefiting from the traditional reverence for Chinese classical literature. Thus, the dual nature of *Water Margin*—as both accessible entertainment and refined literature—provided an ideal template for Kyōden to transition from popular to more prestigious literary forms.

18 *Chūshin Suikoden*, one of Kyōden's experimental works, marks the emergence of the *Edo yomihon* in the late Edo period. Although Kyokutei Bakin's *Takao Senjimon* 高尾船字文 (1796) also integrates theatrical scripts with *Water Margin*, it was criticized for failing to capture the essence of the original and achieved limited popularity. According to Ōtaka (2010), the widespread dissemination of *Edo yomihon* awaited the release of Kyōden's *Chūshin Suikoden*. As Inoue (2010) observed, this work marked the true beginning of the *Edo yomihon*, pioneering mainstream literature in the period. In addition, Ōdaka (2008) recorded the large quantity of *Edo yomihon* that was included in Lords' collections, which indicates that the ruling class was also included in the readership. Namely, by adapting foreign literature, Kyōden developed a new genre of local literature that gained recognition from both the general public and the ruling class.

Literature Review

Previous Research on *Chūshin Suikoden*

19 Despite its historical status and literary value, few previous studies have paid attention to *Chūshin Suikoden*. One main reason is that Kyōden didn't continue this writing approach of combining Chinese vernacular fictions and Japanese theatre scripts. Besides, *Mukashi Gatari Inazuma Byōshi* 昔話稲妻表紙is regarded as his best *yomihon*. (DEVITT, 1979, 269)

20 Those existing studies mainly focus on two aspects: one is the style—in what way Kyōden managed to strip the story from a theatre script

and retell it as a full-length novel (e.g., XU, 1985; NOGUCHI, 1995; ISHIKAWA, 2004); the other is the characters or plots —what characters and plots Kyōden borrowed from *Water Margin* and retained from *Kanadehon Chūshingura* or other source works. This analysis often involves one-to-one correspondences between characters, such as determining which character in *Chūshin Suikoden* corresponds to one in *Water Margin*. Some studies have traced the origins of specific narrative elements (e.g., ASŌ, 1946; SHIMIZU, 1967; TOKUDA, 1994) and explored Kyōden's rationale for selecting them (ISHIKAWA, 2001; ZHOU, 2014). However, these studies rarely discuss the implications of Kyōden's choices. Iyoda's research (2015) is an exception, which contended that the image of a male character Yoshida Kenkō 吉田兼好 was established as a "spectator" who witnessed the whole process of the warriors' revenge. However, she did not come to this conclusion from the connections between *Chūshin Suikoden* and *Water Margin* or *Kanadehon Chūshingura*. Rather, she considered Kenkō as a spectator because she believed that his character came from neither of those two sources.

21 The image of character Kenkō is frequently discussed in previous research. In fact, the previous studies are all concerned with the male characters, and none of them is exclusively devoted to the images of female characters. Although some scholars have mentioned female characters in passing to illustrate how Kyōden mixed different sources, they have not treated female characters as a distinct category of analysis (e.g., ISHIKAWA, 2001; ZHOU, 2014). By specifically examining female characters, this paper aims to explore how Kyōden resisted the marginalized and weak portrayals of women in the source texts. This resistance is more pronounced in his treatment of female characters than in male characters, as his methods for constructing female characters involve unique approaches and motivations compared to those used for male characters.

Previous Research on Female Characters in *Water Margin*

22 Scholarship on female characters in *Water Margin* commonly depicts them in passive and marginal roles. According to Yang (2018), because of their periphery and voiceless positions, the female characters act

as subsidiary tools to help the plots develop and underpin the heroic images of male characters, especially promoting the male characters to go to Mount Liang, the center place of the story. Hu (2019) and Kong (2020) summarized the features of female characters in *Water Margin*. The former categorized the female characters into four types —chaste and weak ladies, tough and iron women, evil and vicious women, and amorous and lascivious vamps—and concluded that no matter which type, women could not have independent personalities under the background of prevalent patriarchy. Kong further asserts that these characters are denied autonomy over their lives and desires, both physical and emotional. In contrast, Bai (2007) presents a dissenting view by highlighting scenes of female empowerment, such as women engaging in intimate conversations with men, pursuing romantic interests, and assuming household responsibilities.

23 Two articles particularly discussed the images of female characters from the perspective of *Water Margin*'s overseas acceptation. Wang (2019) analyzed the English version translated by Sidney Shapiro from an imagological approach. Zhang (2020) analyzed the English version translated by Pearl S. Buck from the perspective of translation as reconstruction. Both of them extracted the translations concerning the female characters, claiming that the translator enhanced the images of female characters by smartly wielding translation strategies, such as choosing neutral pronouns, weakening the male characters in the same scenes, omitting or beautifying the swear words said by female characters, etc.

24 Unlike the two articles that deal with translations strictly bound by the original work, this paper examines *Chūshin Suikoden*, an adaptation in which Kyōden exercised greater creativity and freedom as both a translator and creator. As the analysis in later sections will demonstrate, Kyōden's methods of resistance extend beyond the confines of words and sentences, targeting not only the foreign source text but also the native one.

25 Moreover, while this paper's analysis of the relationship between the adaptation and the original focuses on the portrayal of female characters, it does not approach the subject from a feminist perspective. First, I advise against critiquing *Water Margin* from the standpoint of misogyny or feminism, as attitudes towards female characters are in-

herently relative concepts. The marginalized and passive roles of women in the original work are undeniably evident. However, the source text *Water Margin*, written by male author(s) and centered on male heroes, cannot reasonably be expected to adopt a friendly stance towards women. Furthermore, *Water Margin* does not explicitly display an unfriendly attitude towards women. The often-criticized scenes of women committing adultery and subsequently being violently punished by male protagonists are not uncommon for male characters who commit wrongdoings; there is no evidence of women being singled out for special treatment. In fact, the assertive and bold nature of some female characters could be seen as a recognition of their abilities and agency. Secondly, although Kyōden indeed shows a more favorable attitude towards women and considers his female readers, I believe this reflects a personal viewpoint rather than a clear feminist consciousness. His empowerment and respect for female characters are relative to other male authors of his time and *Water Margin*, since ultimately, the actions of his female characters still serve the narrative of the male protagonists. Therefore, I am reluctant to impose modern feminist concepts on a premodern era. Rather, to avoid the misunderstanding that Kyōden places more emphasis on female than on male characters, I will also briefly discuss the effects of his adaptation methods on male characters while highlighting the empowerment of female characters.

Analysis of Female Characters in *Chūshin Suikoden*

26 *Chūshin Suikoden* features ten female characters, four of whom do not appear in the local source work *Kanadehon Chūshingura*. This analysis will focus on three female characters, comparing their roles across the three works.

27 The first character, Kaoyo, is partially modeled after Lady Lin from *Water Margin*. Kyōden begins with this similarity and further enriches Kaoyo's image by drawing from other *Water Margin* characters. The second character, Okaru, is a most typical example of Kyōden's creativity. Okaru's original image in the native story has little to do with *Water Margin*'s plots. Kyōden reversed the image of a character in *Water Margin* as well as the fate of her husband to set up

her character as a female hero. The third character, Yashakaka, is a new creation not found in *Kanadehon Chūshingura*. Kyōden synthesizes traits from multiple *Water Margin* characters to craft Yashakaka as a wholly negative figure, whose presence intensifies the conflict in *Chūshin Suikoden* and highlights the heroism of other characters.

Kaoyo 貌好

28 Kaoyo, the wife of Hangan, assumed a pivotal role within the Hangan family's hierarchy following his demise. Her significance lies in inspiring Kyōden to merge *Kanadehon Chūshingura* with *Water Margin*. In the preface of the first volume, Kyōden (1928, 423) expressed that his inspiration stemmed from the parallel between Moronao framing Hangan (plots in *Kanadehon Chūshingura*) and Gao Qiu framing Lin Chong (plots in *Water Margin*). This connection was drawn as both incidents were triggered by illicit love affairs with married women. Kyōden positions Kaoyo as a counterpart to Lady Lin, yet she transcends this role. Kyōden skillfully synthesizes multiple *Water Margin* characters to create Kaoyo, who emerges not as a passive, marriage-centric figure, but as the backbone of her clan. The following sections will explore how Kyōden draws from *Water Margin* to develop Kaoyo's character, focusing on descriptions and scenarios.

Amalgamated Beauty

29 In this section, I will examine how Kyōden crafted Kaoyo's appearance using phrases from *Water Margin*, treating the source text as a repository of expressive language. Kyōden's approach to borrowing from Chinese vernacular fiction was flexible and selective, utilizing phrases commonly found in such works. This practice often makes it difficult to trace the exact origins of the language used. However, in the case of Kaoyo, Kyōden consistently referenced *Water Margin*, incorporating its poems and verses to depict her appearance. The chart below outlines the elements of Kaoyo's description, demonstrating how Kyōden synthesized the appearance of multiple female characters from *Water Margin*. The underlined sections highlight the rhetorical expressions directly borrowed by Kyōden. No English translations of the underlined Chinese sources are provided, as their meanings align with Kyōden's usage in the Japanese text.

Description of Kaoyo	Sources in *Water Margin*
金の釵を斜に挿て烏雲に映かし。翠袖巧に裁で瑞雪を籠む。櫻桃にたとふる日は。淺徴紅を暈。静にひとしき手は。半嫩玉を舒。 (A gold pin slantwise set enhances raven tresses; Green sleeves of artful cut conceal the snow-white arms; A mouth round as a cherry, with lips of tender pink; White hands half revealed, like bamboo shoots in spring)	**金釵斜插，掩映烏雲；翠袖巧裁，輕籠瑞雪。櫻桃口淺暈微紅，春筍手半舒嫩玉。**纖腰裊娜，綠羅裙微露金蓮；素體輕盈，紅繡襖偏宜玉體。臉堆三月嬌花，眉掃初春嫩柳。香肌撲簌瑤臺月，翠鬢籠松楚岫雲。 This source depicts Jin Cuilian, a former entertainer who was deceived into becoming a butcher's concubine. Instead of receiving the promised compensation, she was beaten by the butcher's wife and forced to pay the butcher. Fortunately, she and her father were rescued by Lu Da, one of the male protagonists. Jin later married a wealthy man and lived happily with her father. The description occurs when Lu encounters her after her second marriage, noting a significant improvement in her appearance.
臉は三月の嬌花に似て。暗に風の情月の意を藏し。眉は初春の嫩柳のごとく。常に雨の恨み雲の愁を含む。玉貌妖嬈として。芳容窈窕たり。 (A face like third month peach blossoms, hinting at romantic desires and amorous thoughts; Brows like willow-leaves in early spring, but oft-times clouded with the sadness of showers; Her face is enchanting as jades and fair as flowers)	**眉似初春柳葉，常含著雨恨雲愁；臉如三月桃花，暗藏著風情月意。**纖腰裊娜，拘束的燕懶鶯慵；檀口輕盈，勾引得蜂狂蝶亂。**玉貌妖嬈**花解語，**芳容窈窕**玉生香。 This depiction belongs to Pan Jinlian, being coerced into marriage with an unattractive and impoverished man, leading her to commit adultery. She conspired with her neighbor to poison her husband, resulting in his murder. In retaliation, Wu Song, her late husband's younger brother and one of the male protagonists, beheaded her. This account unfolds during Wu's initial encounter with Pan.
若月宮の嫦娥。下界に降るにあらずんば。定めて題闕の龍女。人間に遊ぶならん。 (She is like the goddess of the moon who has left paradise and comes down to the earthly world; Or the daughter of the Sea God who has left the Sea Palace and plays at the mortal world)	身穿縞素，腰系孝裙。不施脂粉，自然體態妖嬈；懶染鉛華，生定天姿秀麗。雲鬟半整，有沈魚落雁之容；星眼含愁，有閉月羞花之貌。**恰似嫦娥離月殿，渾如織女下瑤池。** This depiction belongs to the wife of a civil governor, Liu Gao. She plays a minor role compared to the previous two characters. She was captured by bandits and later rescued by Song Jiang, the leader of the male protagonists. Upon returning home, she falsely accused Song of misconduct, leading to her brutal death at the hands of vengeful protagonists. This event is described when Song first encounters her in the bandit's quarters.

30 [The English translation is based on the translation of John and Alex Dent-Young (2002; 2009) and adjusted by me]

31 As illustrated in the chart above, Kaoyo's beauty is constructed from descriptions of various captivating women in *Water Margin*, while not including Lady Lin, whose experiences parallel Kaoyo's and initially inspired Kyōden's adaptation. Besides, despite Kaoyo's noble status as a lord's wife, the sources include a diverse range of characters: an entertainer who married twice as a concubine, an immoral woman in-

volved in infidelity and murder, and a morally ambiguous noblewoman known for treachery. In essence, when Kyōden directed his focus towards words and sentences, he treated *Water Margin* as a reservoir of materials, drawing inspiration without being constrained by the morality and social standing of the source characters, or parallels between characters in the two texts. In this instance, his aim was to extract rhetorical and epideictic elements to praise Kaoyo's physical allure.

Female Character with Male Plots

32 The depictions of appearance illustrate how Kyōden incorporated the physical traits of female characters from *Water Margin*, irrespective of their status or morality. In addition to treating the source text as a repository to enrich the local narrative, Kyōden's plot incorporations demonstrate how he borrowed elements from this "library" regardless of gender to empower the character of Kaoyo.

33 As previously mentioned, Moronao's improper affection for Kaoyo serves as the pivotal scene that sparked Kyōden's inspiration to merge the two narratives. This illicit love also forms the foundation for the entire *Kanadehon Chūshingura* story, where the central plot revolves around seeking vengeance for Hangan's demise, a consequence of Moronao's unrequited love for Kaoyo.

34 In the local story, Kaoyo's role is simple: she distinguishes a helmet for the general, is pursued by Moronao, laments Hangan's death, transports Hangan's body to the temple, and sends a secret letter to the leader of the revenge group. Her character is defined by these straightforward actions. Inspired by her similar experience with Lady Lin and trying to enrich her storyline by incorporating elements from *Water Margin*, Kyōden strategically transferred Kaoyo's initial act of distinguishing the helmet to a male character. Thus, the initial encounter between Kaoyo and Moronao, originally set in the court during the helmet-distinguishing scene in *Kanadehon Chūshingura*, was shifted to a temple, mirroring the rendezvous between Lady Lin and Gao Qiu's foster son. Subsequently, Kyōden aligned with the narrative flow by adopting Gao Qiu's ploy of framing Lin Chong to create a parallel where Moronao frames Hangan. Up to this point, parallels emerge between Lin Chong and Hangan—both being framed—and

between Lady Lin and Kaoyo, both pursued by someone with greater power than their husbands. However, as Hangan dies in the *Kanadehon Chūshingura* story while Lin Chong survives and embarks on a difficult journey, Kyōden incorporated Lin Chong's experiences into Kaoyo's narrative, depicting the hardships she endures.

35 In shaping Kaoyo's journey, Kyōden drew inspiration not only from the challenges faced by Lin Chong but also from the experiences of Song Jiang, the leader of the 108 heroes on Mount Liang. This choice reflects the parallels between these characters from *Water Margin* and Kaoyo's own journey. Kyōden transposed Lin Chong's predicament—being ensnared by a scheming bureaucrat—onto Hangan, providing a compelling rationale for integrating their storylines. The challenging journey that Lin Chong undertook was then transferred to Kaoyo, Hangan's wife, in a transition that felt natural due to the established connection between Lin Chong and Hangan. This continuity ensured a smooth integration of the narratives. Meanwhile, with Hangan's demise, Kaoyo ascended to a pivotal position within the clan, mirroring Song Jiang's role as the central figure in the rebellion group. By incorporating Song's hardships into Kaoyo's journey, Kyōden effectively established her status as the master of the clan.

36 In sum, Kyōden demonstrated a willingness to adapt male characters' narratives to female protagonists, highlighting his commitment to crafting a captivating story over rigid adherence to original contexts or character conventions. This strategic approach underscores Kyōden's adept use of *Water Margin* as a narrative reservoir, selecting elements that best served to enhance and diversify the storyline.

Effects of Adapting Kaoyo: Diverse Characterization

37 What effects Kyōden achieved by borrowing these descriptions and plots from *Water Margin*? This section examines how Kyōden's adapting methods shaped *Chūshin Suikoden*, focusing on the writer's resistance to the foreign source text as well as the local one.

38 Given that the primary narrative in *Chūshin Suikoden* revolves around seeking revenge for Hangan, and the character names remain consistent with those in *Kanadehon Chūshingura*, I consider *Chūshingura*

story as the foundation or core, and *Water Margin* as the embellishments or flesh. This approach results in the incorporation of distinctive features from the original characters in *Water Margin* to enhance the characters in *Chūshin Suikoden*. Kyōden, by drawing upon the images of Lady Lin and incorporating appearance descriptions of Jin Cuilian and others, portrayed Kaoyo as an exceptionally beautiful, chaste, and delicate woman. Additionally, references to Song Jiang emphasize Kaoyo's elevated status as a symbol of power within the Hangan family after her husband's death. The inclusion of Lin Chong and Song Jiang's trials further highlights Kaoyo's struggles, accentuating the Hangan family's tragic circumstances and setting the stage for the quest for revenge. The nearly literal translation of phrases from *Water Margin* not only enriched the diction of *Chūshin Suikoden* but also invigorated its storyline. These adapted elements seamlessly integrated into the narrative, enhancing both its depth and reader engagement.

39 Meanwhile, the enhanced narrative arcs for female characters in *Chūshin Suikoden* allow for the creation of distinct character images, departing from the stereotypical portrayals found in *Kanadehon Chūshingura*. For instance, Kaoyo's character is depicted with an emphasis on her beauty, chastity, delicacy, suffering, and nobility, while aspects such as her role as the hostess of a warrior family are minimized. This intentional reinforcement and reduction of specific traits contributed to the crafting of unique and memorable female characters. In contrast to the native story of *Kanadehon Chūshingura*, where female characters were often pigeonholed into stereotypes, *Chūshin Suikoden* sought to imbue them with individuality. A similar transformative effect is evident in the character of Tonase, the wife of a high retainer from another warrior family. In the adaptation, scenes depicting her traditional role of serving the lady of the house and receiving guests were omitted, replaced by a focus on her martial arts skills and formidable strength—a shift achieved by incorporating plot elements from Lu Zhishen, a robust male character in *Water Margin* known for pulling out a willow from the ground. Likewise, the managerial role of the household was shifted to Oishi, whose fighting scene was removed by Kyōden. This selective deletion and emphasis on specific attributes served to magnify their distinctive specialties. Consequently, when Kaoyo is mentioned, readers conjure the image

of a lady in the highest position; Tonase is associated with her formidable fighting scenes, and Oishi is perceived primarily as a pillar of support to her husband.

40 On the one hand, the enriched storyline and diversified character types in *Chūshin Suikoden* reflect Kyōden's resistance to the local source material by incorporating elements from *Water Margin*. On the other hand, during adapting the foreign story, Kyōden not only utilized the source material but also resisted its influence, particularly by empowering female characters who were marginalized in the original. For instance, his portrayal of Kaoyo contrasts with the passive demeanor of Lady Lin in *Water Margin*; Kaoyo is depicted with greater proactivity and resilience. Lady Lin was twice harassed by Gao Qiu's adopted son, both times confined in a specific space (once in a temple and another time at a friend's house). Despite Lady Lin vehemently rejecting his advances, she found herself in a perilous situation with no means of seeking help. Fortunately, her husband arrived promptly on both occasions, averting potentially dire consequences. In the case of Kaoyo, the first instance of harassment by Moronao occurred in a temple. Lady Kaoyo's maid, Okaru, ingeniously assisted her mistress in escaping. In the second instance, Moronao sent a love poem to Kaoyo, who promptly discarded it. In the third attempt, Moronao sent another poem, and Kaoyo responded with a mocking verse. Overall, Kaoyo demonstrated a stronger resistance capacity, both personally and through her maid, rather than passively enduring the situation or relying solely on her husband for rescue. What's more, after her husband's tragedy, Lady Lin maintained her virtue at home. However, due to persistent harassment by Gao Qiu's adopted son, she chose to end her own life to preserve her honor. In contrast with Lady Lin's passive rebellion, Kaoyo braved treacherous terrains, returning to her husband's domain. She held the fort in the face of adversity, supporting her husband's loyal subjects in seeking revenge. It can be said that Lady Lin epitomized the traditional image of a virtuous woman in line with the ethical standards of the time, remaining loyal to her husband. Nonetheless, Kaoyo exhibited greater strength, fearlessly overcoming challenges, and exemplifying the qualities of a household leader.

41 Meanwhile, by drawing inspiration from the foreign text, *Chūshin Suikoden* not only introduced additional storylines for female charac-

ters but also provided more opportunities for male characters to showcase their capabilities by assisting or rescuing the female counterparts. As the primary narrative is a tribute to the 47 male loyal retainers, the reinforced vulnerabilities of Kaoyo serve as a poignant contrast to the heroism displayed by the male characters. Despite her minimal verbal presence, Kaoyo's tribulations during the escape journey serve as a backdrop that accentuates the courage of male figures such as Hara Gōemon and Teraoka Hēemon, who emerge as valiant and robust fighters, pivotal in saving Kaoyo's life. Her tears further elevate the status of Yuranosuke, highlighting the dependence of the family's matriarch on him for avenging her husband's tragic demise. In this nuanced interplay of character dynamics, *Chūshin Suikoden* adeptly weaves a narrative that not only expands the role of female characters but also underscores the heroism and significance of the male figures within the overarching tale.

Okaru 僄児

42 Kyōden's approach to Kaoyo, a female character inherited from the local source story, involves incorporating diverse plots from foreign source material to enhance her character and storyline. However, her narrative still fundamentally aligns with that of the local source. In contrast, Okaru, Kaoyo's maid and another character inherited from *Kanadehon Chūshingura*, demonstrates another adapting method. By integrating elements from *Water Margin*, Kyōden crafts Okaru in a way that departs from both her fate in the local story and the imported counterpart characters from *Water Margin*.

43 In the preceding section, I highlighted that Kyōden's portrayal of Kaoyo in his creation is characterized by greater strength and resilience compared to her counterpart in *Water Margin*, Lady Lin. Kyōden's resistance to the foreign source work becomes even more pronounced and determined in the case of Okaru. The contrast in Okaru's image is evident when compared to her counterparts in *Water Margin*, such as Yan Poxi and Jin Cuilian. Kyōden deliberately sought to establish Okaru as a courageous and honorable woman, presenting her as a role model for ordinary people. This stands in stark contrast to the marginalization or stigmatization typically associated with the female characters in *Water Margin*. In the subsequent

discussion, I will delve into the reasons behind Kyōden's choice, providing insights into the rationale for the reversal of Okaru's image.

Replacement of the Dissolute Woman and the Devoted Husband

44 Subsequent to the adaptation of Kaoyo's storyline based on Lady Lin's narrative, Okaru's role was connected to Jin'er, who serves as a maiden to Lady Lin. Jin'er, witnessing the harassment faced by Lady Lin from Gao Qiu's foster son, sought assistance from Lin Chong to protect Lady Lin. The intertwining narratives of Okaru and Jin'er support the transformation of Kaoyo's character being associated with Lady Lin. Under Kyōden's adaptation, both Okaru and Jin'er, as dedicated maidens, share the common experience of witnessing and endeavoring to alleviate the harassment endured by their respective ladies. Moreover, this narrative adjustment serves to diminish Okaru's perceived faults, a departure from the original *Kanadehon Chūshingura* story where her romantic involvement led to her husband Kanpē neglecting his duties and being excluded from the revenge plan.

45 In *Kanadehon Chūshingura*, Okaru did not have a stepmother, and her biological mother deeply cared for her. Kyōden introduced a new character Yashakaka as Okaru's stepmother, a figure I will explore in the next section. Kyōden augmented Okaru's storyline by incorporating plots of mistreatment and fraudulent exploitation by Yashakaka, drawing inspiration from the character Jin Cuilian in *Water Margin*. Yashakaka subjected Okaru to frequent beatings and manipulated her into believing that her husband, Kanpē, had requested her to sell herself, sending the proceeds for the revenge fund. Despite Okaru's belief, the money ended up in Yashakaka's possession instead of Kanpē's. Jin Cuilian in *Water Margin* was defrauded into selling herself to a butcher as his concubine, enduring mistreatment at the hands of the butcher's wife. Similarly, the butcher failed to provide her with the promised money and instead demanded repayment after driving her out of his house. Kyōden intertwined the plots of Jin Cuilian with Okaru's narrative to deepen the tragic undertones surrounding Okaru. This portrayal painted Okaru as a resolute and unyielding woman who faced misfortune without succumbing to defeat.

While Jin Cuilian's motives were driven by a desire for financial support and shelter for herself and her father, Okaru's decision to sell herself was motivated by a different purpose – to raise funds for her husband to participate in the revenge plan. This contrast portrayed Okaru as a determined and devoted woman who considered the larger picture, distinguishing her from Jin Cuilian's portrayal as a vulnerable woman primarily concerned with daily survival.

46 In *Chūshin Suikoden*, Kanpē, Okaru's husband, grappled with guilt for having procured the swords that led to their lord's demise. Excluded from the revenge plan, Kanpē was unable to sign the covenant. Yuranosuke, the leader of the revenge plot, adopted a strategic guise, frequenting a brothel to feign despondency, creating a false sense of security among their enemies. However, Okaru, employed in the same brothel, saw through Yuranosuke's facade, discerning his true determination. When Yuranosuke received a secret letter from Kaoyo regarding the revenge plan, Okaru, pretending jealousy over his correspondence with another woman, seized the letter and refused to return it. A conflict ensued, during which Yuranosuke's knife dropped, and in a staged outcry, Okaru falsely claimed Yuranosuke was going to kill her. This provoked Yuranosuke, leading to him stabbing her. Subsequently, Okaru confessed her true intention: to atone for her husband's actions with her own life. In a poignant gesture, she signed her husband's name on the covenant in place of Kanpē. Yuranosuke, later adorned with Okaru's hairpin, executed Ono Kudayū, fulfilling Okaru's wish by killing an enemy on her behalf.

47 In the native *Kanadehon Chūshingura* tale, Kanpē signed the covenant by himself in the face of death. After achieving revenge, Yuranosuke asked Hēemon to burn incense for their lord Hangan on behalf of Kanpē. Unlike in *Chūshin Suikoden*, Okaru did not conflict with Yuranosuke when he read the letter in the brothel. Instead, it was Hēemon, Okaru's brother, who intended to harm her for reading the secret letter using a mirror. Despite Okaru's readiness to sacrifice herself, Yuranosuke intervened, urging her to survive and pray for her husband and brother. In a symbolic act, Yuranosuke held Okaru's arm to execute Kudayū on behalf of Kanpē.

48 In *Water Margin*, Chao Gai, the leader of the bandit stronghold Mount Liang, dispatched a secret letter to Song Jiang, a future leader

but then serving as an officer. Yan Poxi, Song Jiang's concubine, engaged in infidelity with one of his colleagues. When Song Jiang inadvertently left the secret letter at Yan's residence, she refused to return it and threatened to denounce his crime to the local authority. Their confrontation escalated as they grappled for possession of the letter, and in the heat of the conflict, Song Jiang's knife dropped. Seizing the opportunity, Yan Poxi, in a staged outcry, falsely claimed that Song Jiang intended to kill her. This fabricated provocation led Song Jiang to react impulsively, resulting in the tragic act of severing her head.

Effects of Adapting Okaru: Reversed Female Hero

49 Through a comparative analysis of these storylines, it becomes evident that Kyōden crafted a new and contrasting image for Okaru, effectively reversing the roles played by her husband in *Kanadehon Chūshingura* and Yan Poxi in *Water Margin*. In *Kanadehon Chūshingura*, Kanpē's sacrifice led to his signing on the covenant. Yuranosuke helped Okaru avenge Kanpē by securing the demise of an adversary, honoring Kanpē. In the *Chūshin Suikoden* adaptation, however, Okaru took on the sacrificial role, signing on the covenant herself, while Yuranosuke, in a symbolic gesture, executed an enemy to honor her. This inversion of roles emphasizes Okaru's agency and the profound dedication she exhibited. In *Water Margin*, Yan Poxi's demise was driven by her immoral actions, greed, and wickedness. In contrast, Okaru's character in *Chūshin Suikoden* stands as an admirable figure who willingly chooses to sacrifice herself. Kyōden, after the brothel scene, explicitly comments on Okaru by drawing a parallel to Yan Poxi. He notes that "there is a woman called Yan Poxi in the Chinese Song dynasty; that woman is lascivious and vicious while this woman is chaste and loyal; they are as far apart as heaven and earth." This conscious reversal by Kyōden serves to establish Okaru's positive image by intentionally distancing her character from the negative traits associated with Yan Poxi.

50 Through the dual narrative reversal, Kyōden crafted Okaru as an exemplar of loyalty, righteousness, dedication, and bravery. She emerged as a conscious contributor to the revenge plan, embodying a

female hero notably absent in both *Kanadehon Chūshingura* and *Water Margin*. In the native story *Kanadehon Chūshingura*, although there were women ready to sacrifice for their families, their dedication is limited to family, not aligning with a revenge narrative. In *Water Margin*, the portrayal of beautiful women typically served as foils to their male counterparts. Even among the three female warriors on Mount Liang, two exhibited masculine appearance and disposition, while the third served as a strategic marriage tool employed by the leader to garner support. Kyōden's narrative innovation introduced Okaru as a female hero, breaking away from established patterns in both Japanese and Chinese source works.

51 Meanwhile, it is important to note that Kyōden's empowerment of Okaru does not entail the marginalization of her husband, Kanpē. Instead, Kyōden enhances Kanpē's heroic image by drawing upon the narrative elements of Wu Song, a strong and courageous male protagonist in *Water Margin*. This includes significant actions such as killing a beast with his bare hands and avenging adultery and murder, thereby reinforcing Kanpē's stature as a heroic figure.

Yashakaka 夜叉婆々

52 Unlike Kaoyo and Okaru, who are inherited characters from the local source story, Yashakaka—the role of Okaru's stepmother in *Chūshin Suikoden*—is a newly created character. In the original narrative of *Kanadehon Chūshingura*, Okaru has only a biological mother, depicted as a woman deeply devoted to her husband and daughter. The crux of Okaru's biological mother's storyline revolves around her tumultuous relationship with Kanpē, Okaru's husband. Convinced that Kanpē was responsible for her husband's demise, she passionately implores two warriors who are involved in the revenge plan to seek justice against him. Tragically, Kanpē takes his own life, leading Okaru's biological mother to the painful realization that she had unjustly accused him.

Constructing a New Archetype

53 In *Chūshin Suikoden*, Kyōden incorporated negative elements from *Water Margin* to craft the villainous persona of Yashakaka, building her into a thoroughly evil figure within the story. As highlighted in my

discussions on Kaoyo and Okaru, Kyōden consistently showcased his ability to manipulate the borrowed descriptions and plots, regardless of the original context, disposition, or stance of the characters in *Water Margin*. In contrast to accentuating positive attributes for Kaoyo's beauty, Kyōden deliberately amalgamated negative traits for Yashakaka, presenting her as an entirely antagonistic character. Kyōden's intentional decision to depict Yashakaka with an overwhelmingly negative image adds intricate layers to the storyline involving Okaru and Kanpē. Yashakaka's viciousness serves as a catalyst, bringing out Okaru's tenacity and amplifying Kanpē's valor. The contrasting qualities among these characters create a dynamic narrative tension, enriching the overall depth and complexity of *Chūshin Suikoden*. Kyōden's bold differentiation between good and evil through Yashakaka's characterization stands as yet another prominent illustration of his departure from the foreign source material.

54 Kyōden blended various malevolent traits and actions into the character of Yashakaka. In *Water Margin*, Sun Erniang and Gu Dasao stood as two out of three female heroes on Mount Liang, both characterized by fierce looks and rough temperaments. Notably, Gu Dasao was known for frequently scolding her husband. Pan Jinlian, another character from *Water Margin*, was portrayed as a dissolute woman who engaged in infidelity. Upon Yashakaka's introduction in *Chūshin Suikoden*, Kyōden presented her as not ugly but malicious, bullying her husband, and engaging in marital infidelity. In essence, Kyōden amalgamated the negative aspects of the three characters from *Water Margin* while omitting their positive qualities, such as the bravery and loyalty of Sun and Gu, and the beauty of Pan.

55 Besides, in *Water Margin*, Pan's neighbor, Old Wang, played a pivotal role in orchestrating Pan's illicit affair and providing guidance on poisoning Pan's husband. Wang also actively participated in executing the sinister plan alongside Pan. However, in *Chūshin Suikoden*, Yashakaka independently and willingly carried out these malicious actions. Essentially, the cunning and devious attributes of two characters were amalgamated into one, amplifying Yashakaka's malevolence in *Chūshin Suikoden*.

Effects of Adapting Yashakaka: Punishing Evil and Praising Heroes

56 In *Kanadehon Chūshingura*, there are no inherently malevolent female characters, with the central conflict focusing on the feud between the Moronao and Hangan families. Kyōden introduced the entirely negative character Yashakaka in *Chūshin Suikoden*, drawing inspiration from the foreign source to highlight the theme of promoting virtue and punishing evil (勧善懲悪). As noted in the literature review, Kyōden began his career with entertaining literature but, after government punishment, shifted to works that would gain official recognition by emphasizing the theme of moral retribution. This shift was influenced by government efforts to purify the publishing environment, which censored works not aligned with Neo-Confucianism. The theory of "promoting virtue and punishing vice" in Neo-Confucianism, which shifted the focus of literary discussion from the author's skill to the reader's reception, became a significant theme in Japanese literature during the Edo period. By depicting Yashakaka as a thoroughly villainous character who meets a tragic and violent end at the hands of male heroes, Kyōden reinforced this moral theme, setting an example for readers to avoid immoral behavior.

57 Meanwhile, with Yashakaka acting as an antagonist, the heroic images of Okaru and Kanpē became more outstanding. Suffering from Yashakaka's abuse and conspiracy, Okaru was applauded highly of because of her tragic experience and stoic qualities. By killing Yashakaka and her illicit lover, Kanpē's image was combined with Wu Song, a strong and loyal hero in *Water Margin*. Because Kanpē took avenge on Yashakaka for Okaru and Yoichibē, his heroic image was maintained even though Kyōden assigned the tragic death to his wife Okaru instead of him. Thus, the contrast between good and evil is accentuated, serving as a guiding beacon for ordinary readers to emulate goodness and remain vigilant against malevolence. By framing his theme as encouraging virtue and condemning vice, Kyōden ensures his work aligns with societal norms and regulatory policies, thereby mitigating the risk of censorship.

Summaries

Manifestations of Kyōden's Resistance Against the Source Works

58 The above comparisons of *Chūshin Suikoden* and its two main source works demonstrated the methods Kyōden drew the characters and plots from *Water Margin* and the effects of his measures. In resistance to the foreign source material, *Water Margin*, Kyōden's approach can be examined through three key aspects. Firstly, in terms of expressions, Kyōden integrated borrowed descriptions and plots with minimal constraints, transcending the confines of the original context and character depictions. Secondly, in character setting, Kyōden bestows a notable empowerment on female characters, affording them expanded scenes and roles, thereby crafting legendary female personas. Lastly, from a thematic perspective, Kyōden draws a clear demarcation between good and evil, underscoring the literary philosophy of promoting virtues and punishing evils.

Flexible Narrative Development

59 In his approach to incorporating expressions from the foreign source work, Kyōden employed an unrestrained method, treating *Water Margin* as an undifferentiated material galley rather than confining himself to rigid one-to-one correspondences. Contrary to Ishikawa's (2004) classification of Kyōden's adaptation technique as one-to-one correspondences, I posit that Kyōden's strategy was more open-ended. Ishikawa delineated the patterns with which Kyōden matched characters and plots from *Water Margin* with those in *Chūshin Suikoden*, predominantly focusing on male characters. However, from my perspective, Kyōden's adaptation transcended the constraints of direct parallels. While in the prologue he did cite explicit similarities, such as those between Hangan and Lin Chong, as catalysts for combining *Kanadehon Chūshingura* and *Water Margin*, his overall approach exhibited fluidity. Kyōden drew inspiration from *Water Margin* based on his narrative requirements, selectively incorporating elements to enhance his own storyline. For instance, when depicting a beautiful woman, he widely integrated various female characters

from *Water Margin*, irrespective of their positive or negative attributes. Moreover, he frequently intertwined plots of male characters from *Water Margin* into his female characters.

60 Another noteworthy illustration of Kyōden surpassing the confines of character parallels is his practice of attributing the settings of one single character in *Water Margin* to multiple characters. This manner showcases his ability to reimagine and repurpose the source material in a creative and dynamic manner. A pertinent example is the assignment of Jin Cuilian's appearance description to Kaoyo, while her experience of being defrauded and sold was attributed to Okaru and Osono (the wife of a retainer of Hangan). In essence, Kyōden demonstrated a capacity to leverage the source material without being confined by it, transforming *Water Margin* into a dynamic tool for creative expansion rather than a limiting parody.

Empowering Female Characters

61 In contrast to the foreign source work *Water Margin*, Kyōden portrayed several female characters in a more empowering light, depicting them as heroic, brave, and selfless, with Okaru standing out prominently. In *Water Margin*, women are often marginalized, objectified, and stigmatized. For instance, among the 108 heroes on Mount Liang, only three are female. Of these three, two are considered heroic because they possess rough and tough characteristics typically associated with men, and the third is a beauty with exceptional martial arts skills. However, even after becoming a hero, the beauty is married off to an unattractive husband as part of a strategic alliance orchestrated by the leader. Additionally, *Water Margin* often portrays beautiful wives as betraying their husbands, and beautiful prostitutes are stereotypically depicted as lascivious and indifferent to national concerns.

62 As discussed in the literature review, translators Pearl S. Buck and Sidney Shapiro, as noted by Wang (2019) and Zhang (2020), made deliberate changes in their translations of *Water Margin*, including adjustments in word choices and pronouns, to enhance the portrayal of female characters. However, these adjustments are minor and do not significantly alter the overall depiction of these characters. In contrast, *Chūshin Suikoden*, being an adaptation, afforded Kyōden the

creative freedom to diverge from the original work and make substantial changes, the most notable of which is the character Okaru. Kyōden strategically reversed the characterization of Yan Poxi from *Water Margin* and altered Okaru's fate with her husband, Kanpē. This creative liberty allowed Kyōden to elevate Okaru to the status of a female hero on par with the male protagonists. No longer merely a young woman preoccupied with love, Okaru was transformed into a dignified warrior who played a crucial role in the revenge narrative.

63 Alongside the foreign source, Kyōden's female characters also resisted the narrative constraints of the local source story. In *Chūshin Suikoden*, female characters are portrayed with greater distinctiveness and complexity compared to their counterparts in the native story *Kanadehon Chūshingura*. Borrowing richer plots and detailed descriptions from *Water Margin*, *Chūshin Suikoden* moves beyond the stereotypical tendencies of *Kanadehon Chūshingura*, offering more nuanced and multifaceted female portrayals. For example, while Kaoyo and Okaru's biological mother in *Kanadehon Chūshingura* are difficult to differentiate based on behavior—both grieving the loss of their husbands—in *Chūshin Suikoden*, they assume more complex roles. Kaoyo becomes a symbol of ultimate authority in the clan, while Okaru's mother is reimagined as a stepmother and villain. These changes contribute to a richer and more distinctive characterization of female figures in *Chūshin Suikoden*.

Stark Contrast Between Good and Evil

64 In *Water Margin*, every character exhibits a nuanced blend of virtues and vices, with no one possessing entirely good or evil traits. Take Pan Jinlian, for instance—despite her betrayal and later murder of her husband, she is remarkably beautiful and resilient. Readers find her actions repugnant, yet simultaneously lament her plight as a victim of feudal ethics, unable to determine her own marital fate. Contrastingly, in *Chūshin Suikoden*, Yashakaka lacks physical beauty, engaging in multiple reprehensible acts such as infidelity, murder, abuse of her stepdaughter, and fraudulent activities. Devoid of any redeeming moral qualities, Yashakaka stands in stark opposition to Okaru, who, along with other female characters like Kaoyo and Tonase, demonstrates unwavering goodness. Kyōden skillfully establishes clear distinctions between good and evil, using virtuous characters as role

models and malevolent characters as cautionary figures for the readers.

Potential Motivations behind Kyōden's Resistance

65 To explain why Kyōden empowered female characters and emphasized the distinction between good and evil, three key reasons can be identified.

66 Firstly, female readers have comprised the main group of the readership, and the writers need to consider the reading preference of the readership, thus female characters are getting to the front of the stage. According to Itasaka (2010), from the early to the late Edo period, the primary readership of storybooks shifted from scholars to the general public, and eventually to a predominantly female audience. Kyōden, with his acute awareness of contemporary trends and deep understanding of his readership, was quick to recognize and adapt to this change (ITASAKA, 2010, 508).

67 Secondly, Kyōden held a deep respect and admiration for prostitutes. As Satō (2009, 238) notes, Kyōden's works consistently show support for courtesans, whether in his *sharebon*, *yomihon*, or *gōkan*. His attitudes toward prostitutes, and women in general, influenced his portrayal of female characters in *Chūshin Suikoden*.

68 Kyōden married twice, with both wives being former courtesans, and he is rumored to have said, "True love can only be found with courtesans." Born into the merchant class, Kyōden initially focused on playful literature, such as *enpon* and *sharebon*, where prostitutes were central figures. His supportive attitude toward courtesans also led to disputes with Bakin, another prominent *yomihon* writer of the Edo period. In *Iwade Mono no Ki*, a biography of Kyōden, Bakin recounts an argument in which Kyōden challenged Bakin's discriminatory views, arguing that many courtesans were wise, talented, and loyal, often entering the pleasure quarters out of filial duty. Kyōden's benevolent intentions toward prostitutes enable him to defy the lascivious character stereotypes found in *Water Margin*, portraying Okaru as a courageous and open-minded individual within her profession.

69 Thirdly, during the Edo period, the Tokugawa shogunate upheld Neo-Confucianism and implemented strict publishing regulations. As I explained when introducing the genre of *Chūshin Suikoden* in Section 1, Kyōden faced consequences for his lighthearted *sharebon* works set in brothels. To avoid further penalties, he shifted to higher-literary-value books, explicitly stating in prefaces his aim to educate the public, especially women and children with lower education. His educational content centered on promoting virtues and condemning vices. Consequently, Kyōden consistently created distinct positive and negative characters in his works, ensuring a moral lesson that rewarded good deeds and punished evil ones. This approach elucidates why Kyōden attributed only negative traits to the Yashakaka character, positioning Yashakaka and Okaru as two extremes of good and evil. Okaru serves as a role model for common women to emulate, while Yashakaka represents a cautionary example for the general populace to heed.

70 In summary, *Water Margin* served as a foundational source for Kyōden in shaping his female characters. Simultaneously, Kyōden refused to let the source work constrain his narrative evolution. Viewing it as a rich repository, Kyōden extracted elements from the text while also introducing novel features through flexible integration, division, and inversion of characters and their attributes. His deliberate focus on female readers and prostitutes contributed to amplifying the presence of marginalized female characters within *Water Margin*. Besides, mindful of publishing policies and societal norms, Kyōden established stringent ethical guidelines aimed at educating his female readership.

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RÉSUMÉ

English

This study centers on Santō Kyōden's *Chūshin Suikoden*, a Japanese adaptation published during the Edo period (1603-1867), to elucidate the resistant gestures exhibited by native writers in the assimilation of foreign literary models, particularly against the backdrop of foreign literature's prevailing dominance. Specifically, the research delves into the portrayal of three female characters, unveiling Kyōden's strategies to resist the foreign source work, *Water Margin*, at three levels—linguistic nuances, character settings, and thematic aspects. Through analysis, it becomes evident that the shifts in readership, the writer's perspective on female, and the prevalent social norms of the time drove Kyōden to construct a diverse array of robust female characters while establishing clear differentiations between good and evil within the narrative. This paper's focus on Japanese pre-modern adaptations contributes to the broadening of the scope of Translation Studies both temporally and spatially.

INDEX

Keywords

Santō Kyōden, Water Margin, Adaptation Studies, Translation Studies, Female Characters

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