The Japanese studies on the Chinese plants.*

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北村四郎：中国植物に関する日本の研究

Abstract  The Chinese medicinal books and drugs were introduced to Japan about the middle of 6th century. The identifications of Chinese medicinal plants with the Japanese wild plants were the main studies of the Japanese herbalists up to the middle of 19th century.

I revised the Japanese traditional identifications, consulting the recent Chinese works. Each Chinese name is identified by the original description and the type locality mentioned in the classics.


From the latter part of 19th century, the Japanese botanists gave the scientific names to the Japanese plants. From 20th century, the Japanese botanists studied the plants of Taiwan, the Northeastern part of China, Korea, and South Saghalien, and published many new species. From the latter part of 20th century, the Japanese botanists studied the plants of Himalayas and Hindukush, and of Southeast Asia and published many reports including many new species.

There are many species common to southern China and these regions.

I mention about these botanical expeditions.

Key words: Chinese medicinal plants, Herbalists, Japanese expeditions, Japanese botanists.

The Chinese medicinal books and drugs were introduced to Japan at first by Korean medical men, about the middle of 6th century, and by the Japanese students sent to China, from 7th century. The identifications of Chinese medicinal plants with the corresponding Japanese wild plants were always indispensable and main studies for the Japanese medicinal men, herbalists up to the middle of 19th century.

The results obtained were summarized and published in Honzokomokukeimo (1803) 本草綱目啓蒙 by Ranzan Ono (1729–1810), and illustrated (with about 2000 coloured figures), by Kanen Iwasaki (1786–1842). These works were very well done at that time, but still there are many misidentifications, unidentified names and many questions.

From the latter half of 18th century, the European botanists began to identify the Chinese or Japanese names of plants with the scientific names.

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From 19th century, the Japanese botanists, Keisuke Ito (1803–1901) and Yokusai Inuma (1782–1865) began to identify the Chinese and Japanese names with the scientific names.

Jinzo Matsumura gathered the results of the identifications and published Shokubutsu-mei Part I, Chinese names of plants in 1915. Matsumura identified some Chinese classical names directly and correctly, but chiefly followed the previous identifications by various authors. Accordingly, this book contains many misidentifications. Tomitaro Makino (1862–1957) in his latter years tried to identify the Chinese classical names of plants with the scientific names, by the original descriptions or by the type localities written in the original Chinese classics.

Makino identified some Chinese classical names correctly with the scientific names, but misidentified some names, or could not identify, because the necessary knowledge concerning the distribution of Chinese plants was wanting in Japan.

From 20th century, the Chinese botanists (1916, H. H. Hu) began to identify the Chinese classical names of plants in Chinese classics with the scientific names. Since then, many floristic studies were made by the Chinese botanists with the splendid results. Many books have been published in which every species is represented by recent Chinese name and corresponding scientific name. Among them, Flora Reipublicae Popularis Sinicae is very useful for all purpose, and Inconographia Cormophytorum Sinicorum 1–5, 2 suppl. (1972–1983) is very easy to compare with the Japanese plant. Index Flora Yunnanensis 1–2259 (1984) is very useful for the classical names of Yunnan plants.

Medicinal works are also splendid. Zhong yao zhi 中药志 is very important for the actual and classical medicinal plants. Zhong yao do cidian 中药大辞典 treats all actual Chinese medicinal plants, each species provided with its figure, description, distribution, uses, and history.

I am interested in the identification of the Chinese classical names with the Japanese and scientific names, by the original description and type locality mentioned in the original Chinese classics. I revised the Japanese traditional identifications, consulting the recent Chinese works mentioned above, and published Honzonoshokubutsu 本草植物 or Chinese, Japanese and scientific names of Chinese medicinal plants 1–638 (1985), published by Hoikusha, 4–8–6 Tsurumi, Tsurumiku, Osaka, Japan. In this work, such classics as Tsi min yao shu 齊民要術 (compiled 530–550), Yu yang tsa tu 鄱陽雜俎 (about 850), Yin shan cheng yao 食膳正要 (1330), Pen tsao kang mu 本草綱目 (1590) are treated separately. I also published Shokubutsu-bunkashi 植物文化史 or History of Japanese cultivated plants and identifications of Chinese medicinal plants 1–613 (1987), published by Hoikusha. In this work, the Chinese names of Pen tsao Kang mu shii 本草綱目拾遺 (compiled about 1763) and of Yunnan plants in Chi wu ming shi tu kao 植物名實図考 (1848) are discussed.

My works contain many questions and unidentified names, and probably many misidentifications. Please correct my mistakes and answer my questions.
As mentioned above, from the former part of 19th century, the Japanese botanists began to identify the Japanese plants with the scientific names and from the latter part, they gave the scientific names to the Japanese plants, namely, _Ranzania japonica_ T. Ito gen. et sp. nov. (1888), _Theligionum japonicum_ Okubo et Makino ex Makino sp. nov. (1889), _Kirengeshoma palmata_ Yatabe gen. et sp. nov. etc.

From the beginning of 20th century, the Japanese botanists intensively collected plants in Taiwan, Korea, South Saghalien and Northeasten part of China. They (Hayata, Nakai, Miyabe et Kudo, Kitagawa et al.), published many new species from these specimens.

A few specimens were collected from the provinces of China, namely Chekiang, Kiangsu, Shantung, Hopei, Shansi, Szechuan, Hupeh, Fukien, Kiangsi, Kwantung by the Japanese teachers stayed there, or by the Chinese students studied in Tokyo, during 1904–1915. These Chinese specimens were carefully studied by S. Matsuda. He published only 10 new species from these specimens.

There are many species common to southwest China and Himalaya~Hindukush.

Sasuke Nakao, a member of the Japanese Himalayan Expedition in 1952 and 1953, collected many specimens in Nepal, and asked me for the identification. I was interested in this study, and borrowed the Tibetan specimens (about 1000) collected by Ekai Kawaguchi in 1914, which were preserved in the National Science Museum in Tokyo without being identified. I published the Tibetan Plants collected by E. Kawaguchi 1–3 (1953–54), and Flowering Plants and Ferns (in Fauna and Flora of Nepal Himalaya 1955) in cooperation with the Japanese taxonomists.

In 1955, I collected plants in West Pakistan and Afghanistan, as a member of the Kyoto University Scientific Expedition to the Karakoram and Hindukush, and several subsequent expeditions were done in these areas. I published Flora of Afghanistan (1960), Additions and corrections (1966), The flowering plants of West Pakistan (1964) in cooperation with the Japanese taxonomists.


Besides the expeditions mentioned above, several botanical expeditions from Japan were done in Eastern Himalaya.

There are many species common to southeast China and Southeast Asia.

M. Tagawa organized the botanical expedition to Thailand by the Kyoto University in 1965, since then several botanical expeditions were sent by the Kyoto University to Thailand. This year, H. Koyama, N. Fukuoka and others went to Thailand.


The specimens collected were studied by the Japanese taxonomists and published separately in several journals or in the Flora of Thailand.

I published Compositae of Southeast Asia and Himalayas I–IV (1968–69) in Acta Phytotax. Geobot., besides the recent collections, I also studied the specimens (TI) collected by B. Hayata at Vietnam and Laos in 1917 and 1921.

All these Japanese materials should be used for the future study of the Flora of Sino-Japanese region, in collaboration with the Chinese taxonomists.

摘 要 中国の医学や薬物に関する書籍は6世紀の中頃に日本に伝来した。中国薬用植物と日本野生植物との同定は19世紀の中頃まで、日本の本草学者の主な仕事であった。

私は日本の従来の伝統的同定を現代の中国の植物分類地理学の著作を参考にして再検討した。それぞれの植物名は中国古典にある原記載と原産地によって現代の学名に同定した。私は「本草の植物」1–638頁（1985）を保育社（大阪市鶴見区鶴見4-8-6）から出版した。

また、その追補を繰り返す植物として『植物文化史』405–613頁（1987）に保育社から出版した。これによって久しく誤り同定されていた植物を正しく同定したが、なお原記載や産地が不十分で同定のできないものも多い。

中国植物の同定で革新的な研究は小野蘭山の『本草解目啓蒙』（1803）と松村任三の『改訂植物名義前編漢名之部』（1915）であろう。これらは原記載や原産地を意識しての同定はやっていない場合が多い。

19世紀の後半から日本の植物分類学者が日本の植物に学名を同定し始めた。20世紀から日本の植物分類学者は台湾、中国東北部、朝鮮、南権大の植物を研究し多くの新種を発表した。20世紀の後半から日本の植物分類学者はヒマラヤ・ヒンズークシ、東南アジアの植物を研究し、多くの新種を発表した。これらの地域には中国と共通している植物が分布しており、中国の研究者と日本の研究者がともに協力することが必要である。その協力に基づき21世紀には革新たな進歩が期待される。

この論文は1989年10月4日に中国雲南省昆明で開催された国際植物資源学術討論会で講演した。中国科学院昆明植物研究所創立50周年式が7日にある。外国からは日本の研究者や参加者が最も多かった。岩槻教授、近田和弘、坂田信三さんは同窓であるが、津村研究所の三橋博所長や同研究所員が多く来ておられた。広島大学の田中治さん、横浜大学の栗原良枝さん、静岡大学の北川淳子さんなどである。フランスからは J. E. Vidal さんも参加した。昆明の街ではキクの花盛りであった。日本にあるものと同様である。華亭寺でカワイスギ Cryptomeria japonica var. sinensis Sieb. et Zucc. の大木があった。日本のスギとよく似たのであ

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