

## Explaining *Kundoku* in the Premodern Sinosphere

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*Kanbun kundoku* 漢文訓読 is a practice common to the premodern Sinosphere – the countries outside of Chinese which use the Chinese written language - but it is particularly salient in Japan. It is characterized by the following four properties:

- 1: The source texts of *kundoku* glossing were in classical Chinese.
- 2: There were two text types, the secular Chinese classics, and texts in Chinese from the Buddhist canon. The structure of these two types of text was different.
- 3: *Kundoku* involves the act of directly adding glosses to a classical Chinese text.
- 4: The method of adding glosses has both similarities and differences in each Sinoxenic language.

Below I discuss each of these properties in turn.

### 1. The subject of *kundoku* was texts in classical Chinese

The theme of this article - What is *kundoku* in the premodern Sinosphere? – requires first that we review previous work on what glosses are in the context of *kundoku*; specifically is meant by adding a gloss, in Japanese *katen* 加點 I will refer to the important discussion by Professor Harumichi Ishizuka (2001: 2), which gives a basic outline of this practice in the Sinosphere:

The term *Katen*, “adding marks”, refers to the adding of annotations or symbols to aid in the comprehension of a classical Chinese while reading it. These annotations and symbols are called *kunten* 訓点 (TK: traditionally translated by Japanese scholars into English as “diacritic marks”). The expression *ten* 点, “dot” or “point”, is used both as a noun, with the same meaning as *kunten*, and as a verb, to add a mark or “point” the text. *Kunten shiryō* 訓点資料 “*kunten* materials”, *kuntenbo* 訓点本 “*kunten* book or document” and *katenbon* 加點本, “pointed book or document”, all designate such marked and/or annotated texts.

Some of the terminology above differs from what we use in this special issue, but as the passage explains, adding a gloss is equivalent to adding guiding marks for reading

and comprehending a text in classical Chinese, directly to the text itself. We must ask the basic question: why is this practice limited to just classical Chinese, and not used for modern Chinese, in the languages of the Sinosphere? What is the nature of this source language? Consider the following text from modern Mandarin.

(1) 中共中央政治局常委到第一批党的群众路线教育实践活动联系点调研指导工作

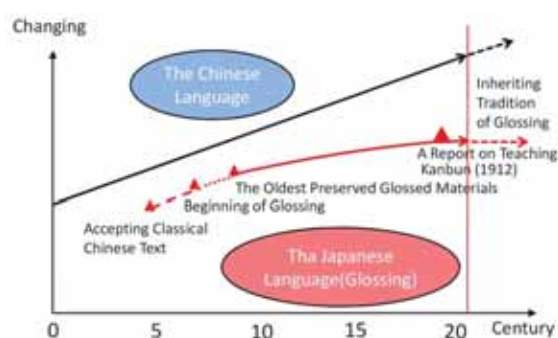
Example (1) is from an article in the *Rén mín rì bāo* (*Peoples Daily*) from July 17, 2013, written in Chinese characters (*hanzi*). If we attempted to gloss this text, we would encounter words not listed in classical Chinese-Japanese dictionaries, and not comprehensible to experts in *kunten*-style glossing. These include items like the modern Chinese genitive particle *de* 的, or *diǎn* 点, the character read in Sino-Japanese as *ten* “point, dot”, but used in modern Mandarin in a variety of functions as a bound noun. We read the text, of course, as modern Mandarin. Consulting modern Mandarin dictionaries, we obtain the following reading:

(2) Zhōnggòng zhōngyāngzhèngzhìjú chángwěi dào dìyīpī dān de qúnzhòng lùxiàn jiàoyù shíjiàn huódòng liánxìdiǎn diàoán zhǐdǎo gōnzuò.

“The Standing Committee of the Communist Party Politburo carries out leadership work in each region to guide practical educational activities on the first mass line.”

But this is the reading in Chinese, or more properly, modern Mandarin. It is not the Japanese reading we obtain through a *kundoku* reading. The official Japanese language version of the *People's Daily* provides a Japanese translation of this excerpt which uses some of the same characters in Japanese, but omits others (and omits some of the content of the original text). But this is translation, not a *kundoku* vernacular reading.

**Fig.1 The relationship between the Chinese language and the Japanese language: Glossing**



This is because the source text of *kunten* glossing has always been classical Chinese texts, specifically, Chinese Buddhist texts and secular classical Chinese texts. As a result, the techniques of *kunten* glossing became fixed, and unable to adapt to the changing Chinese language. Thus Japanese do not do *kunten* glossing or *kundoku* reading of modern Chinese texts. Because of this tight bond to the source language, *kunten* glosses on Middle (postclassical) Chinese, are typically shown a relatively small quantity of glosses, and never involve word-for-word lexical glosses. This becomes even truer in *kunten* glossings of Chinese texts written between the tenth to fourteenth century, moving from the stage of Late Middle Chinese to early Mandarin. *Kundoku* glossings of Middle Chinese works such as *Shishuo xinyu* 世說新語 *New Account of the Tales of the World* by Liu Yiqing (ca. 440) and *Youxianku* 游仙窟 *Wandering in the grotto of the immortals* by Zhang Wencheng (ca. 800) use increasing quantities of vernacular expressions, hinting at difficulties for the glossator in dealing with the source text. We infer that by the Tang dynasty, entering the period of Late Middle Chinese, an unbridgeable gap had opened up between the Chinese language and Japanese glossing in the form it took after the tenth century.

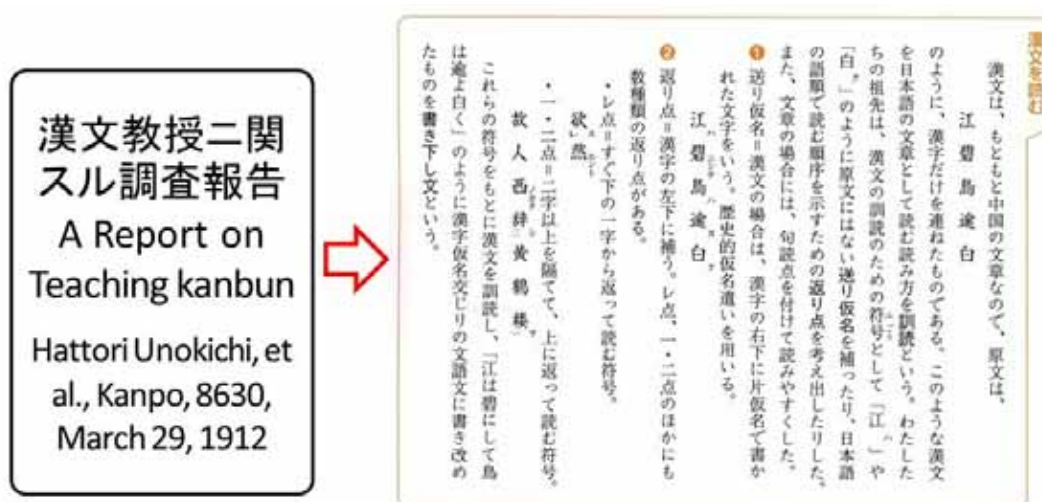
Fig.2 Inheritance of classical Chinese texts and glossing



On the other hand, *kunten* glossings of Old Chinese texts, for example glosses of the *Lunyu* (the *Analects* of Confucius) appear by the thirteenth century, in the Kamakura

period. The method of glossing has been inherited in the Japanese educational system even to the present day, when *kunten* glossing of the *Lunyu* and other texts from the Chinese canon is taught in junior and senior high school textbooks as part of Japanese language classes. This is the way that Japanese people learn the Chinese classics. Although there have been slight changes in the details of glossing through the Edo period, basically our reading method, involving *kunten* glossing for a *kundoku* vernacular reading in Japanese, has remained virtually unchanged for a period spanning 800 years.

**Fig.3 The method of glossing in Japanese language classes in the Japanese compulsory education system**

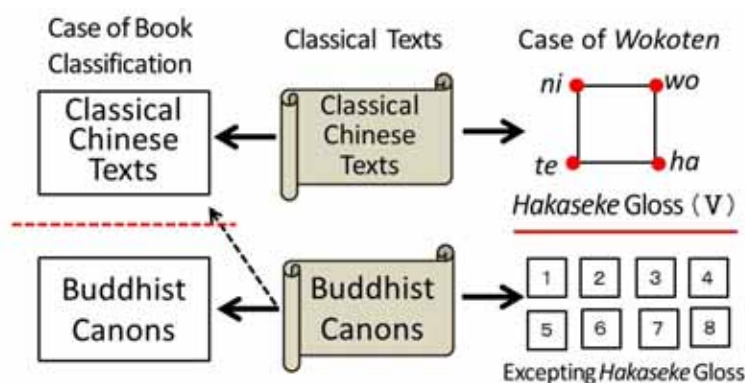


A Textbook for the 2nd year student of Junior High School  
Image: *Kokugo 2*, Mitsumura Toshio, 2010, pp.127

This specific traditional glossing method used to teach the Chinese classics was completely fixed in an official government report by Hattori Unokichi et al in 1912. The report was disseminated and accepted throughout the modern nationwide compulsory education system. In contrast, no reading method for other, nonclassical Chinese texts has been used in the Japanese education system, aside from reading them in Modern Chinese. To be precise: the Chinese classics are read in Japanese using *kundoku* as a compulsory subject in Japanese (National Language) classes in junior high and high schools. Students are taught to follow the *kunten* glosses and read the text in the classical Chinese fixed by the *kundoku* vernacular reading system.

2. There were two text types of *kunten* glossed text, the secular Chinese classics, and texts in Chinese from the Buddhist canon. The structure of these two types of text was different.

Fig.4 What are Classical Chinese Texts?

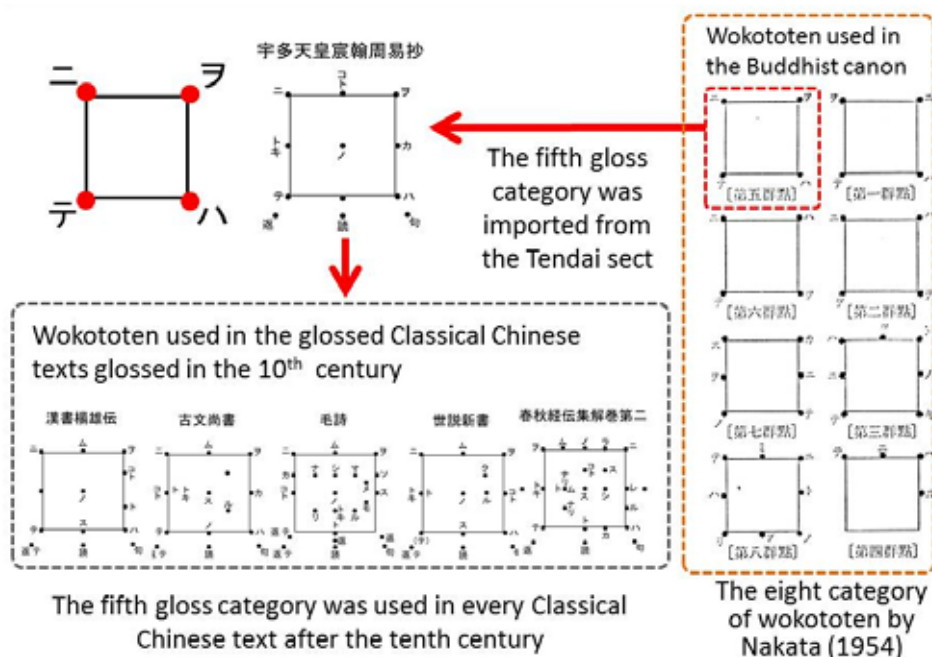


*Kanbun* 漢文, Chinese *hànwén*, is a general term referring to texts in classical Chinese. *Kanbun* texts consist of texts in the Chinese Buddhist canon and secular texts written in classical Chinese, including those generally regarded as belonging to the Chinese classics, the secular Chinese canon. In general, “classical Chinese text” is used here in the same sense as *kanbu/hànwén* in East Asia, as a general term for books compiled in China; sometimes the term is used in a sense excluding the Buddhist canon, as well as texts written or compiled in Japan.

This distinction, however, is not clear within the traditional Chinese bibliographic classification: every catalogue of classical Chinese texts compiled in China and Japan includes the Buddhist canon, from the *Bibliographical Records*, to the *Suīshū* 隋書 *Book of Sui*, to *A Classified Bibliography of the Classical Chinese Texts* produced by the Research Institute for Humanistic Studies at Kyoto University. This follows the standard practice of the traditional four categories, making differentiation between Buddhist and secular *kanbun* texts difficult. We can obtain a precise classification when we focus on the techniques of *kundoku* glossing, particularly on *wokototen* or morphosyntactic glosses. Secular *kanbun* texts use the so-called *Hakaseke wokototen* system, classified by Japanese *kunten* scholars as the fifth group of *wokototen* glosses. This system was borrowed from the *wokototen* system developed by the Tendai Buddhist sect. (For a description of the *wokototen* morphosyntactic gloss systems, see the article by Alberizzi in this issue in addition to the discussion below.) The other groups of *wokototen* glosses are used for Buddhist texts. According to this criterion (the style of morphosyntactic glossing) glossed *kanbun* texts written in Japan (and thus

intended by their authors to be read in Japanese), such as the *Nihon shoki* (日本書紀 720) or *Ishinpō* (医心方 984, the oldest surviving Japanese medical text) may be classified together with secular Chinese texts, as they use the same *Hakase ke* morphosyntactic glossing system.

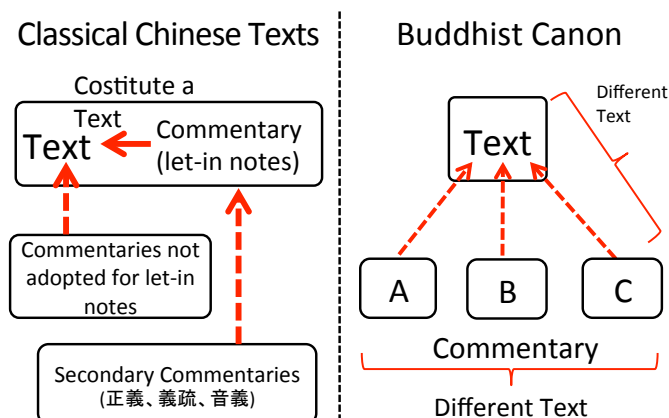
**Fig.5 Wokototen in Glossed Classical Chinese Texts**



Below I explain *wokototen* morphosyntactic glossing systems in more detail. This is perhaps the most distinctive feature of Japanese *kunten* glossing. It involves various systems of dots and other marks inscribed on or around the space to the Chinese character to indicate the particular inflectional ending, postpositional particle, or other functional element that should be associated with it in the *kundoku* vernacular reading.

At present around 200 different *wokototen* or morphosyntactic gloss systems have been identified. The eminent *kunten* scholar Nakata Norio (1954) arranged them into eight groups or categories. Among these, the *wokototen* used in Japanese texts such as the *Nihon shoki* or *Ishinpō* belong to the *Kokiden* gloss group, the *Myōgyō* group, or the *Kida-in* group, all of which belong to Nakata's fifth *wokototen* group, characterized by glosses on the four corners in the order –*te* (gerundive suffix) - *ni* (dative/locative particle) - *wo*- (accusative particle) – *ha* (topic particle; Early Middle Japanese *wa*) clockwise from lower left. As remarked above, this feature distinguishes them from glosses used for the Buddhist canon outside of Nakata's fifth group. The numerous *wokototen* systems used for Buddhist texts vary by sect and period.

**Fig.6 The Structure of Texts**



How then does the content and structure of glossing in secular Chinese texts and differ from texts in the Buddhist canon? Whereas texts and commentaries associated with the Buddhist canon each stand alone, the secular Chinese texts include a traditional commentary (in classical Chinese as reproduced notes), transmitted within the main text.

**Fig.7 Classical Chinese Texts include commentaries as “let-in notes”**



春秋經伝集解卷第二 (有鄰館蔵)  
 Chūnqiū jīng yuán jijiě vol.2 (Yurinkan)  
 Copied in early T'ang dynasty, glossed in early 10<sup>th</sup> century, Image: Kokuhou 10, 1984, pp.xx



漢書楊雄傳 (上野家蔵)  
 Hàنشū yángxióng zhuàn (Ueno Family)  
 Copied in early T'ang dynasty, glossed in 948, Image: presenter possessed one

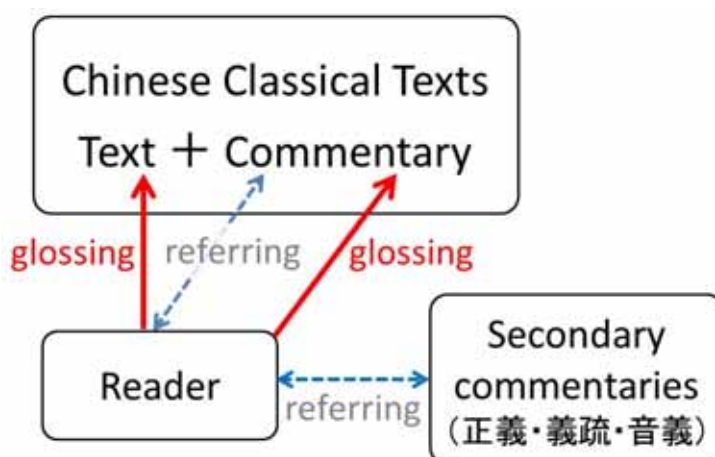
Let us examine a concrete example. The reproductions in Figure 7 are both Chinese manuscripts of the seventh century transmitted to Japan. In the reproduction on the left,

the *Chūnqiū jīngyún jíjiě vol.2* 春秋經傳集解卷第二, *Collected annotations vol. 2 on the Spring and Autumn Annals*, a commentary by Du Yu (222–284) was included between the main lines of text as reproduced or “let-in” notes. In the reproduction on the right, of the *Hànshū yángxióng zhuàn* 漢書楊雄傳, the “let-in notes” are from the *Collected commentary on the Hànshū* by Yan Shigu (581–645).

We see thus that the basic textual organization of secular classical Chinese texts includes reproduced traditional Chinese commentary by recognized authorities, copied and transmitted along with the main text..

In contrast, texts belonging to the Buddhist canon are generally made up of text only. This does not mean that the Buddhist canon is separated completely from its commentary literature, but rather than being integrated into the text, readers add annotations from commentaries in vermilion or white in the margins or between lines.

**Fig.8 Reading activities inferable from the structure of glossed texts**



We can gain a clear picture of reading activities associated with secular classical Chinese texts from their text structure. Learners first read the commentary inside the text (the “let-in notes”). By applying this, they then comprehend the text, and when need be they add glosses of their own. When they fail to understand the commentary, they consult another, secondary, commentary explaining the whole text. Such additional commentaries are called in Japanese *seigi* 正義 “correct meaning”, *giso* 義疏 “commentary”, and *ongi* 音義 “reading or pronunciation glossaries”.

The differing degree of integration of commentary into the text explains why glosses on secular classical Chinese texts often correspond to the content of the commentary. This is not the case with glossed Buddhist texts, where it is often hard to



determine which commentary sources glossators may have consulted.

**Fig.9 Consulting commentaries in the glossing process: “let-in notes”**



The example in Figure 10 shows a case where commentaries were consulted for reading and glossing the secular Chinese text. The text is a copy of the *Gūwén shàngshū* 古文尚書, a purported “old script” text of the *Shujing* 書經 *Book of documents*, widely circulated in the Tang period, but now known to be a forgery. This text was copied in early Tang and glossed in Japan in the tenth century. In this glossed text the “let-in note” commentary has been utilized to prepare the *kunten* glossing. In the example on the left of Figure 10, the relatively obscure character 奠 (Chinese *diàn*) has been glossed with the Japanese reading *sadame*, the infinitive of the Japanese verb meaning “set down, fix”. 奠 *diàn* has the primary meaning “make an offer to the gods”, but a secondary meaning agreeing with the annotation of the “let-in notes”, 定其所居 “settle, fix the abode of”. In the right-hand example, a gloss reading [*u*]beshi “be able” is attached to the character 藝 *yì*, usually meaning “art, talent”, but here used as a potential auxiliary. This too agrees with the annotation in the “let-in notes”: 已可種藝也.

**Fig.10 Consulting commentaries: let-in notes & interlinear Notes**



The next example is from a copy of the *Hànshū yángxióng zhuàn* 漢書楊雄傳, glossed in Japan in the tenth century, where two kinds of commentaries are consulted in producing the Japanese glosses, the “let-in note” commentary and the interlinear commentary added to the left side of the text. On the right is Japanese gloss reading *oyobam'ya* ‘would it extend to?’ placed on the right of the lemma character 捷 *jié*, generally meaning “success, victory”. Once again this agrees with the annotation of the “let-in notes” in Chinese, which state 捷及也 “*jié* is “extend to”, the meaning of the verb *obam-* in Japanese. On the left is a Japanese lexical gloss reading *maziwaram'ya* “will it mingle?”, again agreeing with the annotation of the Chinese interlinear notes, 捷接也 “*jié* (here) is ‘be in contact with’, the meaning of the verb *maziwar-* in Japanese.

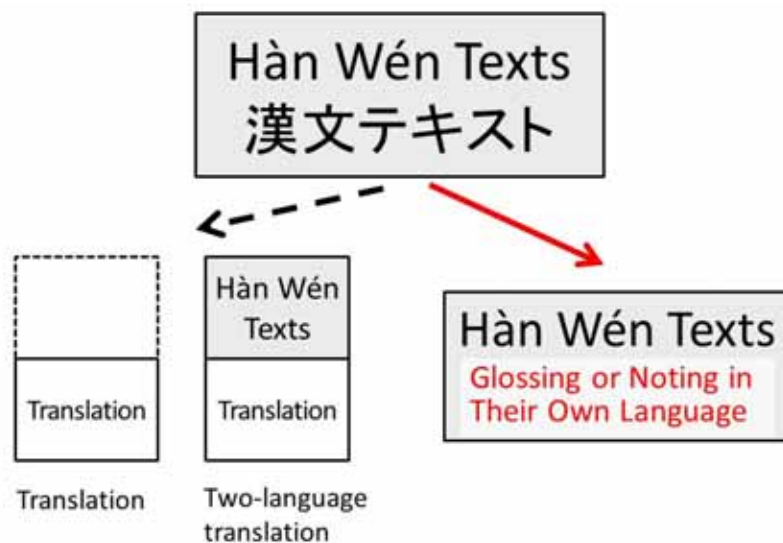
**Fig.11 Consulting commentaries: Secondary commentaries**



This example shows that a secondary commentary, the *Shàngshū zhèngyì* 尚書正義 *True meaning of the Shàngshū*, which thoroughly reannotated the *Shàngshū*, was used for interpreting the “let-in notes”. The Japanese lexical gloss *itareri* ‘has reached’, affixed to the lower right of the character 距 *jù* in the “let-in notes”, agrees with the annotation in the *Shàngshū zhèngyì* commentary.

### 3. Kundoku is an act of directly adding glosses to a classical text

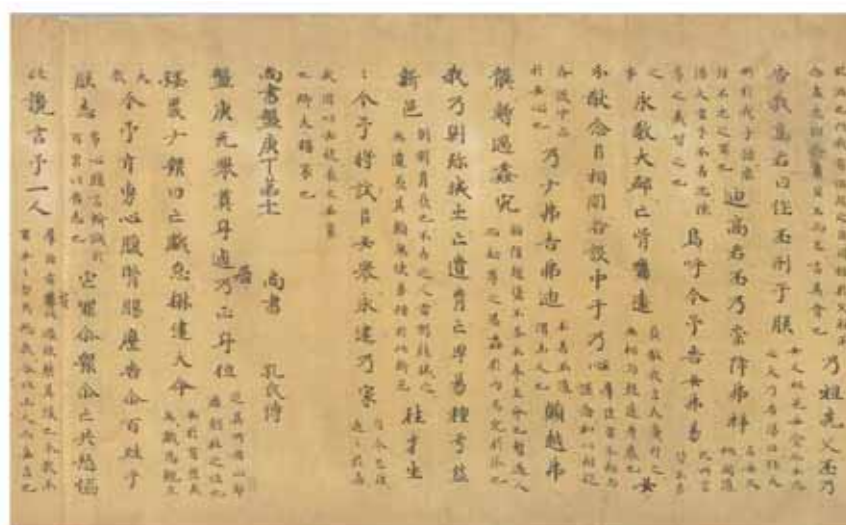
Fig.12 Directly glossing Kanbun Texts



As we have seen, *kundoku* and the associated activity of *katen* or adding glosses is

an act of directly adding a gloss to a *kanbun* text based on an understanding in terms of the glossator's own vernacular. It does not produce a new written text, unlike normal translation. It is important to emphasize here that Japanese scholars distinguish *kunten* glossing, and the practice of *kundoku*, from conventional translation for this reason. Recently it has become clear that this practice of directly adding glosses to a *kanbun* text is not limited to Japan, but was used in other languages as well.

**Fig.13 Reading and glossing with the Chinese language:Chinese-on-Chinese glosses**



Pelliot Chinois 2516 古文尚書 *Gǔwén shàngshū* (BNF)  
Copied & glossed in late 7<sup>th</sup> century, Image:Gallilca

This reproduction in figure 14 is from Pelliot 2516, a copy of *Gǔwén shàngshū* 古文尚書 discovered in Dunhuang, apparently glossed in the seventh century. Punctuation and *pojin* 破音 “breaking sounds”, first identified as a possible source for *kunten*-type glossing by Ishiduka 1993, are inscribed in vermilion in the text. These are Chinese-on-Chinese glosses; at the time, no script other than Chinese characters was available.

**Fig.14 Reading and Glossing in Vietnamese I**



書經大全 *Shū jīng dà quán* (Vietnam National Library)  
Published in 1861, Image: NLV

Figure 15 shows an excerpt from a Vietnamese text of the *Shū jīng dà quán* 書經大全, published in 1861 during the reign of the Nguyen dynasty of Vietnam. Punctuation, adjoined emphasis dots, and red lines are glossed directly in vermilion.

**Fig.15 Reading and glossing in the Vietnamese language II**

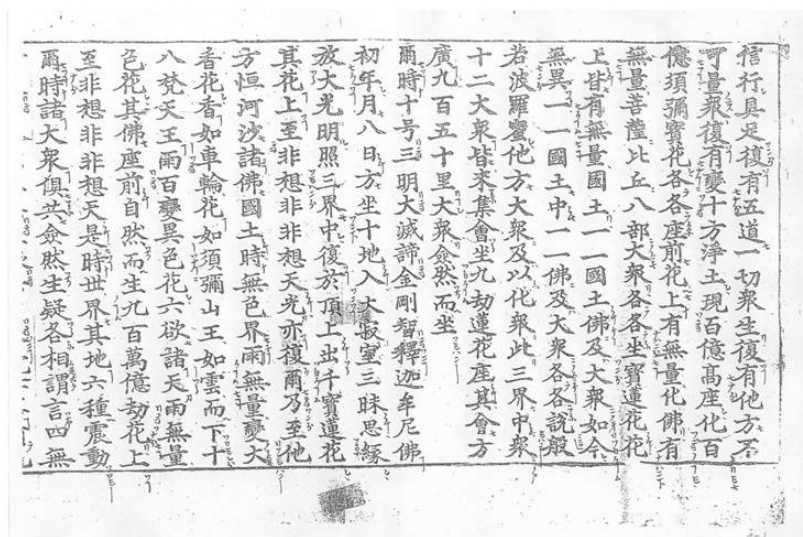


上諭訓條 *Shàng yù xùn tiáo* (Vietnam National Library)  
Published in 1835, Image: NLV

Figure 16 shows another Vietnamese glossed text, the *Shàng yù xùn tiáo* 上諭訓條, published in 1835. In addition to the glossing techniques displayed by the *Shū jīng dà quán* 書經大全 text in Figure 15, apparent vernacular glossing in the form of “let-in

notes” written in *Chu Nom*, Vietnamese vernacular script, appear in the outlined portions of the reproduction on the right..

**Fig.16 Reading and glossing in Korean language**



旧訳仁王経 (韓国文殊寺蔵)  
Koryŏ dynasty middle 12<sup>th</sup> century  
Image: *Kugyol Studies* Vol.17, pp.153

The last example is from the *Kuyŏk Inwang-gyŏng* 旧訳仁王経 *Humane King Sūtra*, discovered in 1973 in Korea. *Kugyŏl*, or Korean morphosyntactic glosses, and inversion glosses, were directly added to the both sides of this xylograph dating from the Koryŏ period using black ink. The date of glossing is believed to be the middle of the twelfth century.

**Fig.17 Types of Glossing**

	Chinese	Vietnamese	Korean (Buddhist texts)	Japanese
Paragraph	○	○	○	○
Punctuation	○	○	○	○
Poyin	○	○	○ (stylus)	○
Tone	△	○	○ (stylus)	○
Proper noun	○	○	○ (stylus)	○
Inversion	×	×	○	○
Wokoto-ten	×	×	○ (stylus) Kugyol	○
Kana-ten	×	△ Chunom	○ Kugyol	○

These examples in various languages of Sinosphere all show glosses added directly to the *kanbun* text in the local vernacular. All differ from mere translations. However, each glossing system has both common components and unique ones: whereas paragraph marks, punctuation, and *pojin* are common to every language, *wokototen* (morphosyntactic glosses), phonogram glosses such as those supplied by Japanese *kana*, *kugyōl* in Korean, and *Chu Nom* in Vietnamese are unique to these languages. It is important to recognize both the common and unique factors in order to grasp the totality of the glossing phenomena in the Sinosphere.

#### 4. Adding glosses has both similarities and differences in each Language

Among these commonalities and unique features, the author would like in conclusion to share his thoughts on the former in particular.

##### 4.1 Why Was Sinoxenic Glossing Not A Translation?

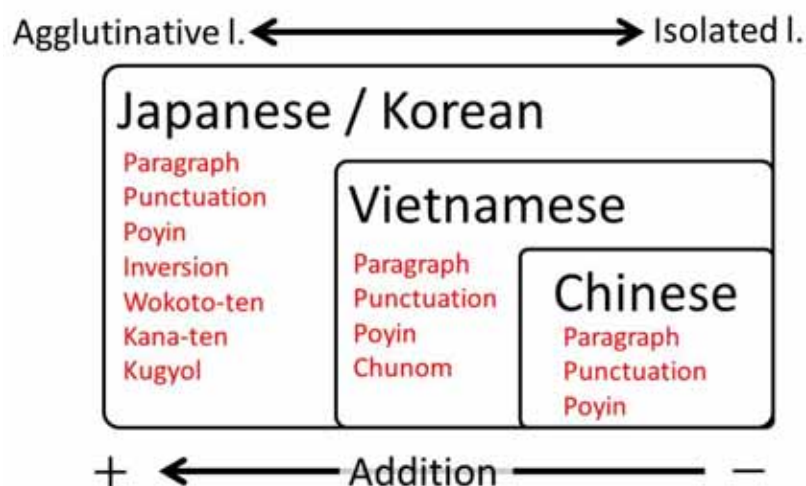
In every culture associated with each of the languages in the Sinosphere, reading the classical texts is essentially a matter of directly glossing the *kanbun* text. Reading and glossing were inextricably wrapped up with each other. This gives rise to a question: why did consumers of classical Chinese texts not simply resort to translation, be it parallel or independent? Some tentative, general reasons are as follows.

First, at the time the arrival of Chinese culture - in other words Sinographic or *hanzi* culture, the surrounding countries had no means with which to write their own language. Obtaining literate culture came at the price of accepting the foreign culture, that is, Chinese culture, as was. However this reasoning alone fails to explain why *kundoku* persisted after the establishment of the various vernacular writing systems, particularly in the case of Japanese.

Second, the prestige of the classical texts discouraged translation and led to an impetus to accept them as is. For example in Japan the Nara Period, the *Ritsuryō* legal code stipulated detailed learning methods for the classical Chinese texts; and the *Tripitaka* establishes a comparable textual system for the Buddhist canon.

Third, whereas Chinese is an isolating language which indicates syntactic relations by means of word order, Japanese and Korean are agglutinative languages which indicate grammatical and information structural relations by means of postpositional particles. Breaking down the original Chinese texts in a proper translation has the natural effect of increasing the number of constituents. It is much more efficient to leave the original texts unchanged, retaining as much Chinese constituent order as possible.

**Figure 18 The Influence of differences in language structure on methods of glossing**



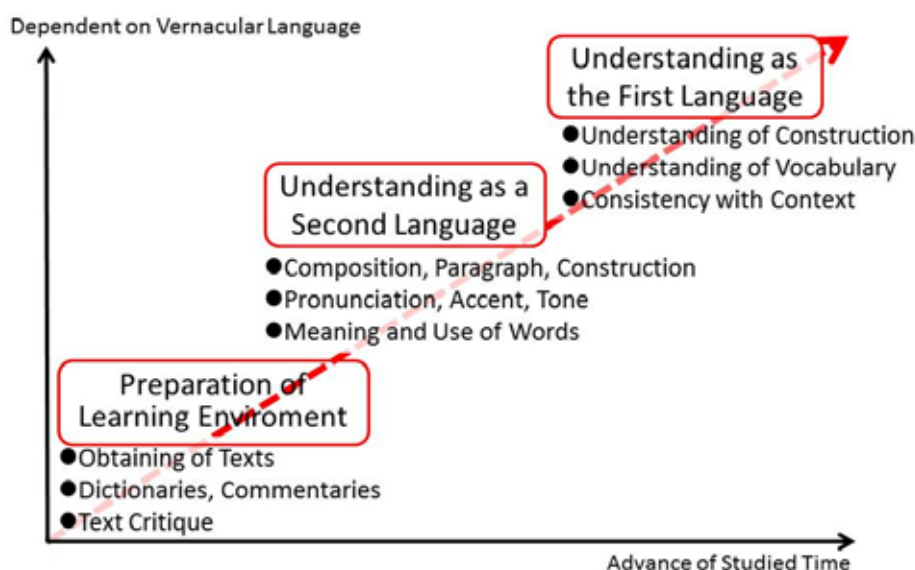
This third reason is especially important in that it accounts for the influence of differences in language structure on the vernacular-specific methods of glossing. In other words, it is the direction of transfer from isolating to agglutinative languages that has influenced the glossing phenomena in the Sinosphere, not vice versa.

Another important commonality in glossing is that whereas similar marks are used in different languages, at the same time, marks peculiar to each languages are also used. This could be understood by a model based on the experience of the individual language learner, related to how the literatures of foreign languages are studied.

When we think of understanding foreign literature, at the beginning, we obtain texts, prepare a learning environment with dictionaries and commentaries, and when necessary, make text critiques. On that basis, we try to read the foreign language text, paying attention to composition, paragraphing, and construction as a second language. In this stage we note the original pronunciation, accent and tone, and distinguish between rough polysemy. It is only after passing these stages, recognizing the structural differences among languages, that we are in a position to understand the text in terms of one's own language; in other words, to understand constructions, vocabulary, and to use the language consistently according to context.

**Figure 19 Actual orders of glossing and learning**





This model based on the experience of the language learner agrees particularly well with the variety of glossing and the order of learning in the case Sinoxenic acquisition of classical Chinese. Actual cases fall into two as the learning advances: one is that increase in number of additive material required because of source language structure, as in Korean and Japanese, and another where such addition is less salient.

**Fig.20 Same text, Same gloss, different Language I**

Gloss to “稱”, at the beginning of 古文尚書 牧誓 *Gǔwén shàngshū Mùshì*

Gloss in Japanese	Gloss in Chinese	Source of Glossing
<p><i>Kanda-bon</i> (Tokyo National Museum) Copied in early T'ang dynasty, glossed in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, Image: TNM Image Archives</p>	<p>S.799 (BL), Copied &amp; glossed in the middle of 8<sup>th</sup> century, Image: IDP</p>	<p>經典積文 <i>Jīngdiǎn Shīwén</i></p>

The type of commonality we have been discussing sometimes produces the same gloss to the same text, even though added in different places and times. In Figure 20 we

compare glossed texts from Japan and Dunhuang, focusing on the gloss to 稱 *chēng* at the beginning of the *Gǔwén shàngshū mùshì* 古文尚書牧誓.

The *Mùshì* 牧誓, exhibits the same vermilion gloss on the left upper left side occurrence of the character *chēng* 稱 as the gloss in the “let-in notes”: the Japanese Kanda copy held by Tokyo National Museum (glossed in the 10th century), and S. 799 of the British Library (glossed in the middle of eighth century in Dunhuang). This is a *po Yin* gloss bearing the interpretation that the word is to be understood as a departing tone word meaning “name”. It cannot be explained as an accidental coincidence. There a possibility that the identity of these gloss is due to the fact that in both case the glossators referred to a comment in a secondary commentary, *Lù Dé míng*’s 陸德明 *Glossed characters from the classics*, where the note says *chēng* 稱: *chǐzhèng fǎ* 尺證.

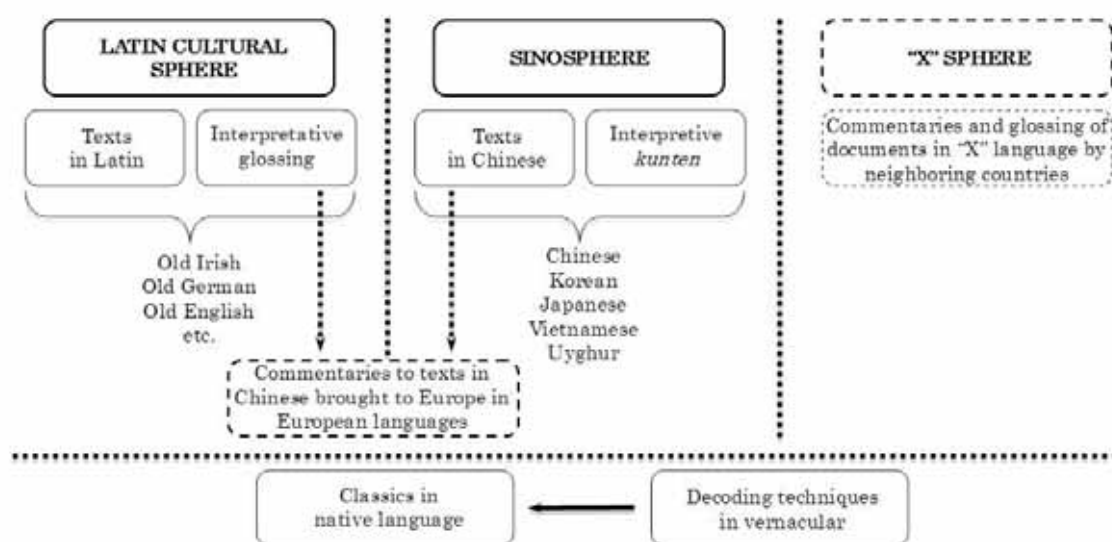
**Fig.21 Same text, same gloss, different language II**



Similarly, “長” in “育長”, or “遺長”, at the end of the section *Pángēng zhōng* 盤庚 in the *Gǔwén shàngshū* 古文尚書 both feature the same kind of gloss: the Iwasaki-hon of the Toyo Bunko (glossed in Japan in the tenth century) attaches the gloss to the upper left in vermilion, while in Pelliot.2516 in the Bibliotheque Nationale de Paris (glossed in Dunhuang the late seventh century), the gloss appears on the middle left, and in Pelliot 2643 (glossed in Dunhuang in the eighth century) to the center of the character toward the upper side. These again show an accordance with an annotation by Lu, which indicates that the annotations are *po Yin* glosses marking rising tone with the verbal meaning “growing”.

It may not be a surprise that we find agreement in the cases of paragraph marking, as this is punctuation which is determined by the construction or structure of phrase, so that each glossator might easily arrive at the same gloss. By contrast, *po Yin* is a type of gloss deeply connected to understanding of the content. The fact that such a difficult gloss found at the same place, and in agreement with particular annotation of a commentary, is hardly understood to be an own development in each language, but sharing a common source.

**Fig.22 The Diffusion and Scope of the Notion of Kundoku**



In conclusion, I would like to consider the diffusion and scope of the notion of *kundoku*, rendered by Whitman et al as vernacular reading in a Sinospheric context. I have focused in this paper on the Japanese instatiations of *kundoku*, while placing the overall practice within the Sinosphere as a whole.

*Kundoku* is a reading method for texts written in classical Chinese, cradled in the Sinosphere, It is plausible that there other reading/glossing methods can be compared to *kundoku* in cultural spheres with various cosmopolitan or classical languages at their core, such as Latin-centered medieval Europe, Old Church Slavonic centered East Europe, and the medieval Near East, with its Persian and Arabic spheres.

By initiating a discussion on the comparative study of such reading/glossing methods in the workshop leading to this special issue, we may hope to grasp a clearer picture of which aspects of textural production, transmission, and consumption are universally applicable over language, culture or time. At least, for the author, Kosukegawa, it is a monumental starting point.

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