

An English Translation of the Inscription of Hokoku Yamada's Monument 「方谷山田先生遺蹟碑 訳文」の現代英語訳

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新見市大佐の山田方谷終焉の地の枕頭位置に「方谷山田先生遺蹟碑」がある。遺蹟碑の題字は勝海舟、碑文は三島中洲によるものである。この三島中洲による漢文による碑文は、方谷の曾孫にあたる金沢大学名誉教授の山田琢氏により1987年「方谷山田先生遺蹟碑 訳文」として現代語訳されている。本翻訳は、それを現代英語に訳したものである。

(キーワード) 山田方谷 (Hokoku Yamada)、三島中洲 (Chushu Mishima)、勝海舟 (Kaishu Katsu)、山田 琢 (Taku Yamada)

Hokoku Yamada (山田方谷) was a scholar of the Wang Yang-ming school, educator, politician and reformer. He was born in Bitchu-Matsuyama Fued (present Takahashi City) in 1805 (Bunka 2) and died in Osakabe (present Niimi City) in 1877 when he was 73. The monument in honor of this great figure was built by his followers, with the title letter written by Kaishu Katsu (勝海舟), and the inscription written by Chushu Mishima (三島中洲). The inscription was written only in Chinese characters, and translated into modern Japanese by Taku Yamada (山田 琢), great grandson of Hokoku Yamada. I translated the modern Japanese version into English.

1. Translation

Hokoku Yamada supported the Rich Country, Strong Military Campaign of Bitchu Matsuyama Lord, Katsukiyo Itakura. After serving for this project, he retired and opened his private school in his hometown, Nishigata Village. Many students gathered from various places to study under his instruction, so chanting voices reading textbooks were heard in the mountains and valleys around.

In his free time, he tried to collect the family heritages from his ancestors and developed and cultivated new fields so that Yamada Family prospered. He thought that his family was strong enough to keep the rituals for the ancestors, and he handed the family lordship to his son Meien (Kozo Yamada, Chisokusai), and started secluded life in the mountains of Osakabe.

Osakabe was his late mother's birthplace. The mother's family, Nishitani Family was long deserted. Hokoku tried to revive the Nishitani Family in October 1870 (Meiji 3).

The number of his students was getting larger and larger, and his private school always had several hundred students in a row of school buildings, and the once-quiet village was bustling. Hokoku diligently paid monthly visits to the graves of his grandparents in the mother's side. The graves are placed in Kongo-ji Temple in Kominami Village. Hokoku showed the grave inscription to the attending boys, and told them that the inscription was written by Shinsai, the son of Shoin Marukawa, Hokoku's teacher. Shinsai was eight years old when he wrote the inscription. With this explanation, he was long lost in thought.

He had a small hut beside the graveyard as a rest house. When he visited his ancestors' graves he stayed in the hut for a while, sitting, meditating, and bowing his head. He acted as if there really had been his ancestors' spirits

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around. The attending boys could not help being moved to see his mourning attitude. He paid monthly visit this way, and sometimes stayed overnight in the hut.

Eventually he accumulated wealth from his students' fees. So he bought land and had a house built, and adopted Makitaro Hayashi, the second son of Kensaku Hayashi of Niimi Village. Hokoku had Makitaro married to a daughter of Teiichiro Ono, one of his relatives, and made him heir to the Nishitani Family. Hokoku must have been very happy about this.

Hokoku passed away suddenly on June 26, 1877 (Meiji 10). Meien brought his coffin back to Nishigata Village and buried him there. Recently, his students discussed and decided to build a stone monument in honor of him beside his school. They asked me (Chushu Mishima) an inscription. Now I remember him supporting his lord very well, serving his ancestors, having loyalty and dutifulness. I am writing this inscription to introduce him as a good role model to future generations.

His pet name is Kyu, nickname is Rinkyu, pseudonym is Hokoku, and his family name is Yamada. I described his leanings and achievements in the inscription of a large monument in Bitchu Han's mausoleum (in Yaeri Shrine). The inscription is as follows:

There are many scholars who think loyalty and dutifulness are important, but they tend to be only saying, not doing. But, Hokoku really acted that way. His character is a real role model, so he does not have to explain. It is natural for people in later generations to be moved. He is not with us anymore, but his model exists forever. This inscription and the monument will surely be handed down.

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Summary

This paper shows a translation of the inscription of the Monument in honor of Hokoku Yamada in Osakabe, Niimi. I translated Taku Yamada's modern Japanese version of the inscription into modern English.

Keywords: Hokoku Yamada, Chushu Mishima, Kaishu Katsu, Taku Yamada