The differences of connotations between two flowers, plum and cherry, in classical Japanese poetry, 10th century.

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Introduction

- This project addresses an analysis of connotations of flowers in classical poetry: i.e., ‘ume’ (plum) and ‘sakura’ (cherry).
- We will identify the characteristics of two flowers by computer modeling.
- Using parallel texts of original texts and contemporary translations of classical Japanese poetry, the Kokinshū, we will clarify the details of connotations in an objective procedural manner that is not influenced by human observations.
- The aim is to examine whether or not the residual of CT – OP gives information on the non-literal elements of OP.

Problem

1. What is the difference between ume (plum) and sakura (cherry)?
2. What kind of connotations does each flower contain?
3. Which picture is that of cherry flowers?

Methods

Material: *Kokinshū* a.k.a. *Kokinwakashū* is:
the first anthology compiled by the order of Emperor Daigo (ca.905), which contains about 1,111 poems. And 10 sets of their Contemporary Japanese Translations (CT)

Fig. 1: Dates of publication of annotations of the Kokinshū: ◦ indicates that it has CT; ◦ indicates that it does not include CT; △ indicates that it is used in this project.

Result

Fig. 2: Schema of relationship between the original poem texts (OP) and the contemporary translation texts (CT) based on Schramm (1954).

Fig. 3: Plum by OP

Fig. 4: Plum by CT

Fig. 5: Plum by intersecction of OP and CT

Fig. 6: Plum by subtracting OP from CT

Fig. 7: Combined Network Model of Plum and Cherry

Conclusion

- It will be necessary to examine not only common nouns but also the distinctive characters of proper nouns in order to further examine the connotative associations of poetic vocabulary.
- We observed proper nouns such as place names, Kurabu, Tatsuta, Otowa, Yoshino in the network models of common nouns, and concluded that they seem to strongly influence the associations of poetic vocabulary.
- The relative salience clearly indicates that both ume (plum) and sakura (cherry) share Kurabu yama (Mt. Kurabu), which comprises a cluster of nodes in the sub-network.

Reference