Database Compilation and The Analysis Of The Phrenology Document

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Physiognomy refers to the act of judging character or fortune from appearance of a person such as body, structure, visage, voice, etc.

Physiognomy has been used from ancient times in various situations; a monarch's magnitude could be emphasized with it; the talented and the successful were said to be born with distinctive looks.

The influences of this are seen in many fields of society. In fine arts a portrait painter would be required to have learned physiognomy as essential education.

In traditional Chinese paintings which made the basis for traditional Japanese art, portrait was thought, in 4th century, to be the most difficult art because the inner face of the model was thought necessary to be represented (Gu Kaizhi *On Painting*), and the 14th century, it was widely agreed that a portrait artist must be proficient in physiognomy.

From my research, in Japan there are the most number of pre-modern books about physiognomy in the world. However in modern Japan only a few fortunetellers are familiar with physiognomy. Besides, it cannot be said that sufficient academic research has been done which brings present-day perspective into physiognomy. Any substantial researches are yet to be set about, either on writings of physiognomy as records of theories, or on their impact relations.

I started investigating classic writings of physiognomy that exist today, and building a database of illustrations and their captions extracted from those writings. It has adopted Topic Maps. (http://topicmaps-space.jp/physiognomy/)

The purpose is to grasp the body of physiognomic knowledge, and to prove the links between physiognomy and each visage represented in the illustrations. In fact, the image database of Japanese historical characters (http://base1.nijl.ac.jp/~rekijin/), and show examples in which physiognomy and some U*kiyo-e* paintings can be proved to have relevance. While this research aims at an analysis of interrelation between paintings and facial features by using SD Method. I will explain this database, the attempt to grasp the body of physiognomic knowledge, and some findings in the process.