The Early Modern Japan Network will hold its annual meeting at the AAS conference in Washington D.C.

Date: April 7, 1995
Time: 6:30 P.M. to 8:30 P.M.
Place: Chevy Chase Room, Washington Hilton

In the spring of 1598 Hideyoshi, five months prior to his death, led a grand procession on a flower-viewing excursion to the Daigo temple in Kyoto that would turn out to be his final campaign on the cultural battlefield. Only weeks before, he had personally applied the final touches to this carefully orchestrated affair, which would be the closing spectacle of his career. It would also be the final stage call for a century that clearly realized the successful alliance of literary ideals with military exploits. The Daigo Hanami proved to be the last link in an impressive array of cultural events scattered over the latter half of Hideyoshi’s career. Memorable among such events were the Kitano Daichakai, Emperor Go-Yôzei’s visit to Jurakutei, a boating excursion for the Ming envoys, the Yoshino Hanami and a pilgrimage to Mt. Kôya.

The Daigo Hanami has often been viewed as the last crowning glory to Hideyoshi’s magnificent career. But it is only too obvious that the failure of the Korean campaigns and the increasing apprehension over the future of Hideyoshi’s young heir, Hideyori, were vivid markers pointing to the decline in Hideyoshi’s
weakening power. From the year before when Hideyoshi first visited Daigo to view the cherry blossoms with Ieyasu and Ishida Mitsunari, he had been impressed with their beauty and immediately decided that he would arrange an outing the following year for Hideyori, Kitanomandokoro (d. 1624), Yododono (1567-1615), and women in their service to take part in this spectacular view.\(^1\) Oze Hoan wrote, in keeping with the season, that Hideyoshi hoped momentarily to forget about the world and disperse the lingering haze or kasumi that hovered in his mind.\(^2\)

The scholar Kuroita Katsumi so lyrically recapitulates Hideyoshi’s dilemma, as only Japanese scholars of an earlier era can do, by comparing Hideyoshi to the fragrant cherry blossoms at their glorious peak reveling in a magnificent display of color and scent, yet, uneasily waiting for the approach of nightfall and the possibility of an evening storm that might scatter their delicate petals to the wind.\(^3\)

Bu (武), the military arts, and bun (文), the literary arts, were both important to the warrior elite in the sixteenth century. In this paper I would like to focus my attention more on the primary role bun often played in the career of a warrior. It becomes apparent in the case of Hideyoshi that he actively included the literary arts in his political agenda and a clear investment in the poetic tradition marked many an event. Like an accomplished movie director he provided a visual menu at the Daigo Hanami that offered its audience a hasty but extensive rearrangement of the physical and natural surroundings, the careful design and costuming of the main participants in gorgeous robes, and culminating in the deliberate chronicling of the affair through the versification and listing of the poets. With scenery, actors and script in place Hideyoshi led his grand entourage through the tunnel of cherry blossoms that lined the main avenue through the Daigo temple complex. Many of these flowers bloomed on trees gingerly carried from other regions of Japan and, with amazing calculation, transplanted just days before.

In a period where the delicate balancing act of bu with bun was crucial to a warrior’s survival and where the two were considered as indispensable as the two wheels of a cart or the two wings of a bird,\(^4\) the Daigo Hanami served Hideyoshi’s grand design of creating a literary monument to himself. It was ironically the fragile written records of poetry gatherings that remained behind after the destruction of war had laid waste to the more salient stone and clay edifices that loomed in the shape of castles and forts. Patronage of the literary arts was a highly visible means of raising high one’s banner on the competitive cultural battleground. Cultural accomplishments became part of the colorful panoply of the warrior when it came to impressing other daimyō and retainers alike. Literary refinement and scholarly pursuits also symbolized the virtue of the able administrator. Large-scale and sometimes ostentatious waka gatherings, many sponsored by Hideyoshi, were important in bedazzling a country with the strained semblance of a peaceful, civilized and centralized state where in actuality there still lurked a potentially insurgent force. Hideyoshi was active in many of the sixteenth-century art forms of renga or linked verse, chanoyu, and the No theater. Warriors were not only the organizing generals on the cultural battlefield. They were also its most enthusiastic participants and seemed to enjoy the social and political bonding at these gatherings. The poetry gathering among other activities practiced in the communal setting of the za had been proven to serve as an emotional bond between lord and retainer and helped promote a spiritual harmony that softened the sharp competitive edge of the military sphere that in turn encompassed and defined all chances of survival. And, last of all, sponsoring a large cultural event not only brought visibility to Hideyoshi, but it provided a final opportunity to extend autocratic control over humanity, nature and physical surroundings as he pompously paraded a

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\(^1\) Kitajima Manji, "Daigo no hanami ni miru Toyotomi seiken no honsei," in Rekishi hyöron, No. 369, 1981-1, p.70.


\(^4\) Kitanomandokoro (北の政所) was Hideyoshi’s primary wife. Yododono (淀殿), mother of Hideyori and known by other names such as Yodogimi and Ochacha, was a privileged secondary wife of Hideyoshi and the eldest daughter of Asai Nagamas and his wife Oichi no kata, who was a younger sister of Nobunaga.
young and vulnerable son along with a household of female attendants before his retainers.

The poetry of the Daigo Hanami remains today recorded in a box of tanzaku, or strips of paper for the writing of waka poetry, which Hideyoshi sent to Gien, the head priest of Sanbōin at Daigoji, shortly after the Hanami. The poems played a crucial role in Hideyoshi’s grand plan. A brief description of the event might bring some of these poems into perspective. Hideyoshi began careful planning of the excursion from the year before in 1597 when he first had an opportunity to view the cherry blossoms at Daigo. Accompanied by Ieyasu and several other daimyō Hideyoshi hurriedly left Fushimi castle for nearby Daigoji where he was delighted with the beauty of the blossoms and yet horrified by the dilapidated state of the neglected buildings. Before Hideyoshi departed from Daigoji he had donated 1500 koku towards the reconstruction of the five-story pagoda. Gien accompanied Hideyoshi a week later in a flower viewing excursion to Yoshino and by the end of that year reconstruction had already begun at Sanbōin. With the end of the new year festivities of 1598 Hideyoshi unexpectedly returned to Daigo in the early part of the second month and announced to Gien plans to host a large “garden party” to be held only a few weeks hence. After personally inspecting every corner of the grounds he then ordered that all building repairs be completed by the middle of the next month.

Hideyoshi devoted much time and attention to staging this apparently spontaneous event. A week later he returned to Daigo to supervise the reconstruction of the garden. It is apparent from Gien’s diary that Hideyoshi literally left no rock unturned and meticulously directed the gardeners in the placing of scenic boulders around the garden. One famous rock by the name of “Fujinami” or “waves of wisteria” which had originally been placed at his Jurakutei palace was transported from Fushimi Castle to Daigo. The garden at Sanbōin has mistakenly been credited in later years to the design of Kobori Enshū (1579-1647), but Gien clearly shows that Hideyoshi had a close hand in much of the architectural design. The cypress covered building built on an island in the middle of a pond with a bridge and two waterfalls were fashioned to Hideyoshi’s specifications. Hideyoshi went to Daigo again towards the end of the month and continued to supervise the reconstruction of buildings and gardens in the Daigo temple complex. He had men search in the areas around Yamato and Kawachi for lumber from old temples which could be used in the renovation. Hideyoshi’s efforts were a combination of control over physical surroundings and over nature itself. In the span of only one month 700 cherry trees were transported from Ōshū and Kawachi and transplanted along a path to create a flower tunnel through which the guests would walk. Several tea houses, a stage and dressing room were erected around the grounds. Outsiders were strictly forbidden and security was extremely rigorous with numerous guard posts stationed along a fenced-off area which ran all the way from Fushimi to Daigo.

The Daigo Hanami was domestic in orientation, with the procession consisting largely of the female retinue which kept company with Kitanomandokoro and Yodogimi and consisted of wives, daughters, mothers and wet nurses from prominent warrior families. It had been planned as a family excursion but it extended far beyond the scope of an intimate family outing. Hideyoshi wished to show the blossoms to Kitanomandokoro, his young heir Hideyori and Yodogimi, and they were in turn the highlight of a major promenade that featured well over a thousand women appareled in a fabulous fashion show of robes and sashes that were changed no less than three times that day. Aware of the tremendous expense, Hideyoshi, just prior to the Hanami, ordered the daimyo Shimazu Yoshihisa to prepare three sets of robes and sashes for each of the women. Yoshihisa was not only burdened with the cost of the robes but had to rush the artisans in Kyoto to finish in eight days time.

With his promotion to naidaijin, which was soon followed by the bestowal of the title of kampaku in 1585, Hideyoshi became interested in the orthodox style of kampaku poetry. In that same year he stopped at Wakanoura with Ōmura Yūko and

In a letter from Shimazu Yoshihisa in the Kamigata area to his brother, Iehisa, he tells of not only the great financial burden but also the pressing time restraints of preparing the robes on time. See Kitajima Manji's article 'Daigo no hanami ni miru Toyotomi seiken no honsei," pp. 70-77.

Wakanoura is located in present-day Wakayama city. It is the site of Tamatsushima Shrine whose god along with those of the Sumiyoshi Shrine are the official guardians of poetry.
there, as an indication of his growing interest in waka, offered a poem as poets and pilgrims had done before him. Yūko praised Hideyoshi and compared him to the ideal of the virtuous ruler who brings peace to his kingdom through a skillful management of words. This was wisely expressed by someone whose livelihood depended so closely on Hideyoshi’s patronage. Although Hideyoshi continued to hold linked-verse gatherings, his attention shifted to the waka gathering and there was an increase in the number of these poetry meetings. A knowledge of linked verse was necessary for socializing in the courtier and warrior circles of the sixteenth century. However, it was the knowledge of the waka tradition that earned one respect as a gentleman-scholar and allowed a warrior to display proudly a familiarity and close association with the centuries-old literary canon. Similar to other inexperienced poets of high rank Hideyoshi often had his poetry “corrected” by Yūko or Hosokawa Yūsai. Despite the popularity of linked verse the reign of waka prevailed and Hideyoshi recognized the importance of associating himself with the most prestigious and honored literary art form.

Warriors were painfully aware of their need for credibility in the world of letters and they energetically pursued the way of bun. Although known as enthusiastic students and patrons of poetry, warriors could not afford to forget that the ultimate key to success was manifested in a calculated combination of bu and bun. Tutored by the nobility and a group of elite warriors and renga masters who had been trained in the court tradition, warriors faithfully accepted the given framework of the classical literature canon they were handed and hardly questioned the content. They inescapably became faithful porters in service of the orthodox court tradition of poetry. It is in part due to transcriptions commissioned by warriors such as Hideyoshi that texts of Heian and Kamakura literature survive. Warriors should be given some credit for preserving the classical canon and sheltering documents from becoming lost in the great shuffle of the times by amassing great libraries and transferring those precious archival materials to provincial domains.

Hideyoshi and other warriors, for the most part, wrote poetry that complied with the traditional canon; however, on rare occasions the canon could be manipulated to suit their needs. Although linked verse continued to kindle a body of new poetic vocabulary it still depended greatly on the waka canon for its poetic language, and familiarity with the imperial poetic anthologies was imperative. Hideyoshi continued to hold linked-verse gatherings and on one occasion when both Hosokawa Yūsai and Satomura Jōha were present he composed a poem which referred to the cry of the firefly. Jōha, a famous master of linked verse and scholar, insisted that this insect made no sound. Yūsai swiftly defended Hideyoshi by citing two examples of the naku hotaru from the Senzaishū. Hideyoshi was immediately comforted and reassured that there existed a credible precedent for singing fireflies, but Jōha, familiar with the Senzaishū, remained puzzled until he could later confront Yūsai. Yūsai admitted to fabricating the poems there on the spot and impressed Jōha with his attempts to encourage Hideyoshi’s interest in poetry. When Hideyoshi composed poetry even fireflies could be heard crying in the summer night.

Three waka from the Daigo Hanami can be attributed to Hideyoshi but only one was actually written in his hand. In general, the warrior elite of the sixteenth century closely adhered to the classical canon for their poetic inspiration. Hosokawa Yūsai, a close adviser to Hideyoshi in poetry affairs, strongly identified with the Nijō school’s orthodox style of poetry. It is in part due to transcriptions commissioned by warriors such as Hideyoshi that texts of Heian and Kamakura literature survive. Warriors should be given some credit for preserving the classical canon and sheltering documents from becoming lost in the great shuffle of the times by amassing great libraries and transferring those precious archival materials to provincial domains.

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According to Hayashi Tatsuya in his article, "Hosokawa Yūsai Nōto 5: Shosei to bungaku no hazama," Part 1 Bungakushū kenkyū 5 (December, 1977), pp 72-74, the basis for this story comes from three collections; Yuasa Jōzan’s Jōzan kidan (1736), Sorori Shinzaemon’s Sorori kyōka hanashi (1672) and Yamashina Dōan’s Kaiki (1727).

In his teachings to Karasumaru Mitsuhiro, Hosokawa Yūsai states that shōfūtei, (正風体) or the correct style, is the most fundamental element of poetry. This can be found in Mitsuhiro’s journal Niteiki (also known as Jiteiki in Nihon kagaku taikei, vol. 6) which covers the years 1598 to 1602, during which he met with Yūsai several times to receive the
from feeling restricted by the many rules of composition observed by the Nijō poets, Yūsai found that the canon actually gave him a greater sense of freedom.11 Hideyoshi no doubt recognized Yūsai’s teachings that warriors should avoid disrupting the conventions of orthodox waka by avoiding vocabulary or themes directly related to warrior ideals. His poetry for the Daigo Hanami deviates little from the prescribed conventions for cherry blossom viewing. The one poem known to be written by Hideyoshi in his own hand is the following:

| Aratamete | 改めて |
| Na wo kaete min | 名をかえて見ん |
| Miyukiyama | 行幸山 |
| Umoruru hana mo | 埋もるる花も |
| Araware ni keri | 現はれにけり |

Change thy name anew  
Miyukiyama  
Blossoms once buried  
Now appear from beneath the snow

Commemorating Emperor Go-Yozei’s visit to his Jurakutei palace in 1588 Hideyoshi held a poetry gathering with the theme of “in celebration of the pine”. It may have appeared as a glorified gathering to welcome the court but the poetic theme was most definitely in celebration of Hideyoshi himself whose linked-verse sobriquet was none other than matsu or pine tree.13 Hideyoshi had not only adopted the poetic practices and canon of the court but he went so far so to advance his ambitions by utilizing his pen name as a symbol of that tradition. By essentially embodying a poetic theme and thus becoming the primary locus of the literary gathering, Hideyoshi seized the opportunity to draw attention away from the emperor. All poems composed that day could only exist in response to the pine or Hideyoshi.

Two poems at the Daigo Hanami also reflect the way in which Hideyoshi’s presence controlled the poetic theme. Among the usual references to cherry blossoms there is also direct mention of the pine and little pine, or the twin pines, obviously a poetic marker for Hideyoshi and Hideyori. The following poems, one attributed to Hideyoshi and the other to Mokujiki Ōgo (1536-1608), a monk from Mt. Koya, use the waka tradition to celebrate the longevity of the pine and at the same time construct a testimonial tribute to Hideyoshi and his heir. Hideyoshi inserts the image of twin pines into his spring verse and it is clear that he viewed this excursion as a means to guarantee Hideyori’s future.

13Mark Morris also writes, “freedom within restrictions of the poetic code was no doubt one of the most pleasurable aspects of composing waka for the individual and was itself an important social function,” in “Waka and Form, Waka and History,” Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, 46, 2 (December, 1986), p. 555.

11Miyukiyama (深雪山) is another name for Daigoji. It is also used in poetry for its visual reference to mountains under deep snow and the winter now left behind by the blooming cherries. Written with another set of characters (御幸山 or 行幸山) it can also refer to the excursion of someone of high rank.

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12Hayashi Tatsuya, “Bunroku Keichō no koro,” in Kokubungaku kaishaku to kyōzai no kenkyū (June, 1987), pp.

106-111. Also see Hosokawa Yūsai’s poetic travel diary Kyūshū michi no ki in Nikkō kilōshū, v. 96 (Yūhōbō bunko), pp. 149-168 where specific mention of Hideyoshi’s pen name matsu is recorded.
Ten thousand generations pass
Mountain cherry blossoms
Bloom on this grand excursion
Accompanying the color
Of the young and old pine

By the sixteenth century there was meager interest in reviving the imperial anthology, which had clearly been one means of privileging the voice of its commissioner. After the last imperial anthology Shinshokukokinshū in 1439 there were some shogun among the Ashikaga who tried to excite interest in such a monumental project but it is no surprise that many such projects were left unfinished.14 Clearly by Hideyoshi’s day there was little hope of reinstating this ancient courtly literary practice among the warrior elite. Instead, Hideyoshi made use of the less demanding and more showy practice of ritual processions recorded by public poetry. Reminiscent of the inspiration behind the kunimi or land-viewing poems in the Manyōshū, Hideyoshi set out on an excursion to survey the land and celebrate the grandeur of nature, but this in turn became a ceremonial and poetic appeal for his family’s future.

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14Yoshimasa attempted to order a new imperial anthology for the accession of Go-Tsuchimikado and Yoshihisa in 1473 actively tried to edit an anthology himself, but both projects ended in failure. See Itō Kei’s discussion in Chūsei wakashū, Muromachi-hen in Shin nihon koten bungaku taikei, vol. 47 (Iwanami shoten, 1990).

The names of actual merchants, their shops, and the merchandise sold in them play so prominent a role in Edo period art, fiction and drama as to suggest that these media might usefully be understood as more narrowly focused modalities of a single general domain — advertising. I am using this word here in its broadest sense to denote any form of representation used for the purpose of stimulating desire. The central subject and driving force of the bourgeois-oriented arts during the period in question is, after all, the representation of desire in all of its multifarious aspects, be it for money, merchandise, social status, or sex. The primary role played by desire in representation is of course nothing new or unique in any mercantile-oriented society, and whatever nice distinctions might once have been sustained between elite “high art” and plebeian “vulgar advertising” in Western Europe and America was effectively blurred long ago, the two having come to the point today of being all but indistinguishable in the form of “infotainment” or “edutainment.” And this was apparently no less true in the cultural milieu of Edo Japan.1

1Or, one may add, in Japan today. The prevalence of this phenomenon as early as the seventeenth century helps provide a context for such “postmodern” novels today as Tanaka Yasuo’s Nantonaku kurisutaru (Somehow, Crystal), a work which reads more like a shopping catalog and list of material cultural icons than like fiction (Norma Feld, “Somehow, Crystak: The Postmodern as Atmosphere,” in Masao Miyoshi and H. H. Harootunian, eds., Postmodernism and Japan [Duke Univ. Press, 1989], 169-188). The matter-of-fact usage of such practices as “product placement” in films, the explosion of museum-shop reproductions, the production of “three-opera-tenor” TV extravaganzas (exploited for public TV subscription drives), and the J. Peterman clothing catalog’s novel use of short stories in place of the usual product descriptions are examples of similar practices employed in the U.S. and Japan.
Popular Edo artists, writers, and actors, with their proven public appeal, were in constant demand by merchants for advertising purposes. Hayashi Yoshikazu contends that the earliest evidence of this practice are found in the numerous advertising broadsides (hikifuda, keibutsu) that were regularly turned out by the most popular writers of the day. Hiraga Gennai's (1729-79) Hika rakuyō (1769, published posthumously in 1783), for example, contains advertisements for Sōsekikō, a “convenient toothpaste in a box” (as it was advertised) invented by this remarkable jack-of-all-trades and sold at the shop of one of Gennai’s friends, one Ebisuya Heisuke. One of the earliest examples of advertising employed as an integral part of illustrated fiction is Koikawa Harumachi’s (1744-89) Kibyoshi Mimasu masu uroko no Hajime (1777), which contains an advertisement for a well-known moxa shop connected to the story’s publisher. Jippensha Ikku’s (1765-1831) Kane no waraji advertised a type of millet rice-cake sold in the popular sweet shop under his management. The gesaku writer Santō Kyōden (1761-1816) frequently depicted his own smoking-accessory shop in his works, and advertised it in 1795 in a playfully complex acrostic puzzle printed on special paper tobacco-pouches that he sold there (Kyōden apparently also attempted to enlarge his readership with his advertisements of special “Literacy Pills” [dokushogan]). Kyokutei ippū Kyōden-bari, written by Kyōden’s friend Takizawa (Kyokutei) Bakin (1767-1848), shows Kyōden seated at the till of his busy shop among his various pipes and smoking accessories. And in Azuma-ori kadoriki taizen, Shikitei Sanba (1776-1822), a shop-keeper as well as popular writer, depicted his own well-known trademark on a shop-curtain containing an advertisement for one of his most popular cosmetics, “Water of Edo” (Edo no mizu, also plugged in his Ukiyoburo [1809-13] and the subject of his Edo no mizu saiwaibanashi [1812]). And, to round off this sort of in-group practice of self-reference, Sanba’s own shop was in turn depicted by the artist Utagawa Kuniyoshi in his illustrated story Nyōbō katagi o tsunaeshi.

Such practices may be considered simply the natural extension into the townsman world of the normal cultural context of the za, the all-important group frame of reference within which all social practices were carried on in Japan since medieval times. It is found in Edo society in all manner of affinity groups that came together formally and informally to produce poetry and art ranging from “serious” works that were formally judged to “playful” works that were often the product of drink and hilarity. We know today how difficult and in fact useless it is to attempt to separate these two apparently polarized artistic activities of the Edo period, the omote and ura of the culture of the times.

Tani Minezō has reproduced and analyzed the contents of what he calls “Japan’s first collection of advertising copy” [kopī] in a miscellany entitled Hirougami, compiled in 1794 by Honzentei Tsubohira, a restaurateur thought to have been a disciple of Santō Kyōden. Of the fifteen advertisements included in Hirougami (all written between 1792-93), four are attributable to Kyōden, eight to Tsubohira, with the remaining three bearing no name. All employ the colorful “playful” language characteristic of all gesaku literature, and Tani hypothesizes that these ads were most likely written in the spirit of gesaku exercises (he does not raise the important matter of fees). One of the shops advertised in this collection is also depicted in one of prints in Hiroshige’s famous Meisho Edo hyakkei series.2 Exactly the same movement between ad copywriting and literary activity is found in recent years in the careers of such popular writers as Inoue Hisashi, Itsuki Hiroyuki, and Nosaka Akiyuki and Kaiko Takeshi (whose writing abilities first came to public notice through his celebrated work on a famous Suntory whiskey ad campaign during the 1960s)3.

2See Tani Minezō, Edo no kopiraitaa, 79 ff. The titles of three gesaku works published in 1795 under the name Honzentei Tsubohira (the sort of art-name typical of a restaurateur, Tani claims) are recorded. The title of this work is taken from the adage suterugami areba hirougami ari, “where there are gods of discarding, there are gods of collecting,” punning on the homonymous hirougami, “collection of [discarded] papers.” Several of these ads take the form of prefaces beginning with the clichéd phrases “habakarinagara” or “osorenagara” (“If I might have a moment of your time...”), a more literary equivalent of the Edo street huckster’s ubiquitous cry “gorōjīro gorōjīro” (“Hey! check it out!).

3See Tsurumi Shunsuke, “Legends of common Culture,”
Not merely prefaces but entire Edo stories as well often take the form of advertisements. Santō Kyōden, for example, wrote Onna Masakado shichijin-geshōhin (1792) in the form of a parody of the legend of Taira no Masakado for the opening of a cosmetics shop owned by the merchant Tamaya Kyūbei; Jippensha Ikku’s Irozuri shinsomegata was composed for the Tokiwayama kimono shop’s winter sale; and Shikitei Sanba’s Wata onjaku kikō no hikifuda was created as an advertisement for a heating device sold by Fujita Kinroku of Odenmacho.4

The frequent depictions of popular kabuki actors in the act of endorsing products seen in Edo period woodblock prints suggest that neither actors nor artists were any more loath than were authors to capitalize on their celebrity by placing endorsements for commercial products in their work. This practice apparently began in Edo theaters as early as 1715, when famous actors in all three major theaters are reported to have begun inserting announcements (kōjo) into their performances for a kimono pattern sold by the Echigoya in Nihonbashi. This vogue reveals the role of advertising in joining the apparently separate worlds of merchandising and the theater. Shortly after this practice began, Ichikawa Danjūrō II (1688-1757) created his wildly popular tongue-twisting patter from the play Uirouri (later included by Danjūrō VII as one of the Jūhachiban or “eighteen kabuki plays of the Ichikawa family”), which he inserted into a 1718 performance of Wakamidori no ikioi Soga, proclaiming that the “Yuán Dynasty medicinal oil known as Tonchinkō” “sold by Toraya Fujiemon at Rankanbashi in Odawara,” was responsible, among its other alleged powers, for the great oral fluency being demonstrated at this very moment by the actor himself.5

A print by Utagawa Toyokuni (ca. 1825) depicts a later Danjūrō in the role of the night-watchman Kichirō making his pitch, while the onnagata Iwai Murasakikawa in the role of Kichirō’s wife poses demurely at his side brandishing a signboard bearing the message “Cosmetics and TOOTHPASTES available from Yorozuya Naosuke at the Aeidō in Kawata-kubomachi, Ushigome.”6 Any number of ukiyoe prints by Kunisada, Kuniyoshi and Eisen, among others, depict such well-known cosmetic products of the day as “Senjōkō” ointment and “Kumonoue” white base cream (oshiro). Famous courtesans are frequently depicted wearing kimonos or carrying umbrellas with the trademarks of well-known brothels, or of popular shops such as Ebisuya, Matsuzakaya, and Echigoya, or sipping the tea or sakē of certain shops, or dining in certain restaurants. Which goods and places were currently in fashion was, with the aid of such advertising, clearly at least as much a matter of common knowledge among the cognoscenti of that time as of our own.7

The detailed portrayals and appraisals of actual brothels, prostitutes, customs, attitudes and connoisseur products in the theater prompts us to understand an entire famous play such as Sukeroku (another of the “Eighteen Plays” performed by the endorsement-minded Danjūrō II in 1713, 1716, and 1749) in the context of their function as advertisements — whether paid for or not — for the myriad particular commercial aspects of the Yoshiwara pleasure quarter.8

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5 Matsumiya, Edo kabuki, 121-59.

6 Nakada, Kōkoku, frontispiece (emphasis in the original).


8 Matsumiya, Edo Kabuki, 232.

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Conrad Totman’s *Early Modern Japan* is a survey history of the three centuries from the rise of Oda Nobunaga in the 1560s to the waning years of the Tokugawa regime in the early 1850s. Although Totman never explicitly says so, the book is surely intended as a college textbook, so I will begin by considering its merits as such. But *Early Modern Japan* is also aimed at a general audience, and thus serves as a more explicit statement of the author’s vision of Tokugawa Japan than it might have had it been conceived solely as a college text. The nature of that vision will be the topic of the bulk of my discussion.

*Early Modern Japan* is without question the most thorough survey of the period available in English. It is clearly written and logically organized, and the footnotes and bibliographical essay will direct students to further readings for term papers and other assignments. Although it is sparsely illustrated for a textbook, the visual materials—particularly the selection of nineteenth-century photographs—add to the book’s appeal. Moreover, unlike so many blandly “objective” textbooks, Totman’s account has an explicit structure and argument around which one can easily build an entire course (minus the critical period from 1853 to 1868, which is treated only very briefly). Students will leave at term’s end with a clear sense of the structure and problems of Japanese politics, society, culture, and environment during the early modern centuries.

So should you assign *Early Modern Japan* to your class? Well, that depends. Do you want your undergraduates to read a survey text of almost 600 pages? Are you comfortable with Totman’s schema of a century and a half of rapid growth followed by another 150 years of stasis, all set against a background of increasing environmental stress? If you can answer yes to these questions—particularly the latter—by all means use it, as you will find it far superior to anything else now available. Otherwise you will probably not want to adopt it, for you will discover yourself spending your lectures arguing against the textbook, a most hazardous enterprise with any undergraduate audience.

Any EMJ Network stalwart would immediately recognize *Early Modern Japan* as Conrad Totman’s work, for it reflects the interests and concerns he has pursued during three decades of careful research and prolific writing, most notably a desire to situate historical developments in an ecological context and an intimate knowledge of bakufu politics. Totman’s sympathy for the losers in the struggles that so often divided the peasantry is evident as well in his emphasis on the costs of economic change. By the same token, he is obviously less comfortable with intellectual history and high culture, both of which he dutifully covers at some length in chapters that competently synthesize other scholars’ work but add little original interpretation. Most striking is the near absence of social history, a point to which I shall return below.

The work revolves around Totman’s reading of the environmental history of Tokugawa Japan. He sees the first half of the early-modern period (roughly 1560 to 1710) as one of rapid and dynamic growth and the second half as a period of “stasis,” which he defines not as an absence of growth or change, but rather as a reallocation of resources from one sector of the economy to another, one stratum of society to another, one region to another, and so on. The shift came about because by the early eighteenth century the Japanese people had exhausted the readily available resources of the land and were thus forced to exploit the environment (and each other) more intensively. To this environmental story Totman links every significant development in politics, diplomacy, economics, social relations, discourse, religion, and culture.

At the outset Totman notes that the “ceaseless interplay of people and their environmental context . . . fundamentally determined the scope and nature of early modern Japan’s growth and the necessity and shape of its stasis” (p. xxvi). The deterministic quality of this approach is especially evident in the discussion of stasis (which altogether accounts for perhaps two-thirds of the book), as major political and economic developments from the Kyōhō Reforms to the rise of tenancy are presented as attempts to cope with a diminishing resource base, while intellectual and cultural developments are in turn discussed as by-products of political and economic change.
One example of this viewpoint is Totman’s re-reading of the evidence presented in Thomas C. Smith’s classic work, *The Agrarian Origins of Modern Japan*. The outcome of Totman’s story is much the same as Smith’s: large holdings broke up into smaller and more productive (but more laboriously run) units; peasants studied agronomy, used commercial fertilizers, and turned to wage labor and by-employments to supplement their incomes; and intravillage social tensions escalated even as living standards rose by some measures. But for Totman “the key factor” in accounting for the origins of this process “is that as villages ran out of additional land to till, they strove to maximize the output of existing fields” (p. 248); the macroeconomic context is relegated firmly to the background: “As the role of markets and money grew, the economic differentiation that accompanied the rise of micro-farming became ever more decisive in the allocation of goods and services” (p. 249). Commercialization, in other words, reinforced a process of social change set into motion by environmental stress but was not a significant agent of fundamental change itself.

This ecological big-bang theory of rural social change is intriguing, but Totman does not fully explore it. The social and economic implications of the rise of landlordism, the commercialization of agriculture, the emergence of rural manufacturing, and other developments are not systematically explored in light of environmental constraints. To be sure, the discussion of Smith’s work is in a chapter on ecology rather than economy, and as such properly focuses on the importance of the environmental context for subsequent economic developments. But the assumptions behind this approach inform the book’s entire argument. Thus Totman contends that “in the eighteenth century, as Japan lost an environmental context favorable to laissez-faire economics, entrepreneurialism was incorporated into a state-sanctioned, oligopolistic or ‘fascist’ order (in which government farmed control of the commercial economy to major mercantile interests in return for fiscal and political collaboration)” (p. 102).

Throughout the book economic development is consistently treated as the ephemeral flip side of environmental degradation and as such warrants little attention; thus the question of structural change in the late-Tokugawa economy is not taken up at all, and in general nineteenth-century developments get little independent treatment (none of the eleven chapters on the period of “stasis” is devoted to the economy). Finally, in the bibliographical essay Totman dismisses analyses of the significance of Tokugawa economic development for Japan’s later history as relics of a “pre-environmentalist ‘modernization’ model” (p. 573).

Here Totman misses an opportunity to show economic historians—not all of whom celebrate the ruthless rationality of the marketplace—a way to integrate the environment more fully into their work. But then his concern for environmental history is a partisan’s concern: he is disturbed by the things we do to the planet in the name of progress and so writes history as cautionary tale. Such passion is incompatible with a treatment of ecology as one of so many variables to factor into a coolly detached analysis. Totman’s passion makes his work emotionally gratifying—and adds to *Early Modern Japan’s* appeal as a textbook—but it colors his narrative in numerous ways beyond the realm of economic history, sometimes for the better and sometimes for the worse.

His description of politics generally benefits from the ecological perspective. Totman does a good job of conveying how the political economy of environmental exploitation worked, as in his description of getting building materials to Edo during the construction of the shogun’s castle (pp. 67-68). Fires, famines, volcanic eruptions, and other emergencies demanded prompt action from leaders; by treating them prominently Totman lends an immediacy to his political history that is lacking in accounts that focus more exclusively on ideological battles. A corollary of this perspective, however, is that nearly the entire period from the mid-seventeenth century to the collapse of the regime is discussed in terms of crisis, leaving one to wonder how the bakufu held on for so long. Totman describes the eighteenth century, for example, as “a grim time devoted to conscious ‘systems maintenance,’ with most political, economic, cultural, and intellectual efforts directed at the preservation, repair, and elaboration of established arrangements” (p. 33). This characterization makes it hard to explain the vitality of so much of late Tokugawa culture and misrepresents ordinary people’s view of their own time—after all, moments of conscious revolutionary reordering are quite rare.
While political history benefits from the environmental perspective of Early Modern Japan, social history suffers badly. Totman admits that among the “aspects of the human story inadequately covered” in the book, the minimal treatment of women is “perhaps the most disturbing lacuna” (p. xxviii). It certainly is disturbing (the absence of gender beyond the confines of “women’s history” is another issue). What’s going on? Part of the answer is that the book reflects the state of Western scholarship, and there simply is not much available on Tokugawa women in English (particularly since Totman seems to have written the manuscript before the appearance of Gail Lee Bernstein’s Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945 [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991]). But it also reveals an implicit assumption that social relations (including gender relations) beyond the struggle for resources are simply not all that important. I come to this conclusion because, on the one hand, Totman takes pains to discuss women painters, poets, and other artists active in the world of high culture, while on the other hand, rural society and culture in general—topics in which women would figure prominently—are hardly touched upon. The family is barely mentioned and even infanticide gets only a couple of paragraphs. Youth associations (wakamonogumi) and other village organizations are overlooked completely despite their importance in the everyday lives of peasants. Especially puzzling is the absence of any discussion of popular religion except as a barometer of political and environmental instability (as in the rise of several “new religions” around the time of the Tenpō crisis in the 1830s); few students reading the book would ever realize that Buddhism was Japan’s principal institutionalized religion during the Tokugawa period.

Some of the other lacunae noted in the introduction (pp. xxviii-xxix) are less surprising but worth mentioning for what they say about the state of Western scholarship on Tokugawa Japan. The biggest omission is the outcaste community and, more broadly, the status system (mibunsei) as an organizing principle of the early-modern polity. Japanese scholars during the past decade or so have been calling for a conceptualization of status beyond the confines of Buraku history, but this work has yet to be reflected in the literature in English. (For a good introduction, see Asao Naohiro, ed., Mibun to kakushiki [Nihon no kinsei, vol. 7] [Tokyo: Chūō kōronsha, 1992].) Totman mentions the handicapped as another overlooked group. Here the literature in Japanese is sparse, but recent work (such as Katō Yasuaki’s article on the blind in the Asao volume cited above, and a brief discussion of a hospice for victims of Hansen’s disease in Kyōto burakushi kenkyūjo, ed., Kinsei no minshū to geinō [Kyoto: Aunsha, 1989], pp. 205-207) suggests that the handicapped occupied an ambivalent buffer zone between outcastes and commoners. Eventually we will realize that talking about commoners in Tokugawa society without reference to outcastes is like talking about contemporary American society without reference to race, but until then marginal peoples will remain invisible and our synthesis of early-modern history incomplete.

Also missing from the book are the people of the Ryukyu Islands and the Ainu, which again is understandable given both the paucity of scholarship in English and the prevailing academic convention that Okinawa and Hokkaido are beyond the pale of “Japanese” history (aside from foreign relations) for studies of the pre-Meiji period. (Totman does cover Russo-Japanese territorial rivalry in the pan-Okhotsk Sea region thoroughly.) This is an issue I feel strongly about, but suffice it to say here that a number of scholars in Japan and abroad are working to problematize the boundaries of both the early-modern polity and Japanese ethnicity (Kikuchi Isao’s work is particularly good on this topic), so that in the future the peripheries will be less peripheral to our understanding of Tokugawa Japan.

As my discussion has shown, the problems with Early Modern Japan are mostly of the sort that pit Conrad Totman’s Big Picture of Tokugawa Japan against someone else’s—mine, of course, in this case, but I suspect colleagues in intellectual history and cultural studies would have their own catalogue of complaints. The growth-stasis framework fits well with the book’s focus on high politics and environmental degradation, perhaps, but it denudes the social, economic, and intellectual history of the period of the dynamism that makes it so interesting and important. Totman’s narrative strategy is surprising considering how his earlier work of environmental history (The Green Archipelago [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989]) argued that a creative political response to diminishing resources helped to
make Japan the “green archipelago” that it is today. Likewise, late Tokugawa Japan’s “struggle to stand still” resulted in permanently reconfigured social and economic relations and radically new modes of discourse—all of which must be understood in light of the ecological story but not subsumed completely within it.

My criticisms of Early Modern Japan notwithstanding, Totman’s pathbreaking attempt to write an environmentally based history of Tokugawa Japan points the field as a whole in a new and promising direction. Our common task is now to find ways more fully to integrate the ecological context into analyses of the economy, society, thought, and culture.

Kumayama chōshi, Tsūshi hen.
(Volume I, 927 pages; volume II, 863 pages; boxed set ¥5,000. Kumayama Machi Yakuba, Chōshi Hensan Shitsu, Matsuki 623, Kumayama Machi, Akaiwa-gun, Okayama-ken 709-07; FAX [08699] 5-2309)

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As indicated in my previous review, pre-Meiji documents are not found in any great number in the Kumayama area, and consequently I was interested in how the editorial committee would deal with pre-modern eras. One approach, quite naturally, was to employ documents from collections in major prefectural archives and museums. But more interesting (to me) is the lengths to which collections outside of Okayama were exploited. Willingness to exploit material from Kyoto University archives, for example, permitted a brief exploration of women’s inheritance of property in the early medieval period of Kumayama history. Likewise, the region’s ties to national political developments is explored through the association of Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa’s wife, Hino Tomiko, with Kumayama. Of more direct interest to kinsei literature specialists, the final chapter of volume one contains a rather extended discussion of waka, eika, and haikai. Special emphasis is given to the stimulus provided by the visit of Okayama samurai and scholar, Hiraga Motoyoshi. Although the sections on kinsei religion are brief, three sections may be of some interest to readers. One deals with the suppression of the Fujufuse sect of Buddhism. Although this region is not known for the widespread presence of Christianity, archaeological finds (substituting for manuscript materials) suggest the extension of Christian influence even into an area that would have been relatively isolated in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Finally, the kinsei section ends with a discussion of yōnaoshi. In the realm of institutional history, the discussion of the Okayama domain’s retainer fief system strikes me as particularly interesting. Standard explanations stress the daimyo’s confiscation of all practical control over the fiefs of landed retainers. In English, the work of John W. Hall on Bizen reflects this emphasis. Nonetheless, Kumayama chō shi (I, pp. 660-64) takes a somewhat different approach, stressing the division of farmers among fiefholders (hyakushōwari) and the continued role of landed retainers in collecting land taxes (despite their loss of any ability to set tax rates), exploitation of mountain and forest resources, and so forth. In addition, other forms of obligations to landed retainers remained and were divided among individual villagers. Such evidence raises the question of whether Western scholarship (at least) has over-stated the completeness of the seventeenth century tendency to fictionalize retainer
fiefs. The description of local administration reveals a fairly weak of ya system (early in the era, a tomura kimoiri system) in which groups of 10-20 villages were overseen by a senior headman (ojóya or kimoiri) who received a rice stipend from the domain. Nonetheless, by mid-late 18th century, financial pressures* conspired with other factors to reduce the number of these officials and often to appoint temporary administrators. As a result, the domain's total financial obligations to these officials was reduced substantially, without apparent loss of administrative effectiveness. Clearly the tie between villages on the one hand, and samurai representatives of retainers and domain on the other, was significant in Kumayama despite substantial loss of retainer autonomy. Local histories such as this are written to mark milestones in community history, and, when they are done sensitively, to evoke among residents a sense of historical place. They do not aim to revise major interpretations of Japanese history. Nonetheless, the story they tell can help create a more finely nuanced understanding of the impact of broader national developments at a local level. These volumes perform both functions nicely.

Sexuality and Edo Culture, 1750-1850
An International Conference

Indiana University, Bloomington
August 17-20, 1995

Sexuality in Edo culture has long been a taboo subject in literary histories and critical studies in spite of the fact that, as with other major cities, urban culture materialized in narratives grounded in sexual fantasies. Recently, scholars from many disciplines have been exploring the connection between the awareness of the body and self-consciousness of the city's culture so as to find a place for sexuality in teaching and research on Japan.

From August 17-20, 1995, at Indiana University, Bloomington, sexuality and urban culture will be the focus of attention in two special exhibitions at the Indiana University Art Museum, the Final Arts Gallery, and in an international conference to be held here on campus. The exhibitions will include hand painted scrolls, handbound illustrated books, woodblock prints from the museum's collection as well as the Kinsey Institute. Sumie Jones, an Indiana University faculty member in Early Asian Languages and Cultures and Comparative Literature, is chairing the conference as the culmination of a national Endowment for the Humanities sponsored collaborative project. In order to convey the multi-layered and multi-disciplinary aspect of Edo culture, over forty scholars from Europe, Japan and the United States with different specialties have been invited to present papers and comments during the conference Howard Hibbett, a distinguished translator and critic of Japanese Literature from Harvard University will give the keynote address. Other participants include: Norman Bryson, Harvard University; Naoki Sakai, Cornell University; Henry Smith, Columbia University; Haga Toru, Research Center for Japanese Studies; Kobayashi Tadashi, Gakushuin University; Ueno Chizuko, Kyota Seika University; Jurgis Elisonas and Richard Rubinger, Indiana University. Both the exhibitions and the conference have received major grant support from the National Endowment for the Humanities as well as other organizations.

Registration materials will be available in May. For further information, please contact Jason Lewis, East Asian Studies Center, Indiana University, tel: (812)855-3765; fax: (812)855-7762, E-mail jalewis@indiana.edu.
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