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From the Editor

編纂者のメッセージ

While computerized techniques for preparing publications like this ease the task considerably, glitches arise – always at the last minute. Such was the case with this issue, and I would be remiss if I did not extend special thanks to Satomi Kurosu and Janine Sawada for their responsiveness under pressure.

Introduction to Essays on the State of the Field

©Philip C. Brown, Ohio State University

In April 2000, a group of early modern Japan specialists gathered at The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio to discuss the state of the field in various disciplines that take that slice of Japanese history as the object of their study. After re-writing, soliciting comments and re-writing again, *Early Modern Japan* begins to publish the fruits of that conference in this issue. We will publish the essays and separate bibliographies for each field, and alternatively organized bibliographies will be placed on the EMJ web site at the following URL: <http://emjnet.history.ohio-state.edu/>.

Two participants were sought for each of five general fields along with one scholar to provide a kickoff and one to serve as overall respondent. Individuals were sought who, wherever the nature of the field permitted, were firmly anchored in the period that is widely considered to fall under the rubric of “early modern,” that is, the period from the late sixteenth century to the mid-nineteenth century. Assembling a broad range of scholars was also an explicit objective: younger scholars as well as mid-career and older scholars; scholars from different parts of the United States as well as at least some scholars who were from outside the United States or people who had at least demonstrated an interest in exploring non-English, western-language materials through their scholar-ship. Where a particular methodological expertise such as

statistics was a significant part of a sub-field, someone who had mastered that methodology was sought as a participant. In general, the final composition of the workshop reflected this diversity. The fields designated and participants were:

Political and “diplomatic” history:

Philip Brown, Ohio State University

Brett Walker, Montana State University

Religion and thought:

Janine Sawada, University of Iowa

James McMullen, Oxford University

Literature and the performing arts:

Haruo Shirane, Columbia University

Lawrence Marceau, University of Delaware

Socio-Economic history:

Seljuk Esenbel, Bosphorus University (Turkey)

Satomi Kurosu, Reitaku University

Art History and archeology:

Patricia Gra-ham, University of Kansas

Sandy Kita, University of Maryland

Respondent:

Conrad Totman (Yale University)

(Our inaugural speaker was unable to attend due to illness.)

The organizer made no explicit demarcation of field boundaries, nor were authors prohibited from treating a work that might also be treated by someone working in a different field. Like their Chinese, Korean, South Asian and European counterparts, many of the figures in the world of early modern Japanese letters were polymaths, dipping into literary pursuits, governance and art as they pleased. Likewise, just as Karl Marx can not be treated simply as an economist or historian, or Max Weber as simply a political scientist or sociologist, many of these figures elude rigid classificatory schemes. What is true for individuals holds as well for many other subjects and artifacts from the era. Are travel diaries literature, art, or personal diaries and therefore treatable as sources for a social or economic historian? The answer, of course, is that they can be any of these. Are commoner protests (*ikki*) something that should be treated as political events or as sociological phenomenon? Once again, both approaches are reasonable. From the outset, the choice of what specific

topics to cover within their fields was left to each pair of scholars, with the assumption that classifications were general guidelines, not fixed, exclusive intellectual territories. This approach left the possibility of some overlap, with the same work being covered by two or more authors from somewhat different perspectives, but also meant that a few small areas of limited publication were inadvertently omitted in our first drafts and which we have tried to remedy in our final versions.

Once selected, each pair of scholars was asked to decide for themselves how to divide up responsibility for the materials in their field. For some fields, such as political history, which readily divided into fields focused on domestic concerns and those that dealt with foreign affairs and frontier history, the choice was straightforward. For other fields, like literature or socio-economic history, the decision of how to divide responsibility presented greater challenges. The principal organizer took the position that it was best to let specialists in the field work these issues out in ways that they thought appropriate to the existing structure of the field and in a manner with which they felt comfortable.

Likewise, no common format was prescribed for the essays; however, participants were given a common charge. Each was asked to prepare a draft essay on the state of their assigned field that summarized trends in topics of study, methods of analysis and theory. While participants were asked to set their work in a long-term historical context of development of their field, emphasis was to be placed on developments over the past twenty to thirty years. Essays were to assess the major accomplishments and problems as part of the effort to analyze the ways in which their field had changed in recent decades. While each and every book or article might not be specifically addressed in their text, a reasonably comprehensive bibliography was to be one result of their work. Finally, they were asked to identify lacunae and possible directions for future research. Essays were prepared for advance distribution and time at the conference focused on respondents' comments, corrections and additions to each essay and, most importantly, to discussion of common themes, trends and issues that crossed disciplinary boundaries.

The possibility that one set of specialists

might define the field with different chronological boundaries – extending further into Meiji, or beginning before Hideyoshi's rise to prominence – was directly entertained by the structure of the charge to participants. Although participants were chosen based on their work within the time frame of a rough, consensus definition of the period we typically treat as "early modern," the whole question of who defines the field and how it should be defined were explicitly introduced as fair game for discussion.

Our primary focus was on work done in Western languages, and primarily those works by people whose professional lives center in the North America and Western Europe. In general, translations of the work of Japanese scholars were omitted except when they played a seminal role in the development of an area of study. (Translations of Japanese works from the period were, of course, included among the scholarly works treated in the literature and performing arts papers and bibliographies.) From a practical point of view, the bulk of the scholarship discussed was English-language material, and overwhelmingly the product of US-based scholars.

In sum, no overall interpretive vision was imposed on participants. They were encouraged to present a personal perspective of the recent development of their areas of expertise as the vehicle through which to introduce major recent scholarship, its strengths and its possibilities. Nonetheless, certain common issues and threads became apparent in our discussions, and they will be presented in a future essay.

Satomi Kurosu's essay treats demographic and family history of the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries. Of all fields, this is the one that has most consistently employed social science approaches and Kurosu's essay provides a good introduction to the sources and methods of a field that many consider technical but that is nonetheless fundamental to our understanding of the customs of the era and the economic circumstances of ordinary people – significant background for studies of farmer and townsmen unrest, shifts in government policy and the like.

The field of intellectual history has been one of the few areas of study in which there has been a recent effort to look at developments in the field. James McMullen's essay updates developments in

this sometimes explosive realm, calling for as much attention to careful translation as to theory. Benefiting from the presence of a recent major review of the field by Samuel Yamashita, he treats work published since then in depth.

Janine Sawada's review of the related field of religious studies draws attention to both the considerable accomplishments of studies of major religious figures and sects, and the limitations of approaches that fail to consider both the eclectic nature of religious leadership/scholarship of the day and the more popular issues of religious practice in daily life. She argues persuasively that in addition to extending our view beyond the great thinkers, we need to think of religious life and thought as broadly eclectic rather than as self-contained, hermetically isolated sects.

In closing, I wish to acknowledge the people and organizations that made this conference possible. The conference received extensive financial and office support from the East Asian Studies Program, Ohio State University, and especially from its director at the time, C.M. Chen, his successor, Bradley Richardson, and Amy Weir-Ganan and Owen Hagovsky. Ohio State University's College of Humanities, the Center for International Studies, the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, and the departments of East Asian Language and Literatures, History, and Art History all provided additional financial support.

Studies on Historical Demography and Family in Early Modern Japan¹

©**Satomi Kurosu, Reitaku University**

Studies on historical demography and family in early modern Japan have dealt with the relationship between population and resources and the role of the family in mediating them. The research questions vary from the simple fact-finding of demographic and family behavior of commoners in early modern Japan to a more theoretical challenge: the roles of family and individual behavior on the Japanese economic development or how they contrast with behavior in other countries (e.g. pre-industrial Europe, developing countries). The field has advanced the understanding of the lives of ordinary people, not through institutional and governing structures but through the analyses of behavior and organization of individual men and women, married couples, and households.² This paper focuses on the development of the field since the postwar period and on works written in English, particularly those based on empirical observations. The overview of the field in the first section attempts to assess chronologically the development of the field by looking at significant achievements by period. The second section discusses merits and problems of sources and methods scholars have adopted in the field. The third section details some of the major issues and controversies that generated research which has increased our understanding of the commoner's lives in early

¹ This is based on the paper I presented at the State of the Field of Early Modern Japanese Studies, Ohio State University, April 21-23, 2000. I am grateful to Saitō Osamu, Philip C. Brown, Hayami Akira, Kito Hiroshi and Hamano Kiyoshi for helpful suggestions, and Barry Keith for editorial comments.

² Hayami, Akira and Hiroshi Kito "Living Standards and Demography," Chapter 7 in Hayami Akira (ed.) *Social Economic History II*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, Forthcoming.

modern Japan. The last section deals with current research and the challenges we face. The discussion centers on the developments in studies on regional diversity, especially studies involving with multi-dimensional analysis, and the challenge in developing comparative theoretical frameworks. To cover the abundant studies in the field, which I cannot cite in the text, I have attached a bibliography of English works at the end of this paper.⁵

I. Overview of Studies on Historical Demography and Family

The major source of early advancement of the field in the post-war period has undoubtedly been the systematic use of population registers, first promoted by Hayami Akira. In the late 1960s, Hayami applied the method of family reconstitution, developed by Louis Henry for the demographic investigation of French parish registers, to Japanese population registers.⁴ This approach has opened many possibilities to investigate demographic behavior of commoners at the micro-level: mortality, fertility, marriage,

³ When necessary, other relevant bibliographies and work in Japanese are included in the notes. In the bibliography, some forthcoming and unpublished works are also included when necessary.

⁴ Some of his early work in English are "The Demographic Analysis of a Village in Tokugawa Japan: Kando-Shinden of Owari Province, 1778-1871," *Keiō Economic Studies* V (1968) 50-88; "Labor Migration in a Pre-Industrial Society: A Study Tracing the Life Histories of the Inhabitants of a Village," *Keiō Economic Studies* X:2 (1973) 1-17. His first comprehensive monograph is only available in Japanese: Hayami Akira, *Kinsei nōson no rekishi jinkōgakuteki kenkyū* (A historical-demographic study of early modern villages) (Tokyo: Tokyo Keizai Shinpōsha, 1973). Another monograph also in Japanese: *Kinsei Nōbi-chihō no jinkō keizai shakai* (Population, Economy and Society in Early Modern Japan: A Study of the Nōbi Region) (Tokyo: Ō, 1992).

and migration.⁵ In collaboration with the Cambridge group in England, household size, household structure, and domestic cycles have also garnered more attention.⁶

The empirical approach also provided a basis for a new interpretation of Tokugawa period history. Historians' view of the Tokugawa period until 1960s was negative, symbolized by the terms, "feudal, stagnated, impoverished, and backward." In this view, an oppressive government exploited fully the peasant population, levying high taxes and closely regulating their private lives.⁷ Since the macro

⁵ For example, Hayami "Demographic Analysis;" "Labor Migration;" Hanley, Susan B. "Toward an Analysis of Demographic and Economic Change in Tokugawa Japan: A Village Study" *Journal of Asian Studies* 31:3 (1972); Hanley, Susan B. "Fertility, Mortality, and Life Expectancy in Pre-modern Japan." *Population Studies* 28:1 (1974) 127-142; Fruin, Mark "Farm Family Migration: The Case of Echizen in the Nineteenth Century." *Keiō Economic Studies* 10:2 (1973) 37-46; and Fruin, Mark "A Social Geography of Preindustrial Labour Migration in Japan: Tajima and Kurome Villages in the Nineteenth Century." *Journal of Historical Demography* 4:2 (1978).

⁶ Hayami Akira and Uchida Nobuko "Size of Household in a Japanese Country Throughout the Tokugawa Era," in *Household and Family in Past Time*, Laslett, Peter and Richard Wall (eds.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972, 473-515; Smith, Robert J "Small Families, Small Households and Residential Instability: Town and City in Pre-Modern Japan," in *Household and Family in Past Time*, Laslett, Peter and Richard Wall (eds.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972, 429-71; Nakane, Chie "An Interpretation of the Size and Structure of the Household in Japan Over Three Centuries," pp.517-543 in *Household and Family in Past Time*, Laslett, Peter and Richard Wall (eds.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972.

⁷ Often quoted examples of this view are: Honjō Ejirō 1935 *The Social and Economic History of Japan*, Institute for Research in the

trend of population showed stagnation in the eighteenth century, the “first generation” of population historians emphasized that it was under Malthusian positive checks: population did not grow due to famine, epidemics and family limitation through infanticide, abortion or other means.⁸

In the 1970s, Japanese and American scholars challenged this view and reinterpreted population stagnation of the eighteenth century.⁹ Hanley and Yamamura’s *Economic and Demographic Change in Preindustrial Japan 1600-1868*¹⁰ and Smith’s *Nakahara: Family Farming and Population in a Japanese Village, 1717-1830*,¹¹ the two influential monographs published in English in terms of their perspectives and methodology, invited a series of debates and examinations that continue to this day. Scholars taking this approach, whether referred to as “revisionist historians” or the “second generation” of population historians, made full

History of Japan, Kyoto (reprinted 1965 New York: Russel & Russel); Sansom, G.B. 1931 *Japan: A Short Cultural History*, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts (revised edition 1943).

⁸ Reviewing the development of the studies on population history Saitō identified the first generation of population historians to focus on “Malthusian positive check,” the second generation on “preventive check” (deliberate family limitation), and the third generation on the re-examination of evidence (Saitō Osamu “Infanticide, Fertility and ‘Population Stagnation’: the State of Tokugawa Historical Demography.” *Japan Forum* 4:2 (1992) 369-82).

⁹ This approach is reviewed in various articles including Hayami Akira “Population Changes,” in M. B. Jansen and G. Rozman (eds.), *Japan in Transition: From Tokugawa to Meiji*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986, 280-317; Totman, Conrad “Tokugawa Peasants: Win, Lose or Draw?” *Monumenta Nipponica* 41:4 (1986) 457-76; Saitō “Infanticide;” Hayami and Kito “Living Standards.”

¹⁰ New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1977.

¹¹ Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1977.

use of micro or macro population statistics to support their claims. The general conclusion reached by these empirical investigations indicates that “it is misleading to speak of ‘impoverishment’ of Tokugawa peasants; and that, despite sporadic outbreaks of nationwide and local famines and other disasters, the general trend in their living standards was unmistakably an upward one.”¹² Thus, population stagnation was attributed to a ‘non-increase’ resulting from the ‘rational’ behavior of Japanese peasants seeking to maintain or improve their standard of living.¹³ The rational behavior was also used to explain Meiji Japan’s rapid and ‘successful’ modernization. Hanley and Yamamura maintained that population control before industrialization was a crucial element in the ability to industrialize, as opposed to a phenomenon that occurred after industrialization.¹⁴ Hayami, however, opposed this view and emphasized the nature of economic development and population increase in Tokugawa farming villages which went hand in hand: “population stagnancy was definitely not a precondition of economic development” but was a “purely chance occurrence caused by exogenously induced population decreases in

¹² Saitō “Infanticide.”

¹³ Hanley produced a series of articles on living standard and cultural interpretation (See section on living standard in bibliography). Recently she made them into a monograph, *Everyday Things in Premodern Japan: The Hidden Legacy of Material Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997). Also Smith later gathered his contribution to Tokugawa and Meiji economic and social history in a monograph: *Native Sources of Japanese Industrialization, 1750-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988). Saitō reviews both of these work thoroughly: Saitō Osamu “Bringing the Cover Structure of the Past to Light” (review article) *Journal of Economic History* 49 (1989) 992-99; Saitō Osamu “The Context of Everyday Things” (Review article) *Monumenta Nipponica* 53:2 (1998) 257-63.

¹⁴ Hanley and Yamamura, *Economic and Demographic Change*, 333.

Tohoku and northern Kanto that offset gains in western Japan and Hokuriku.”¹⁵

Hanley and Yamamura, and Smith’s interpretation that families in Tokugawa Japan deliberately kept family size small through infanticide to maintain a relatively comfortable standard of living was not unchallenged, either.¹⁶ Mosk provided another interpretation, reducing the question from “why did population stagnate in the eighteenth century?” to “why was fertility so low in the eighteenth century?” Mosk maintained that during the Tokugawa era, there was a substantial negative gap between desired and actual surviving family size (i.e. the latter exceeded the former).¹⁷ Therefore, parents were forced to adopt strategies about the sex of the births they would permit to survive in addition to eliminating many weak and sickly offspring soon after birth. The low fertility was explained, in part, by low fecundity and poor infant survival due to poor nutrition (i.e. low calorie and protein intake).¹⁸ Based on estimates of statistical data on food consumption and physical characteristics between 1874-1877, Mosk found that as the standard of living gradually improved during the Meiji period, the gap narrowed and finally disappeared. Fecundity was suggested to have increased because of the improved diet.

These earlier studies covered a range of issues concerning the relationship between demographic events and the economy (local development and economic status of household). Numerous studies that followed used population registers of various localities and other materials and methods to support, extend, contrast, or criticize these earlier studies. In particular, re-examination of infanticide and famine has increased our knowledge (see later section on issues and

controversies).

In the 1980s, the rural household, as an economic unit or as part of the stem family system, became the center of comparative approach. Saitō applied proto-industrialization theory¹⁹ to the case of Japan and found that the impact of rural industry on population increase was relatively weak. He attributed this to the persistent division of labor between the sexes within the rural household. Hanley and Wolf edited a volume contrasting the historical experiences of Japan and China: *Family and Population in East Asian History*.²⁰ In their introduction, Wolf and Hanley offered a thought-provoking observation that “China is to Japan as Eastern to Western Europe.”²¹ They considered the Japanese stem family system the same as the Western European type. They also noted that the Japanese marriage pattern matched that of Western Europe.²² These points became a central theme for new research. Unlike Hanley and Wolf, Cornell challenged the household formation framework developed by Hajnal and attempted to identify a distinctive Japanese stem family

¹⁹ The view is that rural industrialization stimulated family formation through a decline in the age of women at first marriage, and hence led to a rapid growth in population (Saitō Osamu “Population and the Peasant Family Economy in Proto-Industrial Japan,” *Journal of Family History* (Spring 1983) 30-54).

²⁰ Stanford University Press (1985).

²¹ Wolf, Arthur P. and Susan B. Hanley “Introduction,” in Hanley, Susan B. and Arthur P. Wolf (eds.) *Family and Population in East Asian History*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985, 3-4.

²² First theorized by Hajnal, Western European marriage pattern has the features of late marriage and a high celibacy rate (population remain unmarried until age 50) whereas the Eastern European pattern is characterized by early marriage and a low celibacy rate. Hajnal, John “European Marriage Patterns in Perspective,” in D.V. Glass and D.E.C. Eversley (eds.), *Population in History* (London: Edward Arnold 1965), 65-104.

¹⁵ Hayami “Population Changes,” 315.

¹⁶ Earlier debates among American scholars are summarized in Hayami particularly in relation to demographic transition theory (1986).

¹⁷ Mosk, Carl “The Decline of Marital Fertility in Japan.” *Population Studies* 33:1 (1979) 19-38.

¹⁸ Mosk does not deny the practice of abortion and infanticide that existed in the era.

formation.²³ She has succinctly stated the rule of household formation under this system: that the household contains any number of married couples, but it can have only one in each generation.²⁴ The relationship between population and the stem family household, as a unit of production, has thus become increasingly important to understand early modern life.

From the 1980s to the 1990s, this perspective developed further with empirical examinations of family relation and organization. The link between demographic constraints (e.g. having no son or too many sons) and the family ideal of continuation was examined through household events (succession and inheritance, and head's retirement) and individual events (marriage and adoption, migration, births and deaths). Conjugal and intergenerational relationships, life cycle, status and the role of women in farm households are some of the new issues that anthropological and gender perspectives treat.²⁵

In the latter half of 1990s, owing to the computer revolution and a project of international demographic comparison initiated by Hayami, the field appears to have opened yet another set of challenging research questions. The comparative studies and further compilation of population registers make possible the study of regional variation at the micro-level.

II. Sources and Method

This section reviews the statistical sources used since the post-war period. I will start with a description of micro-level sources and the

²³ Cornell, Laurel L. "Hajnal and the Household in Asia: A Comparativist History of the Family in Preindustrial Japan, 1600-1870." *Journal of Family History* 12: 1-3 (Jan-July 1987) 143-62.

²⁴ She proposed this as an expansion of Hajnal's concept of family formation system in which he dealt only with simple and joint households (Hajnal, John 1982. "Two Forms of Preindustrial Household Formation System" *Population and Development Review* 8: 449-94).

²⁵ See section on gender and women in bibliography.

problems inherent in the use of those sources. Special attention is given to the recent development in dealing with one of the crucial problems of micro data, i.e. under-registration of infant deaths. This will be followed by a discussion of macro data and methodological developments.

(1) *Shūmon aratame chō*

The principal source of data in the field has been the annual registers of religious affiliation compiled by local headman (*shūmon aratame chō*; hereafter SAC). The SAC was initiated in 1638 by the Tokugawa government as a measure to prevent the entry and spread of Christianity.²⁶ A similar population register, heavily used in the recent studies of northeastern Japan, is *ninbetsu aratame chō* (hereafter, NAC).²⁷ The NAC stemmed out of the SAC, but they usually exclude information on religious affiliation of individual villagers.²⁸ The quality, dates of compilation, and availability of SAC vary depending on the village, domain, and region. The more detailed listings include name, age, sex, relationship to household head, origins and destinations of migrants with an explanation (e.g. marriage, adoption or service), as well as

²⁶ For details, see Hayami Akira "Thank you Francisco Xavier: An Essay in the Use of Micro-data for Historical Demography of Tokugawa Japan," *Keiō Economic Studies*, XVI :1-2 (1979) 65-81; and Cornell, Laurel L. and Hayami Akira "The Shūmon Aratame chō: Japan's Population Registers," *Journal of Family History* 11:4 (Nov. 1986): 311-28.

²⁷ Two additional sources used to supplement or check SAC and NAC are *zogenchō* (ZGO) and *hōkōninchō* (HC). ZGO was the annual vital register and record of migratory movement. HC was a register of servants (*hōkōnin*) (for details, see Smith *Nakahara*, 15-32).

²⁸ Instead, they tend to have detailed information on population and households as northeastern Japan suffered from population decline and dwindling economic output during the latter half of Tokugawa era.

household landholdings. It is noteworthy that our European counterparts often have to link vital registers (parish registers of baptism, marriage and burial) to household information (e.g. tax records) to reconstruct "household" rather than "family."²⁹ In contrast, some good population registers in Japan (SAC and NAC) can provide information on both family and household circumstances.

While these local population registers provide the rare opportunity for revealing individual lifecourses and household cycles, they are not free of limitations. First, there is a constraint of time frame. Since most of the extant population registers are from the eighteenth century, the focus of study naturally falls into mid-eighteenth century to 1870. There are few villages whose records exist for the seventeenth century. For example, Yokouchi in Suwa region is one such example. It is a pity that we cannot deal with a hypothesis of population and economic expansion in the seventeenth century in relation to the change (or persistence) in the household size and structure and/or patterns, for example, of marriage and service.³⁰

Second, there is a constraint of locality. It is extremely time consuming and energy intensive to collect, transcribe and organize these local registers.³¹ For example, while some local

²⁹ The method of family reconstruction, developed by Louis Henry, uses parish registers and is therefore confined to analyses on complete families (i.e. marriages lasting until the end of the child-bearing age of wives).

³⁰ Nakane maintains that the household size in Japan has not changed over the last three centuries (Nakane "An Interpretation").

³¹ Hayami has been trying to overcome these constraints by promoting several projects (Keiō group at Keiō University, EurAsia Project at International Research Center for Japanese Studies and Tokyo Meeting at Reitaku University). He led collaborative work to discover and collect sources, transcribe good records into Basic Data Sheet (a form developed by Hayami to follow individual lifecourses linking annual household information) and to computerize data. Hayami has been extremely

history books provide transcribed SAC for a single year or for several villages, the samples are usually too small to bear any statistically stable analysis. In addition, good SAC series are not common even in manuscript collections. Thus, there is first and foremost a limit to the availability of good longitudinal data (i.e. continuous without missing years). Which village or domain one investigates, therefore, depends to some extent on a lucky encounter with good sources. Studies based on SAC and NAC are often titled "early modern Japan," "pre-industrial Japan," or "northeast/central/western Japan." In reality, however, most studies are based only on one or a few villages from one locality. How much we can generalize from village studies is a persistent question.

There were also differences in the level of detail in documents based on local government practice. For some domains, SAC was not always made every year. For other domains, only those after certain ages were registered (e.g. after age 15 for Maeda *han*, after age 8 for Kishū and Hiroshima *han*). Some only recorded the list of household members while others recorded details of their members' lifecourse events (e.g. birth, death, marriage, service) and landholdings. The old Tokugawa domain (*tenryō*) as well as the domains, which suffered population decline (e.g. northeastern area) tended to maintain better and more detailed records compared to other domains.³²

generous and instrumental in guiding and sharing his collection of data to both American and Japanese scholars (e.g. Cornell, Laurel L. *Peasant Family and Inheritance in a Japanese Community, 1671 to 1980*, Ph.D. dissertation, Johns Hopkins University; Kinoshita Futoshi *Population and Household Change of a Japanese Village, 1760-1870*, Ph.D. dissertation (1981), Department of Anthropology, University of Arizona, 1989). Cornell has also initiated the computerization of data from central Japan at Indiana University.

³² According to the survey compiled by Hayami Akira, some of the best sources, in terms of its quality and length (continuing more than one century with very few years missing in-

Because of these differences of locality in the investigation, at least a couple of questions require attention before one tries to utilize the data: whether a single group of people listed in these sources is actually a family or household; and whether or not the persons listed actually resided in the locality.³³ There is a general consensus to conduct observations of the unit described as *ie ikken* (one household) in the original documents as a unit of household. Yet caution is necessary for the type of SAC which records a legally domiciled (*de jure*) rather than the resident population (*de facto*) of the household. Hayami raises two examples of this problem: Nakahara in Smith's study (1977) and Nishikata in Hanley and Yamaura's work (1977). The SAC they used can contain excess numbers of elderly persons; for example, they out-migrated and possibly died elsewhere but they are still listed in their households of origin. This can produce higher estimates of life expectancy. Careful observation of the source is required to avoid such problems.

(2) Infant Mortality

The most serious flaw in SAC and NAC for demographic analysis is that they do not record infants who died between annual registration dates. Until recently, village population studies have used the degree of underregistration of births out of context of infant mortality, and a single inflation factor (e.g. 20%) has been used to adjust/inflate measures of fertility. In the last decade, attempts at dealing with these problems extended in several directions.

Jannetta and Preston turned to another source, the Buddhist temple death register, or *kakochō*--local, or regional, records that document the deaths of persons affiliated with a particular temple.³⁴ Basing their studies on a long series of

between) come from some villages in Nihonmatsu domain and Mino province.

³³ "The Myth of Primogeniture and Impartible Inheritance in Tokugawa Japan," *Journal of Family History* 8 (Spring 1983) 3-29.

³⁴ Jannetta, Ann Bowman and Samuel H. Preston "Two Centuries of Mortality Change in

death data of Ogen-ji, a Buddhist temple in the mountainous Hida region of central Japan, they concluded that the previously estimated birth and death rates were high and similar to those in Western Europe at the time. They attributed their results to the different data source, in which a high fraction of infant deaths were captured, events which were otherwise omitted in the analysis of village population registers. They claim that "birth rates and death rates of the order of 20-30 per 1,000 that have been reported for other farming villages during the period appear less plausible, or certainly less universal."³⁵ However, their estimates of infant mortality based on temple registers, have been viewed as too high.³⁶ The high estimates may likely be the result of their strong assumption of no-migration imposed on their analyses.³⁷

Recent studies using other sources (*kainin-kakiage-chō* matched with SAC³⁸) and estimation methods³⁹ drew a similar conclusion -- that the

Central Japan: The Evidence from a Temple Death Register," *Population Studies* 45 (1991) 417-36.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Saitō "Infanticide"; Tsuya, Noriko O. and Satomi Kurosu "Mortality Responses to Short-Term Economic Stress and Household context in Early Modern Japan: Evidence from Two Northeastern Villages," in Tommy Bengtsson and Osamu Saitō (eds.), *Population and Economy: From Hunger to Modern Economic Growth*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, 421-455.

³⁷ Saitō "Infanticide."

³⁸ Tsuya, Noriko O., and Ken'ichi Tomobe "Infant Mortality and Underregistration of Births in a Nineteenth Century Japanese Village: An Analysis of Pregnancy Registers," paper presented at the Eurasian Project Nuptiality Conference, Beijing, November 25-29, 1998.

³⁹ Kinoshita Futoshi "Shūmon Aratame chō niokeru shusseï to nyūjishibō no kashō kiroku: Nihon rekishijinkōgaku no nokosareta kadai (Underregistration of births in Aratame chō: A longstanding unsolved issue in Japanese historical demography)," *Jinkōgaku Kenkyū* 25, 1999, 27-39 (abstract in English). Kinoshita estimated infant mortality from the SAC by using

degree of underregistration of infant deaths depends on the level of infant mortality, but falls into somewhere between 12-18%. These studies also suggest seasonality of births and infant deaths and therefore, the timing of enumeration of local population registers influences the degree of underregistration of births. While these studies are limited to several localities, we have a much better idea, than say, a decade ago, about the incidence of infant deaths and underregistration in Tokugawa Japan.

(3) Macro statistics

Two types of macro level statistics deserve mention here. Paralleling the use of SAC, bakufu surveys of 1721-1846 have been used to examine national population trends and regional variations at the provincial level. Starting with a shogunal order in 1721, the domainal populations were reported by local lords and to the government every six years. The method of enumeration differed by domain. For example, the age at which children were to be included was left to the direction of the individual daimyo and past customs of the *han*.⁴⁰ Although some provincial numbers appear unreal, the extant surveys serve to reflect national and regional patterns of the period.⁴¹ Macro statistics do not exist from 1846 until 1872 when the Meiji government started their enumeration. Demographers tend to stay away from the population statistics prepared by

early vital statistics of the Japanese government; and also examined the level of birth underregistration in the SAC through microsimulation.

⁴⁰ Sekiyama Notarō, “Tokugawa jidai no zenkoku jinkō ni kansuru gimon to kōsatsu” (An examination of and problems concerning the national population of the Tokugawa period), *Shakai Keizai Shigaku* 11(11-12): 172. See Chapter 3 of Hanley and Yamamura (*Economic and Demographic Change*) for discussion of the explanation and evaluation of these materials in English.

⁴¹ Hanley and Yamamura *Economic and Demographic Change*; Hayami “Population Change.”

Meiji government as they are calculated by adding and subtracting their original survey in 1872.⁴² With caution, however, Hayami promoted the use of some of the detailed Meiji statistics. Several studies used the 1886 population and household table to uncover regional variations in age at marriage,⁴³ rice price fluctuation and fertility,⁴⁴ and effect of *hinoeuma* (year of fire and the horse) on births and sex ratio.⁴⁵

(4) Methodological development

Since its inception, one of the main goals of this field has been to reveal the life of individuals; i.e. to *let the data speak*. Efforts were made to achieve this goal by developing information sheets to follow individual life courses by “reconstituting” families applying Lui Henry’s method. In the 1970s and 1980s, scholars made full use of the methods of demographic (e.g. calculation of crude rates, age-specific rates, and life expectancy) and economic analyses. Historical demographers and economic historians in the West influenced Japanese researchers’ method and approach: for example, Wrigley and Scofield for population and economic trends, and Laslett and the Cambridge group for household

⁴² The first survey of household registers in 1872 (Jinshin Koseki) is now closed to access for privacy protection.

⁴³ Hayami Akira “Another Fossa Magna: Proportion Marrying and Age at Marriage in Late Nineteenth-Century Japan,” *Journal of Family History* 12:1-3 (1987) 57-72.

⁴⁴ Feeney, Griffith and Hamano Kiyoshi “Rice Price Fluctuations and Fertility in Late Tokugawa Japan,” *Journal of Japanese Studies* 16:1 (1990) 1-30.

⁴⁵ Hinoeuma is a superstition that women born in the year of fire-horse cannibalize their husbands. See note no.64 for the result of the analysis (Kurosu Satomi “Sex Ratio and the Years of the Fire Horse: Cultural and Regional Experiences in Japan,” in Fauve-Chamoux and Soelvi Sogner(eds.) *Socio-economic Consequences of Sex-rations in Historical Perspective*, Milan: University of Bocconi, Italy, 1994), 77-90.

structure and family studies. Some original efforts are also observed in the use of the rich migration data in Japan--e.g., geographical mobility and the influence of migration on other demographic behaviors.⁴⁶

In the 1990s, owing to advancement in information technology, the application of sophisticated or rigorous statistical analyses to historical records became possible. Life table analysis provided not only the calculation of life expectancy but also dynamic observation of marriage and leaving home patterns.⁴⁷ Regional comparison at the micro level with accumulated data and studies also became available.⁴⁸

The application of the event history analysis or multivariate analysis is the latest development in the field.⁴⁹ It therefore deserves some explanation here. The analysis measures the

effects of different explanatory variables (or covariates) on an individual's probability of dying, giving birth, or getting married using a series of logistic regression models. A person-year is the unit of observation. The analysis looks at whether an interested social event occurs in the following year. The analysis allows us to observe the intricate mechanisms involved in the chance of the occurrence of an event. More importantly, it allows us to overcome the inherent problem of historical data--small sample size and censoring (i.e. we cannot follow individuals throughout their lives). In addition, the method deals effectively with the information that continues over time. While the conventional life table methods can provide dynamic interpretations of events (e.g. duration of years until marriage contrasting sub-categories), it is very difficult to determine how the variables influence each other, and as soon as the variables increase beyond two or three, the comparison becomes too complicated. It is here that event-history analysis becomes most powerful.⁵⁰

III. Issues and Controversies

(1) Population Trends and Patterns

To begin, let us consider the size of the population of Japan since the beginning of the Tokugawa period. Roughly speaking, the population of Tokugawa Japan has three phases: substantial growth at the beginning, a plateau in the middle, and moderate to substantial growth at the end. The population in 1600, "when the Tokugawa victory inaugurated an era of peace, security, and orderly government after many years of civil war, is uncertain."⁵¹ Estimates range from under 10 million to over 18 million. There is a general agreement, nevertheless, that the population grew substantially in the seventeenth century. When bakufu enumerated

⁴⁶ See section on migration in bibliography.

⁴⁷ The life table is a basic demographic tool for summarizing the mortality experience of a population. It also provides standardized comparisons of mortality experience for groups (e.g. sex, race, occupation). In studies for contemporary population, the basic method is applied to other contexts to study risks of events such as marriage, divorce, or entry into the labor force.

⁴⁸ For example, Hayami, Akira and Satomi Kurosu "Regional Diversity in Demographic and Family Patterns in Preindustrial Japan." *Journal of Japanese Studies* 27 (2001) 295-321; Kurosu Satomi, Tsuya Noriko O. and Hamano Kiyoshi "Regional Differentials in the Patterns of First Marriage in the Latter Half of Tokugawa Japan." *Keiō Economic Studies* XXXVI:1 (1999)13-38.

⁴⁹ For example, Tsuya, Noriko O. and Satomi Kurosu "Mortality Responses"; Tsuya, Noriko O. and Satomi Kurosu "Economic and Household Covariates of First Marriage in Early Modern Japan: Evidence from Two Northeastern Villages, 716-1870," in Catharine Caplone and Muriel Neven (eds.), *Family Structure, Demography and Population: A Comparison of Societies in Asia and Europe*, Liege: Laboratoire de Demographie de l'Universite de Liege, 2000, 131-157.

⁵⁰ Cornell, Laurel L. "Analyzing the Consequences of Family Structure with Event-History Methods." *Historical Methods* 23:2 (1990) 53-61. She discusses the usefulness of this method with systematic explanations.

⁵¹ Smith Nakahara 5.

the commoner population for the first time, the population of Japan was 26 million.⁵² From the sixteenth century in the Kinai region, and from the early seventeenth century in the rest of Japan, the pace of population growth accelerated. Hayami and Kito discuss that diverse factors, such as urbanization and the expansion of cultivated land, drastically altered the structure of agricultural households, resulting in rapidly growing population figures.⁵³ Afterwards, there was a plateau in the eighteenth century, the period often referred to as “population stagnation.” However, “stagnation” disguises sharply contrasting regional population changes.⁵⁴ In the Kanto and Tohoku areas, population decline was the rule; but in Kyushu, Shikoku, and Chugoku, increases predominated; and in central Japan, there was a slight decrease in the Kinki region⁵⁵ but an increase in Hokuriku’s population.⁵⁶

The population then began to increase again at the start of the nineteenth century and gained momentum after the 1850s. Hayami argued that a combination of moderate population increase

accompanied by economic development spread throughout Japan.⁵⁷ Irreversible domestic commercial advances plus the appearance of export-oriented industries after the opening of the treaty ports spurred on this process. And, population increases after 1850 stemmed mainly from a rising birth rate. After 1872, this trend became the sustained population growth that has continued to the present.

How do these macro observations relate to micro level observations? It is the latter half of Tokugawa where most SAC and NAC records become available and they are powerful tools for telling us a variety of stories at the micro-level.⁵⁸ Although there is a diversity of findings in the village studies, some common characteristics of eighteenth and nineteenth century became overt. First, fertility and mortality levels varied greatly by region but, in general, they were low (moderate) compared to European counterparts in the eighteenth century. Second, most regions witnessed a rise of fertility in the nineteenth century. A rise in the age at marriage is observed in various regions of Japan (particularly in the areas associated with the silk industry) in the nineteenth century. Third, although age at marriage varied, marriage was almost universal,⁵⁹ particularly for women. Divorce and remarriage were not uncommon. Third, peasants’ households were extremely adept in adding and removing (or replacing) household members via divorce, remarriage, adoption, and service. Thus, both macro and micro studies suggest a great diversity

⁵² Hayami Akira “The Population at the Beginning of the Tokugawa Period.” *Keiō Economic Studies* IV (1967) 1-28.

⁵³ I.e. Much of the resulting population growth was absorbed by the new cities and the increased land opened up for cultivation. They maintain, therefore, that throughout the seventeenth century, population control was unnecessary and growth continued to the very brink of what resources could support (Hayami Akira and Kito Hiroshi “Living Standards and Demography,” in Hayami Akira (ed.) *Social Economic History II*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, Forthcoming, Chapter 7).

⁵⁴ Hayami “Population Changes,” 291.

⁵⁵ Owing to the high death rate in cities, which teemed with workers who had migrated from the depressed countryside, the Kanto and Kinki regions (which included Edo, Kyoto, and Osaka) were subject to the negative-feedback function and thus their populations stagnated (Hayami 1986: 292-3).

⁵⁶ Hayami Akira *The Historical Demography of Pre-modern Japan*, Tokyo: Tokyo University Press, 2001, Chapter 3.

⁵⁷ Hayami “Population Changes,” 316-7.

⁵⁸ Hayami (“Labor migration”) found in the population in Shinshū Suwa, where the longest and oldest records at micro level are available, that the village population grew at an annual rate exceeding 1.4 percent starting from the 1620s with the formation of Suwa domain. At this point, this is the only village that provides micro level picture for the seventeenth century.

⁵⁹ With urbanization and the expansion of cultivated land, it became possible for all agricultural workers, so long as they reached adulthood, to marry and establish families by the seventeenth century (Hayami and Kito “Living Standards and Demography”).

of life among commoners by region and by period.

(2) Re-examination of Infanticide

Hanley refuted the Marxian interpretation and claimed that “peasants were deliberately limiting family size as a strategy to improve household income.”⁶⁰ Smith also claimed that the practice of infanticide “gives the impression of a kind of family planning.”⁶¹ They rejected the conventional pre-war historians’ view that poor families practiced infanticide. However, findings within the last two decades are mixed.⁶² The discrepancy of the findings can be attributed mainly to the different type of local population registers, or simply of statistical instability due to small samples. This latter point is serious indeed as the method to see parity specific control (control after the number of children reached the desired number) focuses on higher order parity. Parents may control fertility only after reaching a certain number of surviving children. Therefore, it is crucial to observe the fertility behavior of parents with at least one or more surviving children. In some villages where the number of births is small, the examination of higher order parity is statistically difficult. Second, it may be a true regional or local variation, or that of the period studied, which then requires explanation. Recent findings indicate at least two possibilities. First, infanticide was not as important in explaining overall moderate fertility or population stagnation as scholars previously believed. Second, nevertheless, there was a great regional diversity in the practice of infanticide and the practice might have been very important in Tohoku.

A couple of recent studies deal with these points and reached a similar conclusion, that

⁶⁰ Hanley, Susan “Tokugawa Society : Material Culture, Standard of Living, and Lifestyles,” in *The Cambridge History of Japan*, vol.4 edited by John Whitney Hall. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, 698-700.

⁶¹ Smith *Nakahara*, 147.

⁶² Saitō (“Infanticide”) summarizes the evidence.

fertility was not deliberately controlled (i.e. natural fertility). Cornell contrasts age-specific marital fertility rates for early modern Japanese villages to that of the Hutterites (an Anabaptist sect) who represent maximum human fertility.⁶³ Based on the comparisons, she concludes that peasant women in early modern Japan were not limiting their families by ceasing reproduction once they had reached desired number of children. Tomobe has estimated the Coale-Trussell indices and total marital fertility rates based on eighteen villages (forthcoming).⁶⁴ The Coale-Trussell model measures the level of fertility (M) and the degree of fertility control (m) under the standard schedule of age-specific marital fertility rates. The Coale-Trussell model compares the fertility experience of a given historical population with the standard schedule derived from empirical data for ‘natural fertility’ populations (i.e. populations

⁶³ Cornell, Laurel L. “Infanticide in Early Modern Japan? Demography, Culture and Population Growth.” *Journal of Asian Studies* 55:1 (1996) 22-50. She uses summary figures for villages for which age-specific marital fertility rates are readily available in previous studies: Nakahara, Nishijo, Kando-shinden, Yokouchi (Smith *Nakahara*, 60); Takayama (Sasaki, Yoichirō “Urban Migration and Fertility in Tokugawa Japan: The City of Takayama, 1773-1871,” in Hanley and Wolf *Family and Population*); Minami Oji (Morris, Dana and Thomas C. Smith “Fertility and Mortality in an Outcaste Village in Japan, 1750-1869,” in Hanley and Wolf *Family and Population*, 241); Yubunzawa, Kabutoyama, Yambe (Kinoshta *Population and Household*, 30).

⁶⁴ Tomobe, Ken’ichi “Natural Fertility Patterns in Early Modern Japan: Lessons from Comparative Historical Demography,” in Lee, James and Osamu Saitō (eds.) *Abortion, Infanticide, and Child Neglect in Asian Population History*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, Forthcoming. He used the list of age specific marital fertility compiled by Hayami and Kito (“Living Standards and Demography”) based on the previous micro level studies, and with the assumption of infant mortality 200 per 1,000.

believed to have practiced no family limitation). Tomobe tentatively concludes that natural fertility was found in rural Tokugawa although the level of fertility was much lower than the pre-transition level of England. At the same time, his estimates showed a considerable regional and local variation. He believes that Tohoku region was an exception where parity control was practiced.⁶⁵

This leads to another micro level finding. Tsuya and Kurosu found a clear and complex sex-selective control regardless of socio-economic class.⁶⁶ Based on the population registration of Niita and Shimomoriya 1716-1870 in Nihonmatsu (contemporary Fukushima prefecture), they calculated the sex ratio of marital births (male births per 100 female births) by number and sex composition of surviving children. Married women (couples) without surviving children were much more likely to have a girl, rather than a boy. Couples seem to have preferred to have at least one girl even if not as their first child. However, once couples had one girl, boys seem to have been favored much more strongly than were girls.⁶⁷ This finding suggests

that in the areas where infanticide was practiced, it shows widespread and sophisticated use of sex-selective and parity-specific infanticide to achieve a relatively small family size with a sex-balanced (and possible sex-ordered) offspring set.⁶⁸

These studies force us to go beyond a one-factor explanation. As Cornell proposed, there is an increasing necessity to investigate “multiple components of demography” which worked together to create the population patterns we observe in early modern Japan.⁶⁹ It requires bringing a more social view of the relationship between population and economic resources than those created by scholars who have emphasized economic objectives and individual choice.⁷⁰ Age at marriage, sexual networking, spousal separation, breastfeeding and other social determinants of fertility are some of the variables to examine. Cultural and institutional factors would also corroborate the statistical findings: For example, the attitudes towards and practice of reproduction including abortion and infanticide.⁷¹

⁶⁵ Tomobe’s finding relates to a study based on the skewed sex ratio of the Hinoeuma (year of firehorse) cohort. Kurosu (“Sex Ratio”) compared the sex ratio of normal years and those surrounding hinoeuma of 1846. Since unbalance of sex ratio (more males than females) appear only as response to hinoeuma superstition, she suggested that sex-selective measure (e.g. female infanticide, neglect) was not practiced in the end of Tokugawa period. However, Tohoku region was an exception in which sex ratio was unbalanced, regardless of Hinoeuma.

⁶⁶ Tsuya, Noriko O. and Satomi Kurosu “Patterns and Covariates of Fertility in 18th and 19th Century Rural Japan: Evidence from Two Northeastern Villages”, *EurAsian Project on Population and Family History, Working Paper Series* No.16. Kyoto: International Research Center for Japanese Studies, 1998.

⁶⁷ This indicates the widespread currency of well-known folk wisdom of “ichi hime ni tarō (one girl and two boys).” An alternative interpretation of this phrase is, first a princess, then a Tom. The shift in the interpretation is

linked to a large-scale campaign to promote contraception by a major pharmaceutical company in Japan in the early 1950s (Hanley and Yamamura, “Ichi hime, ni Tarō: educational aspirations and the decline in fertility in postwar Japan,” *Journal of Japanese Studies* 2 (1975)83-125.

⁶⁸ Tsuya and Kurosu “Pattern and Covariates of Fertility.”

⁶⁹ Cornell “Infanticide.”

⁷⁰ Cornell criticizes Hanley (“Tokugawa Society”) that although the interpretation may be different from that of pre-war historians’, the source of the population stagnation is the same: deliberate control of fertility by individuals through infanticide (Cornell “Infanticide,” 26).

⁷¹ Ota Motoko and Sawayama Mikako “From Infanticide to Abortion,” in Saitō and Lee (eds.) *Abortion*. London: Oxford University Press, Forthcoming; Ochiai, Emiko “The Reproduction Revolution at the End of the Tokugawa Period,” in Tonomura, Hitomi, Anne Walthall and Wakita Haruko (eds.) *Women and Class in Japanese History*. Ann Arbor: Center for

(3) Famine and Mortality Crisis

Famine and epidemics undeniably play important roles in population growth (Malthusian positive check). Those who attributed population stagnation primarily to peasants' voluntary family limitation⁷² took these roles less serious. Recent studies, however, try to recapture the effect of famine. Famine is of particular interest because there were no wars in Japan during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and serious epidemics seem not to have been an important deterrent to population growth during this period.⁷³ Using Ogen-ji temple registers, Jannetta analyzed the effect of Tempo famine by examining the mortality pattern of the famine year (1837) contrasting to normal years (1801-50 excluding 1837). Jannetta concluded that famine was an important deterrent to population growth because famines tipped the already precarious balance between mortality and fertility in favor of mortality.⁷⁴ Kinoshita also found that the mortality structure of crisis years significantly differed from that of normal years in his analysis of *shūmon aratame-chō* of Yambe, a farming village in northeastern Japan.⁷⁵ However, the details of observation differ in these two studies. On one hand, Jannetta attributes the cause of mortality crisis to starvation rather than epidemics based on the age and sex-specific mortality patterns and seasonality. Kinoshita, on

the other hand, stresses the random nature of mortality during the crisis period and in association with outbreaks of various epidemic disease (measles, smallpox, influenza, typhoid, dysentery and typhus) than with harvest failure. We need to consider the geographical locus (central vs. northeast) and the period (i.e. Kinoshita covers 1760-1870 while Jannetta focuses on circa 1840) variations in these observations. Indeed, Kinoshita warns us not to generalize because of the localized nature of crises.⁷⁶ Another important point of famine studies is that mortality crises broke out more frequently than previously thought and the three great famines *Kyōhō* (1732-33), *Tenmei* (1782-87), and *Tempo* (1833-38) were only three of many mortality peaks. Saitō takes this point further to suggest that the frequency of famines had a strong effect on population trends, particularly because the natural fertility level in Tokugawa Japan was low to begin with.⁷⁷ He shows the decline of the frequency of famines towards the nineteenth century and makes this as a strong case for the rise in natural increase towards the end of Tokugawa (particularly after 1840). Thus, while postwar revisionists' work questioned to view famines as the positive check of Malthus (i.e. strong control of population growth), these recent studies suggest the necessity of examining the effects of famines further. However, this new interpretation does not necessarily undermine the argument regarding the improvement of living standard in the nineteenth century. The reduced number of famines and improvement of weather probably set the stage for the rise of living standards. When one revisits this old issue, one can gain a new direction to explain a longer-term population trend.

Japanese Studies, The University of Michigan, 1999, 187-215.

⁷² For example, Yamamura, Kozo "Toward a Re-Examination of the Economic History of Tokugawa Japan, 1600-1867." *Journal of Economic History* 33:3 (1973) 509-46.

⁷³ Jannetta, Ann Bowman *Epidemics and Mortality in Early Modern Japan*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987.

⁷⁴ Jannetta, Ann Bowman "Famine Mortality in Nineteenth-Century Japan: The Evidence from a Temple Death Register," *Population Studies* 46:3 (1992) 427-43.

⁷⁵ Kinoshita Futoshi "Mortality Crises in the Tokugawa Period: A View from *Shūmon Aratame Chō*," *Japan Review* 10 (1998) 53-71.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Saitō Osamu "The Frequency of Famines as Demographic Correctives in the Japanese Past," in Tim Dyson and Cormac O Grada, eds., *Famine De-mography: Perspectives from the Past and Present*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, May 2002.

(5) Stem Family Household

“While farmers sought to optimize the size of their holdings, they also acted in such a way as to create a family size that would maximize income and at the same time ensure the continuation of the family line.”⁷⁸ In the last decade, this point has been expanded via the studies on succession and retirement, adoption, children’s leaving home pattern, and marriage. Directly or indirectly, the studies are based on the premise of the stem family formation that the household contains any number of married couples, but it can have only one in each generation.⁷⁹ These studies brought a clearer understanding of the relationship between household organization and individual lives.

(4) Headship, succession and retirement

In the stem family system and in principle, the household head had important functions in his household and in the community, thus scholars have paid attention to the headship succession in the last few decades. Headship involved responsibilities to represent the household in the village organization, to sign contracts and negotiate agreements, to manage the family’s labor force and finances, to practice the religious rites of the family.⁸⁰ Further, household heads had to obtain and train capable heirs for the survival of the family line.⁸¹ Several characteristics of headship succession in early modern Japan have become clear from a number of empirical studies.⁸² First, headship transfer

occurred either upon retirement or death/out-migration of head. The inclination towards the transfer upon retirement seems to be influenced by demographic constraints. High mortality and low fertility encouraged northeastern families to plan the transfer upon retirement during their heads’ earlier ages, compared to central villages. Second, although succession by the eldest son was most frequent, succession was also possible from a wide range of family members, including adopted sons, sons-in-law, other male kin, and females. Third, headship of the household by a woman was temporary and informal. While this was the case regardless of the region, the proportion of female household heads was larger in central Japan than in the northeast. It was connected with their participation in the labor market and their economic status.⁸³

The socio-economic and regional differences observed in these studies warn us that a simplified view of succession and inheritance is misleading. Hayami uses this to discredit the rule of primogeniture.⁸⁴ However, transfers that followed the retirement of a household head, which appears to have been the most well planned strategy, prove that heirs were almost exclusively natural sons and in the absence of sons, adopted sons or sons-in-law, even in the central area he studied.⁸⁵ It is safe to say that by mid-eighteenth century, the stem family system as rule or ideal was well established, but the demographic conditions (mortality and fertility) did not allow some regions or classes to pursue this goal, and thus produced multiple strategies.

⁷⁸ Hanley and Yamamura *Economic and Demographic Change*, 323.

⁷⁹ Cornell “Hajnal and Household.”

⁸⁰ Okada, Aoi and Satomi Kurosu “Succession and the Death of the Household Head in Early Modern Japan: A Case Study of a Northeastern Village, 1720-1870,” *Continuity and Change* 13:1 (1998) 143-66.

⁸¹ Nagata, Mary Louise “Balancing Family Strategies with Individual Choice: Name Changing in Early Modern Japan,” *Japan Review* 11 (1998) 145-66.

⁸² Hayami “Myth of Primogeniture;” Cornell “Retirement, Inheritance;” Cornell,

Laurel L. “Age at Marriage, Female Labor Force Participation, and Parental Interests,” *Annales de Demographie Historique* (1989) 223-31; and Okada and Kurosu “Succession and Death.”

⁸³ Hayami *Historical Demography*.

⁸⁴ Hayami “Myth of Primogeniture.” He also uses the analysis of the division of landed property between households to challenge the argument that customs of impartible inheritance contributed to Japan’s industrialization by limiting population growth.

⁸⁵ Okada and Kurosu “Succession and Death.”

(6) Adoption

Adoption was one such strategy. It was an indispensable element of the Japanese stem family system under demographic constraints (i.e. low fertility regime). Families with no sons (or sons of an appropriate age) adopted sons, if they had daughters, they recruited adopted sons-in-law as a way to compensate for the lack of a male heir.⁸⁶ Further, the number of siblings surviving to adulthood was clearly larger among the households in higher economic status in contrast to those in lower ones, and thus they adopted their “surplus sons” out to other households.⁸⁷ As Hanley once suggested, adoption was a strategy for a household to assure an heir by the recruitment of a son, but it was also a strategy for taking care of excess sons among the households whose successorship was already assured.⁸⁸

What would become of the sons who were adopted out? This answer has to be approached from an individual perspective. Kurosu examined adoption practices from the perspective of the individual life course using a longitudinal population register (1716-1870) from an

agricultural village in northeastern Japan.⁸⁹ By shifting the observation from households to individuals, several new findings came about: adoption did not mean automatic headships because adopted sons were often sent back to their original households before acquiring headship. Even if they attained headship, they did not keep it as long as native sons did. The headship of adopted sons was not as strongly supported by the village or kinship organization as folklore studies surmise.

(7) Leaving home

An individual lifecourse approach can take us further in understanding the relationship between village, household, and individuals. Smith found in Nakahara that there was deliberately controlled timing in the release of children vis-a-vis the timing of in-marriage.⁹⁰ What he called a ‘hold-and-release policy’ was a precursor to Cornell’s description of a stem household formation: marriage brings the crucial transition point at which one of the siblings stays and brings his or her spouse into the household, while all the others leave for other households.⁹¹ This arrangement was necessary to keep the family farm and property intact,⁹² to secure the farm’s labor force, in the household and by-employment;⁹³ and to assure living space and privacy in order to avoid

⁸⁶ The adoption of sons-in-law (*mukoyōshi*) was the major adoption practice in spite of its marginality in Chinese and Korean practice. Adopted sons were recruited from a large geographical market (as large as those of brides were). This may be the natural consequence of Japanese adoption being able to include “both kin and non-kin of the head and his wife (Nakane, *Chie Kinship and Economic Organization in Rural Japan*, London: The Athlone Press, 1967, 4).”

⁸⁷ Kurosu Satomi and Emiko Ochiai “Adoption as an Heirship Strategy Under Demographic Constraints: A Case from Nineteenth-Century Japan,” *Journal of Family History* 20:3 (1995) 261-288. They made use of an unusually large dataset for premodern period: 2,057 households in 35 villages in Tama (West of Tokyo) 1870 Household Register. This made a rigorous statistical analysis of adoption possible.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 220.

⁸⁹ Kurosu Satomi “Marriage in a Stem Family System: Inheriting Daughters and Non-Inheriting Daughters in Two Northeastern Villages 1716-1870,” in Fauve-Chamoux, Antoinette and Emiko Ochiai (eds.) *House and the Stem Family in EurAsian Perspective*, 245-69. Proceedings of the C18 Session of the Twelfth International Economic History Congress, Madrid, 1998.

⁹⁰ Smith *Nakahara*, 140-45.

⁹¹ Cornell “Hajnal and Household,” 152.

⁹² Smith *Nakahara*, 134-5.

⁹³ Saitō Osamu “Marriage, Family Labour and the Stem Family Household: Traditional Japan in a Comparative Perspective.” *Continuity and Change* 15:1 (2000) 17-45.

unnecessary tension.⁹⁴

A recent study on children leaving home⁹⁵ found in that sons and daughters followed a schedule (customarily/regionally set timing) in departing from home (via adoption, marriage and service) contingent on their sex and sibling composition.⁹⁶ Within the standard schedule, however, sons and daughters were retained or released for the advantage of the family: In-marrying brides replaced sisters, as Smith found in Nakahara; brothers were kept in the home until the next generation was secured (i.e. after heir had his first child). Kurosu examined this further, applying multivariate analysis to two northeastern agricultural villages.⁹⁷ Children were less likely to leave for service at the time of economic hardship in the region; however, children were more likely to leave for service upon the death of the household head; they left for marriage and adoption regardless of the economic conditions at the community and household levels. Thus, sons and daughters in the life-cycle age between maturity and marriage were tightly bound to the household under the Japanese system of the stem family.⁹⁸

⁹⁴ Cornell, Laurel L. "Retirement, Inheritance, and Intergenerational Conflict in Preindustrial Japan," *Journal of Family History* 8 (Spring 1983) 55-69.

⁹⁵ Leaving home is defined as the first migratory move of sons and daughters away from their parental home to live elsewhere.

⁹⁶ Kurosu Satomi "Leaving Home in a Stem Family system: Departures of Heirs and non-Heirs in Pre-Industrial Japan," *The History of the Family: An International Quarterly* 1:3 (1996) 329-352.

⁹⁷ Kurosu Satomi "Who Leaves Home and Why? Daughters and Sons in Two Northeastern Villages, 1716-1870," in van Poppel, Frans, James Lee and Michel Oris (eds.) *The Road to Independence. Leaving Home in European and Asian Societies*, Forthcoming.

⁹⁸ Saitō "Marriage, Family Labour."

IV. New Directions in Current and Future Research

To keep the arguments concise, I have limited my discussion predominately to the studies of Tokugawa peasants. This does not mean there is no studies on the aspect of demographic and family studies on Samurai, merchants, and urban life.⁹⁹ However, due for lack of comparable data¹⁰⁰ in Tokugawa, studies on Samurai and merchants' lifecourses are rather limited in the English literature. Also, the comparison among these classes is lacking. While it is easy to see the classes in entirely different realms, demographic and economic approaches should allow us to see the parallel development or patterns in lifecourse which are shaped in the eco-demo system of the region in which they lived. Further, studies on the interaction of village and city lives (for example, via service migration) should give us a larger and more dynamic

⁹⁹ For example, on Samurai, Hanley and Yamamura *Economic and Demographic Change* and Moore, Ray "Adoption and Samurai Mobility in Tokugawa Japan," *Journal of Asian Studies* (1970) 617-632; and on urban life, Hanley, Susan "Urban Sanitation in Preindustrial Japan," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18:1 (1978) 1-26; Sasaki "Urban migration," Saitō Osamu "The Changing Structure of Urban Employment and Its Effects on Migration patterns in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Japan," in van der Woude, Ad, Akira Hayami and Jan de Vries (eds.) *Urbanization in History: A Process of Dynamic Interactions*, Oxford: Claredon Press, 1990, 205-219.

¹⁰⁰ One of the main sources for the demographic study of Samurai is the Kansei Revised Samurai Genealogies (Kansei chōshū shokafu). Using the genealogies compiled in 1641 as a base, about 50 hatamoto in 1799 set out to compile genealogies for all persons who became either daimyo or hatamoto after 1641 (Hanley and Yamamura *Economic and Demographic Change*, 63). The main source for merchants is SAC. At this point, the number of SAC discovered for urban areas is quite limited compared to those for villages.

understanding of how “economic development, subsequent urbanization and the flow of labor to the cities kept the rural population from growing, and not crop failures or economic distress,”¹⁰¹ or alternatively, how the cities maintained its population even with its (supposed to be) low fertility and survival rate.

As we learn more about the regional diversity of demographic and family behavior, the understanding of economic and geo-social environments becomes more important. Multi-dimensional and inter-disciplinary approaches are increasingly valuable. For example, to explain low fertility in the eighteenth century and the rise in nineteenth century, attitudes towards reproduction, institutional effects (i.e. domain or village policy), nutritional matters, female work patterns, as well as ecological and economic backgrounds are all necessary considerations. At the same time, our rich historical records can provide a lot more insights into questions, which otherwise may not be addressed. Family and gender relations, crisis management upon economic stress, are just a few of the intriguing questions we can examine further.

To conclude, I would like to point out some of the current research that I believe promises further advancement of the field. Since the previous section discussed the developments for major topics, the discussion here focuses on more general directions in the studies on regional diversity, the multi-dimensional approach, and challenges of developing comparative theoretical frameworks.

Reassessment of Regional Variation

Hayami once proposed “another Fossa Magna” in the variation of age at marriage.¹⁰² Based on the prefectural data compiled by the

¹⁰¹ Hayami, Akira “Rural Migration and Fertility in Tokugawa Japan: The Village of Nishijo, 1773-1868,” in Hanley and Wolf *Family and Population*, 132.

¹⁰² “Another Fossa Magna: Proportion Marrying and Age at Marriage in Late Nineteenth-Century Japan.” *Journal of Family History* 12:1-3 (1987) 57-72.

Meiji government in 1886, he found that the age at marriage was low in the east and high in the west with the line dividing the two regions running through Shizuoka, Nagano, and Toyama. The division of the east and the west perfectly matched with the Fossa Magna (a great structural depression on the earth’s crust running through the Chubu region).¹⁰³ More recent studies distinguish “at least” three regions by their demographic patterns and family structure: northeast, central and southwestern region. In fact, Hayami himself revised his view from a dichotomous to a trichotomous (or possibly more) differential. Based on a simulation study, he “traced” how regional demographic and family patterns changed over time.¹⁰⁴ This approach and interpretation was further developed based on the micro-level studies of the three regions--northeast, central and southwest.¹⁰⁵ It was found that the varying level of regional socio-economic developments influenced the necessity of maintaining the ratio of working persons in households; and consequently, shaped the demographic-family patterns.¹⁰⁶ Tohoku families, for example, tried to maintain the highest possible ratio of working-age persons in order to avert economic crisis in the harsh weather (long and cold winters with deep snow). Tohoku families achieved this via early marriage (as a way to add a wife as a part of

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Hayami *Historical Demography*, Chapter 6; Hayami Akira and Emiko Ochiai “Household Structure and Demographic Factors in Pre-industrial Japan,” in Liu, Ts’ui-jung, James Lee, David Sven Reher, Osamu Saitō, and Wang Feng (eds.) *Asian Population History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, 395-415.

¹⁰⁵ Hayami and Kurosu “Regional Diversity.”

¹⁰⁶ It was suggested that the variation of the demographic-family patterns can be explained on the basis of existing evidence by the diversity of ethnological origins of the people who settled in the three regions combined with later adaptations to the physical environment and economic conditions (Hayami and Kurosu “Regional Diversity”).

the household labor force) and limiting the number of children. The narrower age differences between a head of household and his successor, in contrast to other regions, was made possible with the combination of early retirement of household head,¹⁰⁷ early marriage¹⁰⁸ and early stoppage of child-bearing.¹⁰⁹ A recent micro-level study on three regions demonstrated variations in the outcome (i.e. duration of marriage, reasons for dissolution, and likelihood and tempo of remarriage) of the first marriage, thus suggesting co-existence of a multiple number of nuptiality and reproductive regimes in pre-industrial Japan.¹¹⁰ Although the samples in these studies may not fully represent each region, the indication is clear enough to warrant further investigation.

Village, Household and Individual Life-course

Recent studies are particularly successful in showing the effects of short-term economic stress (as measured by rice price fluctuation of a region), household landholdings, and household circumstances on mortality, fertility, and nuptiality.¹¹¹ For example, a study on mortality in two northeastern villages showed that the mortality responses to short-term economic stress from harvest failure and the death of household head varied greatly according to the sex and life

stage of the individual villagers.¹¹² Tsuya and Kurosu also found the importance of the household context (e.g. household resources and general sanitary environment) and that of control over household resources on the likelihood of survival, especially for men. When men and women aged and became frail, their survival was strongly influenced by the amount of familial protection they could obtain. The event history method of investigating mortality has been applied to other regions.¹¹³ As it can introduce factors involved at different levels (i.e. village, household, individual factors), it presents a great opportunity to examine how individual actors' lives were shaped via local environments and family relations. It also presents a chance for a detailed regional comparison to advance discussion of the regional diversity in early modern Japan.

Comparative Framework

From the beginning of recent demographic studies on early modern Japan, the findings were often placed in the framework of more general theories, or in broader comparisons. After all, we cannot determine whether the levels are high or low unless we compare them with those in other societies or periods. While previous studies tried to place Japan in the theoretical framework developed in the West, current research reveals more ambitious undertakings in which authors try to go beyond established parameters. Two such examples are Cornell¹¹⁴ and Saitō¹¹⁵. They

¹⁰⁷ Okada and Kurosu "Succession and Death."

¹⁰⁸ Kurosu et al. "Regional Differentials."

¹⁰⁹ Tsuya and Kurosu "Patterns and Covariates of Fertility."

¹¹⁰ Kurosu et al. "Regional Differentials."

¹¹¹ Tsuya and Kurosu "Mortality Responses;" "Economic and Household Covariates;" Tsuya, Noriko O. and Satomi Kurosu "The Mortality Effects of Adult Male Death on Women and Children in Household in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Rural Japan: Evidence from Two Northeastern Villages," in van Poppel, Frans and Michel Oris (eds.), *When Dad Dies*, Bern: Peter Lang S.A., Editions scientifiques europeennes, Forthcoming, 273-311.

¹¹² Tsuya and Kurosu "Mortality Responses."

¹¹³ Kikuzawa, Saeko "Family Composition and Sex-Differential Mortality among Children in Early Modern Japan: Evidence from Yokouchi, 1671-1871," *Social Science History* 23-1 (Spring 1999) 99-127. She attempted to reveal sex differential mortality among children in Yokouchi 1671-1871. Her results were mixed. It is perhaps due to the specification of the models--particularly uncontrolled period effect of the long 200 years of observation requires reconsideration.

¹¹⁴ Cornell "Hajnal and Household."

¹¹⁵ Saitō Osamu "The Third Pattern of

attempt to identify marriage and family patterns found in early modern Japan as “stem household formation” and “the third pattern,” respectively, as opposed to the models discussed earlier by Hajnal.¹¹⁶ Saitō also encourages the studies on marriage and remarriage patterns in relation to servanthood, gender and work.

Because the method of historical demography (i.e. family reconstitution) was developed in the West, analytical questions tend to center around the questions appropriate to Western societies; for example, marital fertility and infant mortality. Population registers in Japan can bear more diverse questions than that. Migration, divorce, remarriage, adult and elderly mortality are some of the areas Japanese data performs much better, and in turn, can be a basis of a theoretical framework in a multi-dimensional approach to the family and population history.

Another comparative effort has been made among scholars on the pre-industrial period in Eurasian societies (Japan, China, Italy, Belgium, and Sweden).¹¹⁷ It attempts to link the study of family systems and household structure to the analysis of demographic behavior. The longitudinal data at both individual and

household levels allow an adaptation of a dynamic perspective. The product of these comparisons can take us a step further in our understanding of how community and household can shape individual life courses. The population registers of Japan are readily available for rigorous and detailed examinations in this light.

Historical demography in Japan has come a long way since the start of the systematic use of population registers in the late 1960s. Micro studies based on a few villages have accumulated now to suggest some strong regional variations. Demographic questions addressed in earlier studies are also tied into a framework of demofamily system, and further to comparative frameworks of pre-industrial societies. Lifecourse is starting to be scrutinized in relation to individuals' constellation in, and configuration of, household, village organization, and socio-economic changes. While this advancement, to a large extent, is due to the recent advancement in information technology, we owe much to the rich sources of micro and macro data from the Tokugawa era. Utilization of these data allows us to re-examine the simple dichotomy of pre-modern and modern societies in family and demographic behaviors that is often emphasized in Western theories. It also permits us to take a multi-dimensional approach to family and population history. Finally, studies can be extended to link peasants' lifecourse observed in these records to other historical materials and concerns in order to see the history from “bottom-up.” The life course of peasants in early modern Japan are now placed on the central stage of understanding the early modern living standard and demographic behavior in pre-industrial societies.

Marriage and Remarriage: Japan in Eurasian Comparative Perspectives,” in Engelen, T. and A.P. Wolf (eds.) *Marriage and the Family in Eurasia: Perspectives on the Hajnal Hypothesis*, Forthcoming.

¹¹⁶ See notes no.11-12.

¹¹⁷ EurAsian Project on Population and Family History. For five years (1995-1999), Japanese EAP team was headed by Hayami Akira, and was sponsored by the Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture, Japan. International members include James Lee, George Alter, Tommy Bengtsson, Michel Oris, and Marco Bresceci. The products of the international comparison have been presented at international conferences (e.g. Social Science History Association and Population Association of America, International Economic History Meeting). A series of publications is being prepared for mortality, fertility, nuptiality, and migration.

Tokugawa Intellectual History: State of the Field

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I

Tokugawa intellectual history has been called “one of the liveliest and most interesting” branches of the study of Japan in America.¹ The claim was made by Samuel Yamashita in a spirited and accessible article, “Reading the New Tokugawa Intellectual Histories”. Yamashita’s essay surveyed publications between 1979 and 1992. In this sense, much of the ground for the present essay has already been covered. Yet even a modest attempt to update a survey of Tokugawa intellectual history remains a challenge. Of all fields, intellectual history seems to exhibit the broadest range of methods and approaches. The very concept of “intellectual history” differs radically among its practitioners. It ranges from conventional intellectual biography, through historical sociology in the grand Weberian manner, to postmodernist explorations of the relation of language to reality. The understanding of man in society that informs the field is also contested. Some writers adhere to a common-sense, “objectivist”² approach;

¹ Samuel Hideo Yamashita, “Reading the New Tokugawa Intellectual Histories”, *Journal of Japanese Studies*, 22:1 (Winter, 1996): 1. An useful earlier survey of the field that paid attention particularly to Japanese scholarship, is Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi’s review article, “Early-Modern Japanese Confucianism: The Gyōza-Manjū Controversy”, in *Sino-Japanese Studies Newsletter*, 1:1 (November, 1988): 10-23.

² The expression “objectivist” is used by Yamashita, *ibid.*, 13.

others see man as the bearer of values largely determined by or responsive to economic, social and political influences; others, as a being in quest of spiritual goals; yet others, as the decentered participant in a linguistically constructed world with which their own relationship is at best problematic. This diversity means that scholars have tended not infrequently either to talk past each other, or to write virulently partisan, indeed sectarian, reviews of each others’ work.

The strength of Yamashita’s survey lies precisely in his attempt to encompass a very heterogeneous body of work within a broad overview. He set his subject, moreover, in the wider context of recent European and American thinking on intellectual history. He has, one might say, attempted an intellectual history of Tokugawa intellectual history. Yamashita found that the field was indeed burgeoning, for reasons that apply a fortiori to the present. He noted the revival of interest among Japanese scholars after a long post-war period of neglect, the publication in Japan of extensive series devoted to thought, and the vigor of American scholars, as expressed in a series of conferences. Against this background, Yamashita divided the scholarship of this period into four main “interpretive communities”; a concept derived from Stanley Fish.³ These communities are: the “modernization school”; the school of William Theodore de Bary; the “new intellectual historians”; and, though he writes of just one exemplar, “the postmodern theorists”. Yamashita’s own sympathies seemed to incline towards the last two mentioned. But he found both merit and demerit in each of the four

³ *Ibid.*, 4; for further discussion, see Janine Sawada, “Tokugawa Religious History: Studies in Western Languages, 1980-2000,” below.

approaches. “None”, he wrote emolliently, “is intrinsically closer to an imagined historical reality or inherently more truthful than any other. In fact, each of these strategies configures as well as disfigures the Tokugawa material”.⁴

Yamashita’s classification has a certain cogency, and can even be linked to the institutional setting of the field in the United States. He is above all concerned with method and intellectual pedigree. He is most instructive where, as with the “new intellectual historians”, he can link the method to the work of historians writing on Europe and America. At the same time, his article is also both provocative and eccentric. It has several weaknesses, which seem to derive partly at least from its author’s theoretical leanings. First, the modernization category is too inclusive. It incorporates historical sociology, like the now classic work of Robert Bellah⁵ with its explicit concern with the resources that predisposed Japan to rapid modernization. But, with less obvious justification, it includes a historian of education such as Richard Rubinger,⁶ together with highly focused monographs on particular historical figures. The principal exemplar in the latter category was Kate Nakai’s study of Arai Hakuseki’s political career, *Shogunal Politics*.⁷ This work, however, was, at most, incidentally and tangentially concerned with the causes of the Restoration, let alone the broader theme of modernization. Here, Yamashita seems to

have been overly influenced by H.D. Harootunian’s ill-judged review of 1990, which charged Nakai with “rigid commitment to a normative course that had been supplied by modernization theory years ago”.⁸

Rather few scholars balance high methodological sophistication with rigorous study of the primary sources for the period. All too often, there is an inverse relationship between theoretical bravura and textual thoroughness. Yamashita’s sympathies are confirmed by a perhaps unconscious betrayal of the standards that most empirically orientated scholars would accept as *de rigueur*. Writing of the work of Kate Nakai and of Bob T. Wakabayashi, he praises their method in startling terms.

Both should be congratulated for reading their sources in the original *kanbun* or *bungotai* form, for with the writings of leading Tokugawa thinkers now available in modern Japanese, it is tempting to use these more accessible and readable versions. Both also made good use of the relevant secondary literature in Japanese, and to their credit acknowledge their debts.⁹

In a field where the original language is the very stuff on which interpretation is based, Yamashita’s wording suggests that it is especially laudable to consult the original texts. This implies expectations of scholarly practice that would be unacceptable in the intellectual history of other cultures. Yamashita does, it is true, allude to problems concerning accuracy of reading and translation when reporting the review literature on the work of the “new intellectual historians”. None the less, his sympathy with the theoreticians appears to incline him to sweep disciplined

⁴ Yamashita, 46.

⁵ Robert N. Bellah, *Tokugawa Religion: The Values of Pre-Industrial Japan* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1957).

⁶ Richard Rubinger, *Private Academies of Tokugawa Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982).

⁷ Kate Wildman Nakai, *Shogunal Politics: Arai Hakuseki and the Premises of Tokugawa Rule* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988).

⁸ H.D. Harootunian, Review of *Shogunal Politics*, *Journal of Japanese Studies*, 16:1 (Winter, 1990): 160.

⁹ Yamashita, 10-11.

linguistic understanding of primary source material under the carpet.¹⁰

A further eccentricity was that the survey addressed only “American” scholarship. It is perhaps one thing to restrict such a survey to English language publications. Regrettably, few have ready access to the relevant scholarship written in other languages, such as German, French, Chinese or Russian. Nor would one wish to deny that America leads the way; outside Japan, the field is most vigorous in the United States. Nonetheless, a significant contribution is made by scholars writing in English outside that country. After all, the main scholarly journals in Japanese Studies are genuinely international. A book written by a Japanese for an English language readership may be reviewed in an American journal by a Dutch scholar also writing in English. Yamashita’s apparently self-imposed restriction means that his survey is incomplete and unbalanced. Oddly in a scholar sensitized to the subtleties of power, he seems to constitute his own hegemonic discourse, to indulge in what, facetiously to borrow the language of critical theory, might be called the “discursive exclusion of the heterogeneous”.¹¹ His survey omits a number of works of quiet but real scholarly value. Thus 1992 saw a reissue of W.J. Boot’s 1983 Leiden University doctoral dissertation, “The adoption and adaptation of Neo-Confucianism in Japan: the role of Fujiwara Seika and Hayashi Razan”. This “second version”,¹² though revised in some particulars, is not yet rewritten in book

form; it retains *longueurs* in the form of excessively long passages of translation which, while they help establish the author’s bona fides as a researcher, make for hard reading. None the less, Boot’s work forms an admirable counterpoint in method and findings to Herman Ooms’s *Tokugawa Ideology*, reviewed by Yamashita. Boot scrupulously analyses the mainly *kanbun* primary documentation concerned with the early phases of the Neo-Confucian movement in the Tokugawa period. His work exhibits an exemplary and, indeed, timeless critical thoroughness. The scholarly community needs such works of caution and integrity, just as it needs the stimulus of works of abstraction and theory.

Omitted, too, from Yamashita’s survey were two books of non-American authorship that dealt with two of the most original and difficult Tokugawa thinkers, both influenced by Dutch studies, the materialist Miura Baien and the antinomian Andō Shōeki. The New Zealand scholar, Rosemary Mercer’s *Deep Words: Miura Baien’s System of Natural Philosophy, a Translation and Philosophical Commentary*,¹³ follows a pattern common in the field: an introduction followed by translations from Baien’s work. What distinguishes this book is that, unusually in the field of Japanese intellectual history, Mercer is a professional western philosopher; she approaches Baien’s work with the critical rigor of that discipline. Toshinobu Yasunaga’s *Ando Shoeki: Social and Ecological Philosopher in Eighteenth-century Japan*¹⁴ follows the same pattern.

¹⁰ While Yamashita does mention reviews critical of the “new intellectual historians” for inaccurate translation (Ibid., 34-35), he refrains from himself evaluating these criticisms.

¹¹ Herman Ooms, “Tokugawa Texts as a Playground for a Postmodern Romp”, *Journal of Japanese Studies*, 22:2 (Summer, 1996): 365.

¹² 2 vols., W.J. Boot, Leiderdorp, 1992.

¹³ Rosemary Mercer, *Deep Words: Miura Baien’s System of Natural Philosophy: A Translation and Philosophical Commentary* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1991).

¹⁴ Toshinobu Yasunaga, *Ando Shoeki: Social and Ecological Philosopher in Eighteenth Century Japan* (New York: Weatherhill, 1992).

Its strengths lie in a different direction. The author is familiar with the broad East Asian philosophical and religious tradition and is particularly persuasive on the influence of Zen Buddhism, together with Dutch learning, on Shōeki's thought. Neither book is entirely successful. Mercer, as Peter Nosco pointed out in his review,¹⁵ while cautioning against philosophical comparisons between Baien and western philosophers, indulges in just that. Her claim that Baien's category of "fineness" corresponds to a universal should be treated with great caution. Yasunaga's book, on the other hand, lacks bibliography, index and macrons over the long vowels of romanized Japanese. Yet both books, eccentric to some degree like their subjects, have drawn attention to the creativity and variety of eighteenth-century Japanese thought.

These contributions to the field are worthy even of belated note. The present essay, however, is concerned largely with monograph and book-length work published in the mid to late 1990s, thus taking the story on from Yamashita's article. It is influenced by, but attempts to adjust, his "interpretive communities". A threefold division has been adopted, though it is not intended to suggest that the three categories are in any sense methodologically exclusive or pure. Yamashita's "modernization" becomes historical sociology; the de Bary group is assimilated to a broader history of ideas; the "new intellectual historians" and "post-modernists" are grouped together. The approach is influenced by Yamashita, but remains that of a generalist uncommitted to any particular method. For the generalist may be well placed to spot excesses and shortcomings, to test the claims of the theoretically-inclined against

¹⁵ Nosco, Peter, Review of *Deep words, Monumenta Nipponica*, 47:3 (Fall, 1992): 411-12.

sober empirical reality, and to point to themes that remain yet to be fruitfully explored.

Nor are these three categories exhaustive. The Canadian historian John S. Brownlee has continued his instructive survey of Japanese historical and political thought, which had already in 1991 touched on the secular and rational character of the historical thinking of Arai Hakuseki.¹⁶ In the first part of his 1997 monograph *Japanese Historians and the National Myths, 1600-1945: The Age of the Gods and Emperor Jinmu*,¹⁷ he devoted chapters successively to Hayashi Razan and Hayashi Gahō, the *Dai Nihon shi*, Arai Hakuseki and Yamagata Bantō, and to Date Chihiro. Much of his account is descriptive, but he also convincingly documents a growing spirit of "positivism" and a secular and rational approach to the past as it underlay and explained the political structures of the present. This rationality was, however, constrained by Confucian metaphysical thought and pitted against the demands of nationalism and its associated irrational myths. Nonetheless it provided the foundation for modern Japanese historiographical practice. In a quite different direction, Wai-ming Ng's very recent book, *The I ching in Tokugawa Thought and Culture*¹⁸

¹⁶ John S. Brownlee, *Political Thought in Japanese Historical Writing: From Kojiki (712) to Tokushi Yoron (1712)* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1991), Chapter 10, "Secular, Pragmatic History in *Tokushi Yoron* (1712).

¹⁷ John S. Brownlee, *Japanese Historians and the National Myths, 1600-1945: The Age of the Gods and Emperor Jinmu* (Vancouver: UBC Press, and Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1997), Part 1, "The Tokugawa Period".

¹⁸ Ng Wai-ming, *The I ching in Tokugawa thought and culture* (Association for Asian Studies and Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000).

is a survey of the diffusion of *I ching* studies in Tokugawa Japan. Its approach seems best described as bibliographical and cultural. It surveys the prodigious and varied Tokugawa period output of texts on this important work. Its main finding is to show how remarkably widely Japanese culture was penetrated at different levels by Chinese ideas on divination, cosmology, numerology and moral thought. Its broad scope means, however, that in no one field is Ng's discussion particularly profound. Rather, his book opens paths to further enquiry.

II

Historical sociology addresses society and its dominant traditions. However, it exploits much of the same material as intellectual history, is concerned with moral values, world view and ethos, and its findings are germane to intellectual history. The best-known example of this approach in the Tokugawa field is, of course, Robert Bellah's *Tokugawa Religion*.¹⁹ This seminal book looked at the value system of the Tokugawa period from the point of view of its contribution to Japan's modernization during and after the Meiji period. This concern reached a high tide during the sixties and seventies; to some extent, modernization has since receded in importance as its underlying assumption of the normative status of western culture has been exposed and questioned. None the less, two books published in the period under review may be discussed under this rubric: Eiko Ikegami's *The Taming of the Samurai: Honorific Individualism and the Making of Modern Japan*,²⁰ and the slighter book by

Eiji Takemura, *The Perception of Work in Tokugawa Japan: a Study of Ishida Baigan and Ninomiya Sontoku*.²¹ Both these works explicitly take Robert Bellah's classic study as their point of departure.

Takemura is concerned in his short book with practical attitudes to work; he eschews what he calls the "sublime ideologies [such as Confucianism, which] remained for the most part the heritage of the intellectual few".²² Ishida Baigan and Ninomiya Sontoku, in his view, saw work both as social role play and as a mode of spiritual self-fulfillment. Takemura argues that through the teaching of these individuals "work was ideologized in depth and enriched with meaning".²³ They promoted not a submissive loyalty, but constructive planning, autonomy and even criticism of superiors. He is cautious over to what extent their teaching contributed directly to modernization, though he does argue that it "promoted economic change"²⁴ and even "helped Japan's relatively smooth industrial transformation".²⁵ Yet both movements declined; the former into submissiveness and "common morality"; the latter to be highjacked by statist ideology. This is a readable introduction to the topic, but adds little fundamentally to the work of Bellah and others.

Eiko Ikegami's *The Taming of the Samurai* is on an altogether grander scale. It may well be the most widely noted book in the field in the period under review. The sweeping nature of its claims concerning the Japanese experience requires that, of

Making of Modern Japan (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995).

²¹ Eiji Takemura, *The Perception of Work in Tokugawa Japan: A Study of Ishida Baigan and Ninomiya Sontoku* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, Inc., 1997).

²² *Ibid.*, 199.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 23.

¹⁹ Bellah, *Tokugawa Religion*.

²⁰ Eiko Ikegami, *The Taming of the Samurai: Honorific Individualism and the*

all the work touched on in this essay, it be most carefully evaluated. Like Takemura's book, it stands firmly and self-consciously in the tradition of Robert Bellah's *Tokugawa Religion*. Indeed, Ikegami writes of "shar[ing] many of Bellah's interests and questions concerning Japanese culture".²⁶ As her title suggests, she is interested in the "resources" that traditional Japanese culture brought to the modern world. Writing nearly four decades after Bellah, however, Ikegami could draw on a vastly greater volume of analysis of Japan's cultural inheritance. As a native speaker of Japanese, moreover, she controlled a body of historical scholarship in a fashion denied Bellah himself. Like Bellah, she is explicitly concerned with the values of the warrior estate. However, she adopts a diachronic, historical method that sets her work off from what she sees as Bellah's "static" and "functionalist" approach.²⁷ She is sensitive to the dynamic development of Japanese history, to the multi-layered character of the Japanese cultural tradition, and particularly to the effect on samurai of state formation in the early modern period.

Bellah had focussed on inner-worldly mysticism and its associated asceticism as a Japanese counterpart to Weber's "Protestant ethic". Ikegami, by contrast, builds her analysis around what she terms "honorific individualism". A major thesis of her book is that early Japanese notions of honor were basically individualist, focused on the one-to-one combat of the twelfth century. In late medieval times, honor had connotated "violence, autonomy, individuality, and dignity".²⁸ This form of honor was, however, incompatible with the requirements of order in Japan's early modern state. Ikegami is particularly

sensitive to the impact of the Tokugawa settlement on the hitherto relatively independent ethos of members of the warrior estate; she is good on the dilemmas facing Tokugawa samurai. Under this regime, honor was "tamed" and "proceduralized". Refocussed and rechanneled into constructive modes of behavior, it was now subject to "moralization"²⁹ and promoted "long-term goals".³⁰ At the same time, the earlier martial and violent honor survived as a substratum, "never completely eradicated". It was preserved, Ikegami argues, for instance, in the *Hagakure*, which "created a 'time bomb' in Japanese culture".³¹

The book is an impressive and at times even brilliant achievement. Ikegami has drawn on a large body of Japanese secondary writing, some of it fresh to English-language readers. She analyzes particular incidents with insight, and is duly sympathetic, at times arguably too sympathetic, to her subject. The book contains much fascinating detail. But it has a number of weaknesses. Some derive from its basic thematic and conceptual structure. Others reflect the reductionism seemingly inherent in the project of historical sociology.

The identification of honor as a major and positive cultural resource for modern Japan, first, suggests unpleasant moral ambiguities. Ikegami is of course sensitive to the association of honor with violence, though less, it seems to its implications in Japan's twentieth-century history. On grounds of moral sensibility, not all readers seem likely to share her celebration of it as a positive value. A more serious structural problem, however, concerns the concept of "honorific individualism" itself. This self

²⁶ Ikegami, 9.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid., 117.

²⁹ Ibid., 236.

³⁰ Ibid., 330.

³¹ Ibid., 298.

contradictory-sounding concept derives from the thought of Thomas Hobbes' Leviathan, where the philosopher generalizes the concept of honor to include possession of material wealth and power.³² Ikegami links Hobbes' honor to the "possessive individualism" that C.B. Macpherson, the distinguished Canadian scholar of Hobbes, identified in the tradition of seventeenth-century English political thought.³³ At the same time, Ikegami shifts the sense of "honor" from its broad Hobbesian sense to the social value that is the opposite of shame.³⁴ For her, honor is social approval and the recognition of dignity. The problem is that the two types of honor reflect different types of society. Hobbes, as Macpherson convincingly argues, accepted a model of society based on a market economy, acquisitiveness and "possessive individualism". Ikegami's social concept of honor more usually reflects a status-based society largely premised on pre-market relations. Her coupling of "individualism" and "honor" for the basic theme of her book thus creates a tension that informs the whole work. At the least, her key concept requires further explication.

"Individualism" typically places self before society; "honor" implicitly does the opposite. In the general understanding, honor is heteronomous; the source of honor lies outside the self, in society. Its antonym is shame. Honor is thus not to be equated with morality, for arguably immoral or amoral actions may attract honor. Only in a perfectly moral society, indeed, could honor and morality in practice mean the

same thing. To make her thesis of the redirection of honor persuasive, Ikegami must extend the sense of honor to an internalized value "resid[ing] in the innermost depths of a person's self-understanding".³⁵ In a similar direction, she writes, problematically, of a moralized honor linked to autonomy. Under the Tokugawa order, samurai "were required to demonstrate their moral autonomy when it touched upon the matter of their honor".³⁶ It is, however, difficult to see the sensitivity and violent response to insult that remained characteristic of samurai behavior throughout the period as the exercise of genuine "moral autonomy". Thus Ikegami ends up constantly adjusting her concept of honor to reconcile two values which at best rest uneasily together. The result is that the semantic inclusiveness of honor is extended to the point where its analytical value becomes strained. Honor is not a talisman that explains everything. After all, even warriors in battle are driven as much by their individual need to survive and to gain access to the rewards of victory as by the need to defend their honor.

Ikegami is conscious that honor reflects primarily the social and particularistic here and now. She writes that "any honor culture is by its nature liable to serious conflict with a transcendental value system". But Japan, she argues, was never historically exposed to a system of thought or "universalistic religion" that might challenge her honor culture. Japan "neither developed indigenous elitist counter-ideologies nor imported those of Western Europe".³⁷ As this suggests, Ikegami takes a limited view of Confucianism. That tradition, she thinks, "never became an ultimate religious value

³² Ch. X.

³³ C.B. Macpherson, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke* (Oxford: Clarendon Press of Oxford University Press, 1962).

³⁴ Here she apparently follows Orlando Patterson (MS of vol 2 of *Freedom*); *Ibid.*, 418, note 9.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 23.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 220.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 335.

transcending the norms of a social group".³⁸ She seems to reduce Japanese Confucianism to "logical skills" which merely supplemented "a remarkably strong sense of personal autonomy expressed in the idiom of the indigenous samurai culture".³⁹ "Confucian teachers", further, "did not and could not fundamentally challenge the emotional dimension of the samurai's honor culture".⁴⁰ They chose the path of "accommodation"⁴¹ to Japanese society and its values.

Yet many have seen in Confucianism exactly such a potential challenge to existing society. Mencius celebrated the "great man", who was "above the powers of riches and honors to make dissipated, of poverty and mean condition to make swerve from principle, and of power and force to make bend".⁴² And in Japan itself, a seventeenth-century Confucian could write that "The superior man is unconscious whether others know or do not know him. He merely develops his own virtue, irrespective of praise or reviling. Hence he is one who takes his own solitary course".⁴³ But Ikegami discounts any alternative to her honor culture. Her main exemplars of Japanese Confucian behavior, in fact, are hardly good representatives of the tradition. They are Arai Hakuseki at the age of eighteen, at most one year after his discovery of Confucian learning, and Yoshida Shōin. Hakuseki, even in his maturity, was a man by temperament little

interested in the internal life. As Kate Nakai remarks, he "was a Confucian 'actor' rather than a Confucian 'thinker'";⁴⁴ and Shōin's thought was too much influenced by Japanese particularism and nationalism for him to be cited as an exemplar of the Confucian tradition.

In a similar direction, Ikegami paints a broad picture of Japanese Confucian thought that does not allow for significant exceptions or minority views. She writes of the inversion in priority of the two core Chinese Confucian values of loyalty (*chū*) and filial piety (*kō*) that took place in Japan, of "placing *chū* first and making *kō* secondary".⁴⁵ This is of course the commonly accepted view, repeated constantly by ideologues and scholars since Tokugawa times. But it overlooks significant exceptions, where thinkers adhered, for complex reasons, to the Chinese priorities.⁴⁶ If historical sociology deals with the "resources" that the past brings to the present, then the past itself should not needlessly be painted in monochrome.

There are other significant omissions. Ikegami, like many other scholars, seems to overlook the influence of military philosophy on the Japanese value system. Yet the canon of Chinese military philosophy was as well known to samurai as the Confucian classics. Ming dynasty military treatises were also avidly read. Here was a deeply rooted ethos that has little to do with honor. "Though he be a dog or a beast, a warrior's true task is to win".⁴⁷ Surely it is unwise to

³⁸ Ibid., 306.

³⁹ Ibid., 316.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 319.

⁴¹ Ibid., 305.

⁴² *Mencius*, 3b, 2 (iii); James Legge tr., *The Chinese Classics*, 2 (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1960 [reprint of 2nd edition of 1895]): 265.

⁴³ Kumazawa Banzan, *Rongo shōkai*, in Masamune Atsuo comp., *Banzan zenshū*, 4 (Tokyo: Banzan Zenshū Kankōkai, 1940): 28.

⁴⁴ Nakai, 79.

⁴⁵ Ikegami, 252.

⁴⁶ For example, Hayashi Razan and Kumazawa Banzan. See I.J. McMullen, "Rulers or Fathers: A Casuistical Problem in Early Modern Japan", *Past and Present*, No. 116 (August, 1987), especially: 69-78.

⁴⁷ For example, Hayashi Razan and Kumazawa Banzan. See I.J. McMullen, "Rulers

underestimate the starkly rational and realist approach legitimated by the military canon and inculcated in samurai by long historical exposure to warfare. This rationality, as much as “honorific individualism”, explains the “enormous individual courage and risk-taking”⁴⁸ that Ikegami identifies in the Japanese response to the challenges of nation building in the Meiji period. Thus, surprisingly in one so sensitive to the complexity and internal dissonance within the culture of honor, Ikegami has simplified the pluralism of the Japanese tradition. In attributing so much to her indigenous “honorific individualism”, she comes close to the reductionism or essentialism that characterize certain styles of sociological writing on Japan. Her failings are, however, not crude. She is always sensitive to ambiguities and dilemmas, and her analyses are often very subtle.

Yet the tension between honor and individualism remains. In her “Epilogue”, Ikegami introduces a concept of “proximity”, whereby “a socially embedded sense of self . . . and a more subjective sense of self are brought into proximity”.⁴⁹ Thus, she contends, honor and individuality need not be polarized; nor is honor “a dated and superficial concept”. Here, finally, Ikegami confronts the structural problem of her work. Yet her solution to the problem of the construction of the modern Japanese self has an element of *déjà vu*. It leads close to the familiar territory of the *Nihonjinron*. As Ikegami acknowledges in a footnote, her analysis is similar to the “contextualism”

of scholars like Hamaguchi Etsun.⁵⁰ Yet she strives to differentiate her work from such views. Perhaps it is her sensitivity to the weakness of her argument that leads her to conclude her book with a fierce attack on Ruth Benedict’s analysis of Japan as a shame-based culture.

In the end, Ikegami’s “honorific individualism” not only contains a morally repugnant element; it is also hard to accept as the key to the success of modern Japanese society. Her most serious contribution to the understanding of the Japanese historical inheritance seems likely to lie in her vivid sense of the layered, ambiguous and cumulative character of the Japanese historical experience.

III

The history of ideas, as pursued by scholars such as Arthur O. Lovejoy, views thought as relatively autonomous. Though he does not make this connection, in Yamashita’s survey, the “interpretive community” centered round William Theodore de Bary comes closest to this type of scholarship. True, Yamashita’s identification of de Bary with a particular approach is in some ways inappropriate, for de Bary’s influence has been as much institutional, through the funding for the field that he has secured, as intellectual. He would not wish to be associated with a particular approach. De Bary’s own work, however, as Yamashita points out, views Confucianism, particularly in its revived Neo-Confucian form, as a movement with the potential to develop or “unfold” doctrinally. Yamashita characterized the de

or Fathers: A Casuistical Problem in Early Modern Japan”, *Past and Present*, No. 116 (August, 1987), especially: 69-78.

⁴⁸ Ikegami, 365.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 372; italics original.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 419, note 1; For Hamaguchi Etsun’s theory, see “A Contextual Model of the Japanese: Toward a Methodological Innovation in Japanese Studies”, *Journal of Japanese Studies*, 11: 2 (Summer, 1985): 289-321.

Bary method as differentiated from the “modernization” school by virtue of its positive view of Confucianism. That tradition was progressive, reformist, and, in certain manifestations, “liberal”.⁵¹ Essentially, de Bary and his followers, though not of course insensitive to historical context, try to see Confucianism as an object of study in its own right, rather than as the product of given social environments. They seem to prefer to believe that ideas are an autonomous realm of experience, as objects of sympathetic study or even of belief. For them, Confucianism is a grand tradition diffused across the national boundaries of East Asia. Indeed, it almost has the texture of Christian Catholicism. Their approach might be called “theological” in the sense that the development of doctrine, the inter-relationship of divergent metaphysical emphases, and particularly the “spirituality” of the tradition, engage their keenest interest. It is significant that the Chinese and Japanese scholars who work with this group, men such as Okada Takehiko or Minamoto Ryōen, tend themselves to write from within the broad tradition of East Asian spirituality. In some sense, they tend to be bearers of its ethos.

Credit must be given to de Bary and those associated with him, including the late Professor Wing-tsit Chan and Irene Bloom, for the efforts that they have made over a long period, through seminars and other activities, to raise understanding of the Neo-Confucian world, particularly on the East Coast of the United States. The result has been an impressive volume of published work, a great collaborative effort, covering China, Korea and Japan. Yet it is not easy to feel one’s way into the world of belief and practice of a tradition as ramified and subtle as Neo-Confucianism.

These publications do not always make for easy reading. It needs considerable scholarly powers to make the material incisive, persuasive and alive. Otherwise, the emphasis on doctrine too often produces a turgid or arid style. Too often, ideas and concepts are inadequately explained, listed as inert items in an insufficiently articulated or contextualised framework of belief and practice. Furthermore, the pan-East Asian perspective of the group imposes special technical and linguistic requirements, especially where Japan is concerned. Japanese Confucians belonged to a scholastic tradition. Most read Chinese effortlessly; some emulated their Chinese mentors by writing in that language. To write about, *a fortiori* to translate, this material requires facility in handling both classical Chinese and classical and modern Japanese. This expertise, it is difficult to deny, has not always been fully available.

Much of this work consists of translations with introductory essays that set the translation in context, a format of obvious value for American university teaching. Such was Mary Evelyn Tucker’s 1990 book, *Moral and Spiritual Cultivation in Japanese Neo-Confucianism: The Life and Thought of Kaibara Ekken (1630-1714)*,⁵² reviewed not uncritically by Yamashita. In the decade of the nineties, the same format is adopted by John Allen Tucker’s *Itō Jinsai’s Gomō jigi and the Philosophical Definition of Early Modern Japan*, published in 1998.⁵³ This work illustrates both the strengths and weaknesses of the de Bary approach.

⁵² Mary Evelyn Tucker, *Moral and Spiritual Cultivation in Japanese Neo-Confucianism: The Life and Thought of Kaibara Ekken (1630-1714)* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989).

⁵³ John Allen Tucker, *Itō Jinsai's Gomō jigi and the Philosophical Definition of Early Modern Japan* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1998).

⁵¹ Yamashita, 17-18.

Tucker's introduction, first, is commendably transnational in perspective. He places *Go-Mō jigi* in a long tradition of "Confucian lexicography", going back to the Sung dynasty and Ch'en Pei-hsi's *Hsing-li tzu-i*. But he needs to write more convincingly about the relationship of Jinsai's polemical work both to the received tradition and to its historical context. He uses such categories as "Neo-Confucian" with insufficient rigor; and he appears to have a simplistic understanding of the relationship of thought to its social background. His translation is also open to the criticism that he treats *Go-Mō jigi* as a text written in Japanese rather than in Chinese. This leads to problems with his English version.⁵⁴ Another work somewhat in the same manner is Marleen Kassel's *Tokugawa Confucian Education: The Kangien Academy of Hirose Tansō (1782-1856)*.⁵⁵ This work fills in the detail of the profile of this private academy provided in Richard Rubinger's 1982 study, *Private Academies of Tokugawa Japan*.⁵⁶ It also offers translations of key texts by Tansō. The background essay is more comprehensive than Tucker's. Yet here, too, the limitations of the approach stand out. The book contains a biography, and summary of the development of Neo-Confucian doctrine in both China and Japan that, though accurate, is more than a little redolent of hagiography and adds little to the established understanding. Tansō's philosophy is limned out. Central is the concept of "reverence", but the reader is not offered any very convincing

explanation of what significance this value might have in practice or in broader historical terms.

Not all those associated institutionally with de Bary share this sort of approach. Janine Anderson Sawada's *Confucian Values and Popular Zen: Sekimon Shingaku in Eighteenth-Century Japan*⁵⁷ (1993) deals with the general area of commoner Confucianism. This book falls more within religious than intellectual history. Here, at last, "spirituality" is given a more incisive and sophisticated treatment. Much of the book is factual and descriptive. The historical context emerges vividly. The process of training, the institutional and familial milieu, the problem of reconciling Zen Buddhist forms of enlightenment with Confucian moral teaching are sympathetically explored and their paradoxes exposed. This book conveys a graphic sense of Shingaku preachers as members of a commoner urban society, their limitations and their particular, quite modest, form of religiosity. If indeed there is a "de Bary tradition", this represents it at its freest and most attractive best.

IV

Yamashita's "new intellectual historians", so prominently represented by such scholars as Tetsuo Najita, H. D. Harootunian, Herman Ooms and Victor Koschmann in the eighties, were less productive during the nineties. Yet several works from this group have remained important or continued to attract serious critical attention in the period under review. Two scholars, Naoki Sakai and Tetsuo Najita have produced work that

⁵⁴ Documented in I.J. McMullen, "Itō Jinsai and the Meanings of Words", *Monumenta Nipponica*, 54: 4 (Winter, 1999): 509-20.

⁵⁵ Marleen R. Kassel, *Tokugawa Confucian Education: The Kangien Academy of Hirose Tansō* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996).

⁵⁶ Richard Rubinger, *Private Academies of Tokugawa Japan*.

⁵⁷ Janine A. Sawada, *Confucian Values and Popular Zen: Sekimon Shingaku in Eighteenth-century Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1993).

may be addressed in a review such as this.

Naoki Sakai's *Voices of the Past: the Status of Language in Eighteenth-Century Japanese Discourse* was published in 1992.⁵⁸ In its sheer density and difficulty, it remains *sui generis*. The book defied easy evaluation and inevitably aroused controversy. Its theoretical modality lay far beyond the range of most historians, even of practitioners of intellectual history; it was, however, admirably reviewed by Yamashita himself, who seemed awestruck by its theoretical claims. Five years after its publication, it was still arousing controversy. The book was the subject of a review article by Herman Ooms, the most open minded of the "new intellectual historians", in the *Journal of Japanese Studies* in 1996.⁵⁹ Ooms wrote with special authority as a scholar familiar with much of the largely continental literature that inspired Sakai's seeming intellectual hypertrophy. He was, however, far less impressed than Yamashita. He argued convincingly that Sakai's imposition of his own postmodernist problematic on Jinsai's thought distorts Jinsai's real concerns. Most tellingly, he accuses Sakai of twisting the meaning of his texts and of poor scholarship.

It is sometimes helpful, if presumptuous, when struggling with highly theoretical and unfamiliar work of this sort to assume that theoretical luxuriance conceals something relatively simple and accessible. In Sakai's case, as Ooms would have it, he is looking for "an open-ended individualism" which will make it possible to do away with the normative ethics that smothers true ethical intention. In Sakai's own words, "One is capable of being ethical

precisely because one is uncertain of the consequences of an intended ethical action. Only when here is discontinuity between intent and consequences, is the ethical possible".⁶⁰ As with other aspects of postmodernism, there is a resonance with Zen Buddhism, as well as with modern anxieties about the role of language and metaphysics. Be that as it may, Sakai claimed to have found this non-normative ethics in Jinsai's rejection of the Sung Neo-Confucian metaphysical view that identified moral norms with eternal principles immanent in men and in the external world. He argues that Jinsai believed that "ethical norms are established and affirmed in action, they do not exist either temporarily or logically anterior to action".⁶¹

But Jinsai was not a Buddhist and entertained no Buddhistic rejection of objective concepts. He believed in the existence of moral principles as taught by the Confucian Sages. It is difficult to reconcile Sakai's "non-normative" understanding with, for instance, Jinsai's own claim in *Go-Mō jigi* that "Although the goodnesses of the realm are many and the principles of the realm are numerous, yet benevolence, righteousness, ritual propriety and wisdom are the main points; and of the ten thousand goodnesses there is not one which is not itself included among them".⁶² In the light of such passages, Sakai's attempt to enlist Jinsai to resolve his postmodern predicament seems at best problematic. His book, it seems, remains mainly concerned with modern perceptions of the problem of

⁵⁸ Naoki Sakai, *Voices of the Past: The Status of Language in Eighteenth-Century Japanese Discourse* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992).

⁵⁹ Herman Ooms, "Tokugawa Texts".

⁶⁰ Sakai, 106; Ooms, "Tokugawa Texts", 392.

⁶¹ Sakai, 105; Ooms, "Tokugawa Texts", 393.

⁶² Itō Jinsai, *Go-Mō jigi*, in Yoshikawa Kōjirō and Shimizu Shigeru comp., *Itō Jinsai, Itō Tōgai, Nihon shisō taikēi*, vol. 33 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1971): 128

language and morality. As Sakai himself recently observed approvingly of cultural studies as a whole, “we are no longer simply talking about some kind of distant object, but we are really talking about our involvement in that object, too”.⁶³ *Mutatis mutandis*, the self-absorption that these words suggest informs *Voices of the Past*.

Tetsuo Najita’s major contribution for the *Cambridge History* (1991),⁶⁴ an attractive account of eighteenth-century thought, drew heavily on his *Visions of Virtue* of the preceding decade.⁶⁵ It was structured, like the earlier work, around his dichotomy between “history” and “nature” as the basis of knowledge. Most recently, he has published *Tokugawa Political Writings*,⁶⁶ in the series *Cambridge Texts in Modern Politics*. The stated aim of this series is to provide “authoritative and accessible” English-language editions of texts that “have been important in the politics of Latin America, Africa and Asia in the later nineteenth century and twentieth century, and which will continue in importance into the twenty-first”.⁶⁷ Najita’s volume is devoted to two works by Ogyū Sorai, the *Bendō* and

a partial translation of *Benmei*. Najita makes far-reaching claims for Sorai’s place in the modern world. He is a “pivotal referent”, recognized as “one who provides the conceptual handle with which to understand the modernization of Japan”.⁶⁸ His ideas, “whose full significances have yet to be determined”,⁶⁹ “continue to reverberate”.⁷⁰

Najita’s book has not been well-received. W.J. Boot, in a review article for *Monumenta Nipponica*, found that inaccuracies in translation and a failure to document quotations in Sorai’s text effectively disqualified it from serious consideration.⁷¹ Detailed examination of both introduction and translation confirms that this is a tendentious and misleading work. Both in his translation and his introductory essay, Najita systemically distorts Sorai’s thought in a liberal direction. Where Sorai is authoritarian, Najita depicts him as a kind of universalist inspired by a genial, nurturing spirit. Much of this is done on the basis of misinterpretation of Sorai’s text. This is not the place for a detailed critique of Najita’s English rendering.⁷² To take just one fairly representative example from the translation, however, Najita translates the canonical expression *shen tu*, literally “cautious over being alone”, as “humble

⁶³ Harry Harootunian and Naoki Sakai, “Dialogue: Japanese Studies and Cultural Studies”, *positions*, 7:2 (Fall, 1999), (English version of Japanese article published in *Shisō* 877 [July, 1997]): 622.

⁶⁴ Tetsuo Najita, “History and Nature in Eighteenth-century Tokugawa Thought”, in John Whitney Hall, ed., *The Cambridge History of Japan: Volume 4, Early Modern Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), Ch. 12.

⁶⁵ Tetsuo Najita, *Visions of Virtue: The Kaitokudō Merchant Academy of Osaka* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

⁶⁶ Tetsuo Najita, ed., *Tokugawa Political Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, i.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, xiv.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, xiii.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, x.

⁷¹ W.J. Boot, “Approaches to Ogyū Sorai: Translation and Transculturation”, *Monumenta Nipponica*, 54: 2 (Summer, 1999): 253-7.

⁷² Such a critique is undertaken in my review article, “Ogyū Sorai and the Definition of Terms”, *Japan Forum* 13:2 (Autumn, 2001): 249-65. This review develops material first presented in the Ohio State University workshop and I am grateful to Philip Brown for agreeing to its separate publication. It is hoped to explore the utilitarian character of Sorai’s thought and his debt to Mo-tzu in a further article.

autonomy".⁷³ His rendition suggests a whole wealth of associations remote from Sorai's mental world. Sorai did not, as Najita's use of "autonomy" suggests, underwrite an individual's capacity to determine his own conduct. Rather, he believed that behavior should be controlled by external institutions. At most, for Sorai, *shen tu* referred to a disciplined self-control when out of the sight of others. It had nothing to do with the determination of moral choice suggested by the English "autonomy". Significantly, Sorai was deeply hostile to Mencius, the classical Chinese Confucian who most promoted individual autonomy. Indeed, *Bendō* and *Benmei* are anti-Mencian and in many ways illiberal tracts.

Sorai's thought was also profoundly elitist. Najita's introduction, however, credits Sorai with the view that the people could intellectually grasp the Way and determine their conduct accordingly. But, in a passage from *Benmei* not translated by Najita, Sorai explicitly denied the utility of attempting to explain the Confucian way to people in general.⁷⁴ Rather, they were to submit to institutional control and be transformed unconsciously through its influence. Nor was Sorai in practice a particularly benevolent Confucian. He advocated the sale of human beings, and summary execution of absconding servants by their samurai masters.⁷⁵

⁷³ Najita, ed., *Tokugawa Political Writings*, 97.

⁷⁴ Ogyū Sorai, *Benmei*, in Nishida Taiichirō comp. *Ogyū Sorai, Nihon shisō taikei*: 36 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1973): 239.

⁷⁵ See J.R. McEwan, *The Political Writings of Ogyū Sorai* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 71. For a new, complete translation of *Seidan*, see Olof G. Lidin, *Ogyū Sorai's Discourse on Government (Seidan). An Annotated Translation* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999).

What has happened here? Why should the "new intellectual history" often be so critically received? Are reviewers merely petulant or pedantic to insist on more disciplined understanding of the texts? More broadly, are critics of the "new intellectual history" spoilers of its shining project to disclose the true construction of knowledge and power? Answers to such questions are contingent on ideological preference; none is likely to satisfy all parties to the debate. Over time, it is true, scholars will cumulatively reach judgment as to what work has enduring merit and what is merely fashionable; such judgment will transcend the controversies of the here and now. Meanwhile, however, it is worth noting that Herman Ooms, himself no mean theoretician, finds fault with both Harootunian and Sakai for distorted or unreliable reading of their primary texts.⁷⁶ Theory, it seems, can indeed deflect from scholarly soundness. Najita is a different case, for his work, though theoretically sophisticated, is generally much more accessible to ordinary readers. But with him, too, inattention to language and the momentum of his own exegesis would seem to carry him away from fidelity to the meaning of his original texts.

Yet theory need not distort, overburden or render work inaccessible to the ordinary reader of intellectual history. A refreshing example of just how judiciously it can combine with empirical research is provided by Gregory Smits's 1999 monograph, *Visions of Ryukyu: Identity and Ideology in Early-modern Thought and Politics*.⁷⁷ The theoretical underpinnings

⁷⁶ Ooms describes Harootunian's Tokugawa "populism" as "textually unfounded" ("Tokugawa Texts", 386); and indicts Sakai (together with Harootunian) for "twisted meanings" (Ibid., 400).

⁷⁷ Gregory Smits, *Visions of Ryukyu: Identity and Ideology in Early-Modern Thought*

of this book are not extensive; they seem to consist largely of the ideas on community and state of Benedict Anderson, Ernest Gellner and Prasenjit Duara. The attraction of the subject lies in the challenge to self-definition experienced by a small island political community caught between two powerful neighbours. True, Smits draws critically on a considerable Japanese secondary literature, and his book is something in the nature of a survey. Nor is he embarrassed to leave some problems unsolved. But he is sensitive to the internal and external pressures that influenced the choice of ideological strategy among the Ryukyu elites. His account ranges from the question of human agency in Confucian thought to practical matters such as silviculture on the islands. Yet, in spite of this range, his account is always lucid and accessible. Smits's story is inherently dramatic. His depiction of Sai On's use of Confucian ideas to assert Ryukyuan autonomy within the East Asian context is especially compelling. As he claims himself, his analysis of Sai On's use of Confucianism illumines the spread of that tradition beyond its homeland.

V

The foregoing review has touched on the most salient work on Tokugawa intellectual history in English of the last decade. Of the books mentioned here, two, those of Ikegami and Najita, stand out, by virtue of their subject matter or circumstances of publication, as most likely to reach a wide readership. These books may well form the image of Tokugawa intellectual tradition among students and the non-specialist public. It is incumbent on the community of scholars to

test such work for accuracy and reliability. Ikegami and Najita write in very different modes. But each seems to have distorted the subject of their book by masking what many would perceive as its negative aspects. It is interesting that neither Ikegami nor Najita discusses "military philosophy", the realist tradition widely studied among samurai and others during the period. This tradition has certainly deeply influenced Japan's intellectual and cultural inheritance. True, Ikegami characterizes the Tokugawa regime as a "garrison state",⁷⁸ thus implicitly recognizing the role of threatened violence in its governance. However, while siting honor at the basis of the dominant tradition and acclaiming it as a positive resource, she pays insufficient attention to its historically destructive side. She does little to confront what she would surely concede have been its terrible workings out in the twentieth century. Najita, likewise, does not discuss Sorai's well-documented interest in Chinese military writing or its impact on his thought. Still less does he mention or attempt to dispose of the charge of Arai Hakuseki, himself a "strong-arm" Confucian, that Sorai "sought to present the Sun tzu as a model for government".⁷⁹

There are, therefore, lacunae which, it may be suggested, should be addressed. It is these gaps, rather than, for instance, a radical re-periodization, that challenge scholars in the field. For the conventional concept of "Tokugawa intellectual history" retains natural chronological boundaries. It has a natural beginning with the freeing of Neo-Confucianism from Buddhist and court noble control early in the seventeenth century; and a natural end with the granting of public access to western texts with the end of the

and Politics (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999).

⁷⁸ Ikegami, 156.

⁷⁹ Nakai, 62-63.

Tokugawa period. Among the lacunae within this period, clearly, the influence of military thought is one. But polemics within the intellectual world also deserve further exploration. Both John Allen Tucker's misrecognition of the polemical nature of Itō Jinsai's thought and Najita's overly bland presentation of Sorai suggest that it will be profitable to pay more attention to controversies among intellectuals in the period. For, axiomatically, such arguments demonstrate faultlines in the thought of those who mount them. Jinsai's dismantling of Sung Neo-Confucian dualist metaphysics reveals his deep aversion to certain forms of mysticism and self-deconstruction. Sorai's anti-Mencian views help plot his position on a range of questions, including the important one of human moral subjectivity. The primary sources for Tokugawa intellectual history certainly contain references to many other controversies that could usefully be analyzed. Like geological fissures, such divisions of opinion reveal underlying formations.

Intellectual biography, too, unfashionable though it may be, can be illuminating. Biography can be subsumed under what Maruyama Masao once called the "approach via the subject". It is in some ways a humbler task than the "approach by the method" that uses exalted theory. Yet it can provide a useful control over the sometimes procrustean tendencies of the latter. It is a commonplace that one way to understand an age is through its larger minds. Fortunately, the Tokugawa period is formidably well documented, and more and more primary material is being published in accessible editions. Searching inquiry into the lives and confrontations of able and articulate men and women is always likely to be instructive. This sort of inquiry should not be inhibited by Herman Ooms's too lightly passed denunciation of the

"worn and by now questionable trope . . . of the unfulfilled promise"⁸⁰ of Tokugawa thought. Ooms's own interpretation, of course, promotes a notion of "closure" that is inhospitable to radical alternatives. But many Tokugawa intellectuals thought deeply about the betterment of their society; not all underwrote the status quo. Some drew on elements of Chinese thinking that challenged the dominance of what Ooms calls the "discursive edifice" of "submissiveness to the political order."⁸¹ Equally, some were frustrated. But their analyses may contain criticisms of their present that remain of interest.

Again, accuracy of linguistic understanding must be recognized as a sine qua non for this of all fields. It can no longer be acceptable to treat texts written in Chinese as though they were Japanese. While Yamashita was right to express gratitude for the increased availability of modern translations, he was wrong to imply that credit should be given for not relying on them. Najita's work shows how easy it is to impose wishful readings on a text if linguistic understanding is insufficiently rigorous. Perfect accuracy may be unattainable, but it should still remain a discipline to strive for.

No doubt the divisions that have so conspicuously characterized the field over the last two decades will be perpetuated in some form. But there is a sense that the most virulent and destructive phase of controversy is spent. In 1999, Harry Harootunian and Naoki Sakai published a dialogue in the Duke University periodical *positions*, entitled "Japan studies and cultural studies".⁸² The dialogue is

⁸⁰ Ooms, "Tokugawa Texts", 86.

⁸¹ Ooms, Herman, "Introduction to "The Nature of Early Tokugawa Confucianism" by Kurozumi Makoto", *Journal of Japanese Studies*, 20: 2 (Summer, 1994): 335; footnote 9 supplies further references to "closure".

⁸² See above, note 63.

informed by bitterness and self-commiseration. The titles of subsections tell the story. They include: "The crisis of Japan studies in the United States", "Culturism and the postwar policies of the United States", "The missionary positionality and the production of knowledge"; "Academic journalism and the hostility to theory"; "Colonial legacy and ethnocentrism"; and so on. The burden of the argument is that Japanese Studies in the United States has been an instrument of political and colonial power; that critical theory can expose this situation; but that critical theorists have been victimized or even "portrayed . . . as criminals"⁸³ by a Japanese studies establishment centered in major universities and working through journals such as the *Journal of Japanese Studies* and *Monumenta Nipponica*. These journals are described as enforcing their ideology through, among other things, a pedantic insistence in reviews on accuracy in translation.

The dialogue would seem both to overstate and understate the case for "theory". From a trans-Atlantic perspective, the claims of victimization are shrill. After all, the work of the main bearers of "theory" in Tokugawa intellectual history, Najita, Harootunian and Ooms, has been available in attractive and reasonably-priced paperback editions. Sakai's Tokugawa book was published by a distinguished university press. These scholars have had ample opportunity to present their views. Indeed, the impression is sometimes conveyed that theirs has been the "hegemonic" discourse. It is the works on eccentric thinkers, precisely the witnesses to the heterogeneity that the theorists claim to value, which seem to have been under-supported and starved of recognition. Nor are Harootunian and

Sakai justified in representing theory as rejected. Perhaps they have confounded broader issues with the often hostile critical response to their own work. Intellectual history abounds with examples of radical ideas that, after initial resistance, have entered common discourse. Many of the central insights of postmodernism on power and on the contingency of language that Harootunian, Sakai and others have striven to promote will, without doubt, be absorbed into the mainstream of scholarly consciousness and method. Mature scholarship will not be allergic to the best theoretical writing. Moreover, for all the perceived shortcomings of some of the work of the 'Chicago group', most scholars would surely concede that the field looks different, livelier, more exciting and imaginative, since they have visited it.

All that said, no one would wish to deny the larger point that the diversity of method and approach sketched above is a sign of vitality. The different styles of scholarship do mostly, as Yamashita suggested, contribute to understanding of the Tokugawa intellectual world. The fertility of the field remains a cause for celebration. Of course, there can be no final version of Tokugawa intellectual history. As long as understanding of man, individually and collectively, changes, so will the reading of the Tokugawa historical material necessarily also change. It is likely to remain a subject of fruitful contestation.

⁸³ Harutoonian, in Harootunian and Sakai, 612.

Tokugawa Religious History: Studies in Western Languages*

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The study of religious history in secular academic institutions in the West is interdisciplinary--depending on the scholar or topic, it takes the form of intellectual, social, literary, or art history, and draws on the methods or insights of philology, anthropology, sociology, and cultural studies, among others. European and American scholarship on the religious phenomena of Tokugawa Japan in particular represents an increasingly wide range of approaches and themes. However, various factors have worked against balance within that diversity. First, accessible historical evidence of religious life during this period has been limited to genres produced by certain social groups. The most readily available material is documents written by educated elites--particularly records of formal doctrines and institutions--rather than first-hand accounts of the everyday practices and rituals of

the majority of less-privileged people. Biographical material is extant, but consists mostly of official hagiographies and legendary anecdotes; personal testimonies by ordinary practitioners, particularly women and less-educated groups, are rarer. Second, Western scholars of religion, particularly students of the mainstream Buddhist and Confucian systems of this period, have only recently begun to shake off a long-standing preference for doctrinal and classical textual studies, a tendency that allegedly dates to the nineteenth-century Christian theological milieu in which European investigation of Asian religions originated.¹

These two factors may not be completely unrelated. After the Meiji period began, new concepts of "religion" (*shūkyō*) and "doctrine" (*kyōhō*) emerged, partly in response to perceived Western assumptions that systematic belief was a defining element of religion; in the ensuing decades, curators of certain Japanese religious institutions invested more in the preservation (in some cases, reconstruction) of Edo-period doctrinal statements than in the archiving of manuals of practice, oral lore, or informal first-person accounts.² On the other hand, a close

* Many people have assisted me during the various stages of completing this essay and the accompanying bibliography. The participants in the "Early Modern Japanese Studies: The State of the Field" symposium held at Ohio State University in April 21-23, 2000, offered stimulating responses to the first draft of this work; I am particularly grateful to the editor, Philip Brown, and to my colleague, James McMullen, for their comments, suggestions, and affirmation throughout this project. Stephen Vlastos' and Jacqueline Stone's comments on an early draft of the essay helped me make it more lucid and accurate. Michel Mohr, Paul B. Watt, and Samuel Hideo Yamashita have also extended their support and assistance. Numerous scholars in the field helped me identify and/or correct references in the bibliography and notes. I am especially indebted in this regard to W. J. Boot, Antony Boussemart, Herman Ooms, and Duncan R. Williams. Needless to say, I am fully responsible for all remaining errors and omissions from the bibliography.

¹ See esp. Gregory Schopen, "Archaeology and Protestant Presuppositions in the Study of Indian Buddhism," *History of Religions* 31 (1991): 1-23, rept. in Schopen's *Bones, Stones, and Buddhist Monks: Collected Papers on the Archaeology, Epigraphy, and Texts of Monastic Buddhism in India* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997), 1-22; and Bernard Faure, *Chan Insights and Oversights: An Epistemological Critique of the Chan Tradition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 35.

² Several new religions were compelled to create "Shinto"-based doctrinal identities under the auspices of the nativist/Shinto ideological campaign of the early Meiji; later, in the postwar period, some attempted to recreate their purported preMeiji systems of belief. Re the Western origins of the notion that religion requires belief, see W.C. Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion* (New York: Mentor, 1964), e.g., 164; or

look at the primary records of many Tokugawa religious groups reveals a keen interest in intellectual formulation that well predates the nineteenth-century encounter with Western philosophies of religion. Not only the established Buddhist and Confucian schools, but lesser-known, heterodox groups carefully preserved written statements of belief from long before the Restoration--not necessarily systematic doctrinal treatises, but sermons, dialogues between masters and disciples, popular tracts, and not infrequently, didactic letters.

The dimension of religious life about which even these documents often remain silent, however, is religious praxis, especially personal, individual practices (as opposed to official ceremonies and rites). Documentation of the practices of ordinary people as well as of the broader social functions of religion in this period is extant. However, in addition to the reasons cited above, scholars tend to neglect these documents because they are mostly manuscripts written in cursive style (*komonjo*) that require significant training in order to read.³ Western scholars who do not use these manuscripts must limit their research to works that have already been selected, edited, and published by modern

Japanese scholars. The latter in turn may represent sectarian or other interests that are not necessarily conducive to broad-based studies of Tokugawa religious history.

In any event, the Western study of Edo-period religions during the last twenty years has remained dominated by an infatuation with ideas, and consequently has overlapped considerably with the study of Tokugawa intellectual history. The latter, as Yamashita notes, has become an invigorating and even controversial field during recent years.⁴ He posits a rather evolutionary scheme according to which authors of books published between 1979 and 1992 advanced through a series of preoccupations with "modernization," "tradition," the "new intellectual history," and "postmodern" theory, and depicts each of these interpretive waves as arising partly in reaction to its predecessors.⁵ In the final analysis, however, Tokugawa intellectual history as a field is not really being redefined by these disputes. Works produced during the last two decades are still concerned with discrete "schools of thought" and articulate individual thinkers, even though this scholarship adopts a growing number of novel configurations

his *Faith and Belief* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 13-14. See also the 1980-90s series of debates about the definition and relative importance of doctrine in the study of Japanese religions, published in the *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*: Neil McMullin, "Historical and Historiographical Issues in the Study of Pre-Modern Japanese Religion," 16, no.1 (1989): 3-40; Jamie Hubbard, "Premodern, Modern, and Postmodern: Doctrine and the Study of Japanese Religion," 19, no.1 (1992): 3-27; and Neil McMullin, "Which Doctrine? Whose 'Religion?--A Rejoinder,'" 19, no.1 (1992): 29-39. Here I use "doctrine" to refer in the narrower sense to systematic theoretical representation of religious belief; but I view this as only one among many possible expressions of "thought."

On this point, see Barbara Ambros and Duncan Williams, "Local Religion in Tokugawa History: Editors' Introduction," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 28, nos. 3-4 (2001): 217.

⁵ I will not rehearse Yamashita's fascinating discussion and the subsequent debate over it here, but recommend to the reader his succinct synopses and historiographical interpretations of the major monographs in the field, on the one hand, and the critical responses it provoked, on the other: see Yamashita, "Reading Tokugawa;" The Neo-Confucian Seminar, Columbia University, "Minutes of the Meeting of 1 November 1996;" John Allen Tucker, "A Response to Sam Yamashita's 'Reading the New Tokugawa Intellectual Histories,'" *Journal of Japanese Studies* 23, no. 2 (1997): 525-536; Samuel Hideo Yamashita, "Response to John Tucker's Response," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 23, no. 2 (1997): 536-541; and Harold Bolitho, "Tokugawa Japan: The Return of the Other?," in Helen Hardacre, ed., *The Postwar Developments of Japanese Studies in the United States*, Brill's Japanese Studies Library no. 8 (Leiden, Boston, and Koln: Brill, 1998), 85-114.

informed by recent theoretical trends. Many writers enjoy elucidating ideas in terms of diachronic “developments” or “traditions,” while others explicitly argue against the coherence of such a project. The degree of attention to “context” (intellectual, social, or other) is also presented as a conscious decision, even a matter of principle, and differs radically depending on the author’s predilections.

Bolitho comments that Tokugawa intellectual history “since the mid-1980s has been in the process of splitting into two separate and contending--not to say contentious--streams.”⁶ The two currents to which he refers are the orthodox type of history that seeks the meaning of a text by relying on critical translation and interpretation of its contents in conjunction with extensive research aimed at depicting the text’s significance within a larger biographical and/or historical context, on the one hand; and the “new intellectual history” ushered in by Harootunian and Najita that draws on a variety of European theories to argue against such “common sense” historical preoccupations as “reconstructing the past” or establishing continuities, on the other. The fundamental scope of study in both camps, however, remains the same: the doctrines or values of one educated figure or of a series of educated figures within the same school or sect are examined in detail. The parameters of Yamashita’s review are accordingly defined by the quite traditional premise of most intellectual history of this period: it is the study not of people’s ideas across the board, but of the formulations of a minority of well-expressed “thinkers.” Neither he nor his critic J. Tucker consider the possibility that people other than Kokugaku and Confucian scholars might produce thought worth studying. Indeed, Yamashita’s conclusion that the new intellectual historians “chose to study those without power and influence” is highly debatable. While it is true that in terms of social origin, many of Harootunian’s nativist figures and Najita’s Kaitokudō scholars were not upper-class samurai, they nevertheless were members of privileged sectors of the population: that is, they had the

resources to learn how to read difficult Chinese and/or arcane Japanese texts. These thinkers and teachers in fact spoke for elites, mostly rural notables and well-endowed merchants, who wielded their own kind of power. Koschmann comes closer to treating a broad range of the populace, though the Tengu insurrection about which he writes was also dominated by agrarian elites.⁷

The efforts of the so-called new intellectual historians to broaden the scope and methodology of Tokugawa studies are groundbreaking. However, regardless of whether one belongs to their “interpretive community” or to a more traditional one, the challenge of accounting for the full social and/or intellectual context of an historical phenomenon remains the same.⁸ I

⁷ J. Victor Koschmann, *The Mito Ideology: Discourse, Reform, and Insurrection in Late Tokugawa Japan, 1790-1864* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 157.

Among the works that Yamashita excludes from his review are those of Walthall and Wilson, among the few scholars who have attempted to account for popular intellectual trends; see Yamashita, “Reading Tokugawa,” 5, n. 8. Cf., e.g., Anne Walthall, *Social Protest and Popular Culture in Eighteenth-Century Japan* (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 1986); the same author’s *Peasant Uprisings in Japan: A Critical Anthology of Peasant Histories* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); and George M. Wilson, *Patriots and Redeemers in Japan: Motives in the Meiji Restoration* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 77-93.

⁸ Yamashita borrows the term “interpretive community” from Stanley Fish, who articulates it in his *Is There a Text in This Class?* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980), esp. 14-17, and reevaluates and clarifies it in his *Doing What Comes Naturally: Change, Rhetoric, and the Practice of Theory in Literary and Legal Studies* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 1989), 141-160. Especially in his later remarks Fish emphasizes that interpretive communities are not immutable or monolithic, but act in a kind of dialectical

⁶ Bolitho, “Tokugawa Japan,” 102.

heartily agree with Yamashita's statement that "members of a single intellectual generation, no matter what their declared philosophical or religious affiliations, often share a distinctive conceptual vocabulary that they use in their speaking and writing."⁹ Given this premise, however, why do the cultivators of the "field" of Tokugawa intellectual history (both new and old) routinely exclude study of both popular religious thought and Buddhist belief systems (which, as often as not in the Edo period, were profoundly related)? Yamashita cites the notion of a "period discourse," but like those he critiques, he glosses over the failure of intellectual historians in general to take into account the full range of that discourse in any particular Tokugawa context. The best intellectual and religious histories of this period move beyond the conventional distinction between elite "thought" and popular "religion" that has long informed Tokugawa studies--a distinction that continues to make itself felt at the end of the twentieth century.¹⁰

I will limit my discussion here to works by authors who explicitly identify their topic as "religion" or "religious" in nature and to works of intellectual history that bear significantly, even if only implicitly, on the study of Tokugawa religious life.¹¹ However, I have included

fashion as "engines of change"--as Yamashita in fact demonstrates in his depiction of the interrelational development of his four interpretive communities.

⁹ Yamashita, "Reading Tokugawa," 24.

¹⁰ See, e.g., Bitō Masahide. "Thought and Religion: 1550-1700," in *The Cambridge History of Japan, Volume Four: Early Modern Japan*, edited by John W. Hall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 373-424; and Peter Nosco's critique of the latter essay along these lines in his review of *The Cambridge History of Japan, Volume Four*, in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 53, no. 2 (December 1993): 579.

¹¹ For consideration of some of the seminal works of Tokugawa intellectual history per se (as distinct from their bearing on religious studies) that appeared between 1979 and 1992, see Yamashita, "Reading Tokugawa," in which the

numerous intellectual histories that do not meet these arbitrary criteria in the bibliography, which is designed to accompany both the present survey and James McMullen's essay in this volume. The list covers European-language books, periodical articles, and unpublished doctoral dissertations of the last two decades that treat Tokugawa intellectual and religious history understood in the broadest sense.¹² Moreover, I have organized my remarks and the bibliography under

author usefully contextualizes the emergence of the field during these years in terms of earlier developments in the Western study of Japan; and McMullen's essay in this issue.

¹² The bibliography also includes studies of art, literature, and education that bear on Tokugawa religious history, and *selected* studies pertinent to the transitional years before and after the formal boundaries of the period (understood here as 1600-1868). In general, I exclude periodical literature that appears in unrefereed publications (newsletters, proceedings, and the like); masters theses; reviews; encyclopedia articles; and translated primary documents in sourcebooks. I do, however, include translations of primary works accompanied by introductions that have appeared as monographs, periodical articles, or unpublished dissertations. A few pre-1980 works and several post-2000 works (some of which are still in press) are cited fully in my footnotes, but not in the bibliography. Works by Japanese authors in translation are generally excluded; exceptions are cited only in order to elucidate a point or to identify an exceptional contribution to an understudied area. The works of Japanese scholars who have published directly in European languages and/or who maintain a professional presence in Western academic circles are treated as "Western." For an exhaustive recent bibliography of Tokugawa intellectual and cultural history in European and Slavic languages, see Klaus Kracht, *Japanese Thought in the Tokugawa Era: A List of Books and Articles in Western Languages* (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz Verlag, 2000). I am much indebted to Klaus Kracht for allowing me to consult his extraordinarily thorough work while it was still in press.

a set of subsections that is convenient, given the present division of the field of Japanese religious studies in the West, but artificial and misleading in its implications for the nature of Edo-period religious culture. The rubrics that I use for the “major” or “established” systems of the time--Confucianism, Buddhism, and Shinto/nativism--are, of course, intellectual constructs. They encourage us to assume that their referents are distinct, identifiable bodies of thought and practice, produced and/or consumed by people who consistently associated themselves with one system, but not the others. My utilitarian use of these categories thus perpetuates another characteristic of Western scholarship in this field that I believe is in need of revision. I will try to counterbalance this paradoxical state of affairs by identifying points of commonality in Tokugawa religious studies as a whole, across the various subfields.¹³

School Shinto and Nativist Studies

I use the term “Shinto” cautiously, given the disjunction between its modern usage, created in the early Meiji, and the multiple senses the word appears to have in earlier Japanese texts.¹⁴ By

¹³ The works listed under a particular section in the bibliography are not necessarily discussed under the homonymous section of this essay. Studies of polemical discourses by independent thinkers or sectarian critics are listed under the religious system that the writer criticizes. Studies of *rangaku* (Dutch learning), medical thought, and mathematics are listed in the “General, Thematic, and Interreligious Studies” section of the bibliography.

¹⁴ The Japanese historian Kuroda Toshio argued that in medieval Japan “Shinto” was not understood as a distinct religious system, but formed part of a ritual and symbolical complex ordered by the prevalent Buddhist paradigm of exoteric-esoteric truth. Kuroda’s thesis has led scholars of the medieval period to view Buddhist and “Shinto” phenomena as closely interacting elements within a broader social and cultural context. For the impact of Kuroda’s thesis among

“school Shinto” in particular I mean the priestly or ritual schools of the Tokugawa period (such as Yoshida, Watarai, Suika, and Shirakawa). Compared to these institutions, Kokugaku (usually translated as “nativism” or “national learning”) has gained far more attention in the Western academy. The authors of the two most extensive treatments, Harootunian and Nosco, differ greatly in their fundamental methodological premises as well as in their chronological parameters. Nosco stresses the contexts in which Kokugaku first emerged--its popular cultural environment in the Genroku era and its changing relations with specific Confucian discourses in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries--and explicitly highlights the religious quality of Norinaga’s ideas, such as his concern with reestablishing the purportedly natural unity between human beings and the gods.¹⁵ Harootunian, who resolves not to depict nativism’s “moment in history” or to identify biographical or intentional contexts, instead offers us concentrated readings of the texts themselves.¹⁶ He interprets selected themes in nativist thought as keys to its political figuration in the late Tokugawa and, ultimately, to its decline in the Meiji. The religious quality of nativism surfaces not because of any deliberate emphasis on Harootunian’s part, but almost inadvertently from his close textual analyses, which uncover specific ideas about deity,

Western scholars and references to some of his key works, see Helen Hardacre, “The Postwar Development of Studies of Japanese Religions,” in Helen Hardacre, ed., *The Postwar Development*, 205. Cf., however, Mark Teeuwen, *Watarai Shintō: An Intellectual History of the Outer Shrine in Ise* (Leiden: Research School CNWS, 1996), 6-8.

¹⁵ Peter Nosco, *Remembering Paradise: Nativism and Nostalgia in Eighteenth-Century Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1990).

¹⁶ Harry D. Harootunian, *Things Seen and Unseen: Discourse and Ideology in Tokugawa Nativism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 19; 3.

community, and worship. Embedded in Harootunian's intense prose are numerous valuable insights into pertinent agrarian attitudes of the period, such as Hirata's conviction that "eating and working were religious acts."¹⁷ Harootunian and Nosco thus elaborate, each in his own way, on nativist ideas that played an important role in the more broad-based religious movements of the late Tokugawa and beyond. However, neither foregrounds the religious premises or implications of Kokugaku as a whole, and both concentrate on the views of educated spokespersons.

More recently, the writers of several doctoral dissertations and related essays caution us not to overlook the diversity and scope of the Kokugaku phenomena. Burns takes up late nativist attacks on Norinaga's theory of Japan as a natural social body, while Teeuwen directs our attention to the neglected literary dimension of Kokugaku.¹⁸ Devine discusses the issue of Christian influences on Hirata and Breen persuasively argues that the nativism of the later activist Ōkuni Takamasa and his disciples was far less xenophobic than the Kokugaku depicted in standard textbooks.¹⁹ McNally, who attends closely to the historiography of nativist studies, argues that the modern idea of a continuous nativist "tradition" is ultimately the result of Hirata Atsutane's efforts

to legitimize his place within the Norinaga school.²⁰

None of the aforementioned intellectual histories, however, take up the details of how nativist sentiments were disseminated or what specific influence they had on popular religious life.²¹ Walthall's recent biography of an educated peasant woman who took up Hirata's ideas in the Bakumatsu period is the first English-language monograph that sheds light on how Kokugaku affected the everyday life of an individual follower--much less a female one.²² Nosco's earlier essay on the preacher Masuhō Zankō, whose exaltation of Japanese erotic and aesthetic traditions over Chinese moralism previewed Kokugaku in the early eighteenth century, also enlarges our understanding of the less formal dimensions of this movement.²³

²⁰ Mark Thomas McNally, "Phantom History: Hirata Atsutane and Tokugawa Nativism" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, 1998).

²¹ Robertson suggests that Hirata's ideas were spread in the countryside through his collaboration with farm-manual writers, but she does not examine the effect of these ideas in any specific religious context; Jennifer Robertson, "Sexy Rice: Plant Gender, Farm Manuals, and Grass-Roots Nativism," *Monumenta Nipponica* 39, no. 3 (1984): 233-60. For a recent discussion of the teaching methods of a leading Kokugaku teacher, see Jacqueline Pigeot, "Le système de lecture de Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801)," in *Repenser l'ordre, repenser l'héritage. Paysage intellectuel dans le Japon des Tokugawa (1600-1868)*, ed. Frédéric Girard, Annick Horiuchi, et Mieko Macé (Genève: Droz, 2001), 311-340.

²² Anne Walthall, *The Weak Body of a Useless Woman: Matsuo Taseko and the Meiji Restoration* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998). See also her "Nativism as a Social Movement," in *Shinto in History*, ed. John L. Breen and Mark Teeuwen (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000), 205-39.

²³ Peter Nosco, "Masuhō Zankō (1655-

¹⁷ *Things Seen*, 213.

¹⁸ See Susan Lynn Burns, "Contesting Exegesis: Visions of the Subject and the Social in Tokugawa National Learning" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1994); Mark Teeuwen, "Poetry, Sake, and Acrimony: Arakida Hisaoyu and the Kokugaku Movement," *Monumenta Nipponica* 52, no. 3 (1997): 295-325.

¹⁹ Richard Devine, "Hirata Atsutane and Christian Sources," *Monumenta Nipponica* 36, no. 1 (1981): 37-54; John L. Breen, "Shintoists in Restoration Japan (1868-1872): Towards a Reassessment," *Modern Asian Studies* 24, no. 3 (1990): 579-602; and the latter author's "Shintō and Christianity: The Dynamics of the Encounter in Bakumatsu Japan," *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, Fourth Series 6, no. 6 (1991): 49-60.

Such lesser-known figures, especially those on the fringe of established socioreligious institutions, merit more attention--their interpretations of the world often teach us more about the processes of cultural change than the writings of famous thinkers. In general, however, the religious impact of nativism "on the ground" has not been addressed in a concerted fashion by European or American scholars; it is unclear to what extent or even whether Kokugaku as such actually pervaded the religious culture of the "masses." Rather than continuing to focus on the published works of national-level figures who are conventionally identified with a formal school, it would be more fruitful at this juncture to search in local Japanese archives for records of discourse and practice left behind by little-known commentators in specific geographical areas, and to examine these fragments with an eye to determining the parameters of nativist influence. Japanese local historians' work on the social and religious life of ordinary people during the late period demands more attention in this regard.

Little has been published in Western languages regarding school Shinto. Ooms courageously analyzes Suika Shinto, the complex system of ideas and symbols devised by the Confucian scholar Yamazaki Ansai.²⁴ Teeuwen's monograph on Watarai Shinto adds much to our knowledge of both the medieval origins and the Tokugawa development of the system of ideas associated with "Ise Shinto."²⁵ The Yoshida and Shirakawa (Hakke) schools, which controlled the shrine system during this period, have received little sustained attention in Western scholarship, whether in their religious, social, economic, or political aspects. These institutions were constituted by ritual systems that were closely guarded by priestly clans, and the extant

texts associated with them make demanding reading. The study of historical "Shinto" phenomena, whether formal or popular, is an exceptionally difficult task.²⁶

Confucian Studies

Several studies of Tokugawa Confucian thought have appeared in the last two decades, but treatments that emphasize religious themes are limited in number. Early on, Boot carefully contextualized the thought of the early Tokugawa scholars Fujiwara Seika and Hayashi Razan with reference both to medieval interpretive traditions and to the impact in Japan of Korean Confucian thinkers.²⁷ W. T. de Bary, who pioneered the

²⁶ Hardacre remarks that Shinto studies have dwindled in the American academy in the late twentieth century partly because of the decline of "Shinto" itself after the war (she presumably means the decline in shrine-centered religious life in Japan); Hardacre, "The Postwar Development," 201. She also argues that the decrease in Western scholarship is related to the diminishing interest in the role Shinto purportedly played in Japanese militarism during the years leading up to the Pacific war--an interest that was earlier exemplified by such works as Daniel Holtom's *The Political Philosophy of Modern Shinto, a Study of the State Religion of Japan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1922). Moreover, Shinto as an academic field in Japan is not well-developed compared to Buddhist studies--although Shinto-related publications and activities appear to be gaining momentum during the last decade, especially under the auspices of Kokugakuin University. In the West, the support of the International Shinto Foundation had led to a recent surge in faculty positions, conferences, publications, and other scholarly activities related to Shinto.

²⁷ Willem Jan Boot, "The Adoption and Adaptation of Neo-Confucianism in Japan: The Role of Fujiwara Seika and Hayashi Razan" (D. Lit., University of Leiden, 1983).

1742): A Shinto Popularizer between Nativism and National Learning," in *Confucianism and Tokugawa Culture*, ed. Peter Nosco (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1984), 106-87.

²⁴ Herman Ooms, *Tokugawa Ideology: Early Constructs, 1570-1680* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 194-286.

²⁵ Teeuwen, *Watarai Shintō*.

argument for the religious qualities of Neo-Confucian thought in a number of earlier writings, in the Tokugawa context highlighted the concerns of Seika as well as Ishida Baigan. He identified these figures' interest in internal cultivation particularly with the Neo-Confucian notion of the "learning of the mind-and-heart" (*shingaku*) that had been interpreted in various ways in Song and Ming China and Yi Korea before it was revised further by Tokugawa Japanese scholars.²⁸ De Bary's salutary emphasis on Neo-Confucian "learning" as a way of life or spiritual discipline rather than simply a metaphysical or ethical theory inspired a number of graduate students in East Asian studies at Columbia University in the 1980s (including me), but it was M. E. Tucker who first took up the challenge of applying this perspective to the Tokugawa context. In her book and other writings she argues that the self-cultivation teachings of Kaibara Ekiken constituted a distinctive "spirituality" that was integrally related to his activities as a botanist, textual scholar, and moral educator.²⁹ Tucker's approach to Ekiken did not appeal to some intellectual historians, who yearned for more discussion of local contextual factors and the ideological implications of his thought, but her work nevertheless filled a vacuum in the study of Tokugawa religion, which had long been identified simply with "Buddhism" and "Shinto."³⁰

²⁸ W. Theodore de Bary, "Neo-Confucian Orthodoxies and the Learning of the Mind-and-Heart in Early Tokugawa Japan," in *Neo-Confucian Orthodoxy and the Learning of the Mind-and-Heart* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), 187-216.

²⁹ Mary Evelyn Tucker, *Moral and Spiritual Cultivation in Japanese Neo-Confucianism: The Life and Thought of Kaibara Ekken* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989); and her "Religious Aspects of Japanese Neo-Confucianism: The Thought of Nakae Tōju and Kaibara Ekken," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 15 (1988): 55-69.

³⁰ Yamashita, e.g., complains about M. E. Tucker's book in "Reading Tokugawa," 20-22.

Some of the resistance to M. E. Tucker's emphasis on the "spiritual" qualities of Ekiken's thought is not unrelated to the assumption that educated, non-sectarian thinkers are the proper domain of intellectual history conceived as distinct from religious studies. In spite of the popularity in the modern West of such open-ended definitions of religion as Geertz's "system of symbols" or Streng's "means of ultimate transformation," many scholars retain a preoccupation with the theistic or devotional (read: "popular") nature of religion. This often unstated premise allows historians (both Western and Japanese) to applaud studies of religion as a broad-based social force, while dismissing its relevance to educated, protoscientific thinkers like Ekiken.³¹ Younger scholars nevertheless continue to add to the growing body of work on Tokugawa Confucian thought that includes consideration of its religious aspects. J. Tucker, who has produced several innovative rereadings of early modern Japanese thought in recent years,³² revives a domain of interest that has

My own work, *Confucian Values and Popular Zen: Sekimon Shingaku in Eighteenth-Century Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1993), did not come under Yamashita's cutting knife—he covers only monographs published through 1992.

³¹ M. E. Tucker cites Frederick J. Streng's *Understanding Religious Life* (Belmont, CA: Dickenson Pub. Co., 1985), 1-9; Tucker, *Moral and Spiritual Cultivation*, 7. For Clifford Geertz's classic definition, see his *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1973), 90-91.

³² See, e.g., John Allen Tucker, "Chen Beixi, Lu Xiangshan, and Early Tokugawa (1600-1867) Philosophical Lexicography," *Philosophy East & West* 43 (1993): 683-713; "Two Mencian Political Notions in Tokugawa Japan," *Philosophy East and West* 47, no. 2 (1997): 233-53; Itō Jinsai's "Gomō Jigi" and the *Philosophical Definition of Early Modern Japan*, Brill's Japanese Studies Library 7 (Leiden, Boston, and Koln: Brill, 1998); "Ogyū Sorai's Understanding of *Watakushi* and *Ōyake*," in *État*,

remained inadequately explored in the Japanese context in his essay on Confucian notions of supernatural beings.³³ Historians of Confucian thought have long been aware that their highly-educated subjects often combined moral theorizing and humanistic programs of cultivation with a greater or lesser degree of involvement in rituals that centered on spirits or gods. Some Tokugawa scholars, notably Nakae Tōju, constructed belief systems that clearly affirmed personal notions of deity, as Ching and, more recently, Steben have emphasized.³⁴ It is true that Tokugawa Confucian scholars such as Itō Jinsai interpreted theistic beings as manifestations of the forces of yin and yang, but even so, J. Tucker argues, they were “sincerely religious people, and not mere atheists.”³⁵

However, while these scholars have rightly directed our attention to the religious dimensions of Neo-Confucian self-cultivation or “spirituality,” the relation between all aspects of the Confucian scholar’s intellectual and religious

self-presentation, including the function of non-Confucian ideas and rituals within the individual’s larger world of meaning, remains insufficiently addressed in the Japanese context. It behooves students of Tokugawa thought to gain a more detailed understanding of the religious diversity that characterized the life-world of these teachers, rather than simply remark in passing about their Shinto-type predilections or Buddhist antipathies in the course of analyzing their “main” (Confucian) doctrine. As part of his larger argument that Jinsai drew on Neo-Confucian anti-Buddhist discourse, for example, J. Tucker describes Itō Jinsai’s personal dissatisfaction with Buddhist meditation and gives a wealth of references to the historical precedents of the particular Zen technique that Jinsai repudiated.³⁶ In this way he establishes (within the admittedly limited parameters of a periodical article) a partial context for understanding why Jinsai came to dislike Buddhism. One is left wondering, however, what sort of Buddhism Jinsai encountered in mid-seventeenth Japan, such that the great philologist simply fell back on Song nihilistic caricatures of Zen?

Even if the sources do not always provide direct answers to such questions, given the advance in our linguistic and research skills, Western students of Tokugawa religious history can at least move toward integrated accounts of how diverse ideas, rituals, and institutions functioned in relation to each other within each thinker’s local universe, rather than concentrate simply on the ways in which these scholars each reconfigured a single “home tradition.” Histories contextualized in this way are more likely to account for a variety of synchronic factors in the construction of religious systems, rather than emphasizing a unilinear development. Smits for his part grounds the Confucian ideas of the Ryūkyūan scholar Sai On (1682-1761) in the broader political and social conditions of his time, and in so doing he gives some attention (though

société civile et sphère publique en Asie de l'est, ed. Charles Le Blanc and Alain Rocher (Montreal: Centre d'Études de l'Asie de l'Est, Université de Montréal, 1998), 209-38; and his "Rethinking the Akō Rōnin Debate: The Religious Significance of *Chūshin Gishi*," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 26, no. 1-2 (1999): 1-37. For a review article on J. Tucker's *Itō Jinsai's "Gomō Jigi*," see I. J. McMullen, "Itō Jinsai and the Meaning of Words," *Monumenta Nipponica* 54, no. 4 (1999): 510-520.

³³ John Allen Tucker, "Ghosts and Spirits in Tokugawa Japan: The Confucian Views of Itō Jinsai," *Japanese Religions* 21 (1996): 229-51.

³⁴ See Julia Ching, "The Idea of God in Nakae Toju" *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 11, no. 4 (1984): 293-312; Barry D. Steben, "From Samurai to Shishi: the Development of Ethical Idealism in the Yōmeigaku School of Japanese Confucianism" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1994); and the latter's "Nakae Tōju and the Birth of Wang Yang-Ming Learning in Japan," *Monumenta Serica* 46 (1998): 233-263.

³⁵ J. Tucker, "Ghosts and Spirits," 247.

³⁶ J. Tucker, "Ghosts and Spirits," 238-241. He concludes in this regard that "for rhetorical purposes, [Jinsai] merged Neo-Confucian meditation . . . with Zen meditation . . . so that he could critique them both." Brackets added.

unfortunately too little in his book) to the non-Confucian religious ideologies and practices against which Sai On polemicized.³⁷

The most erudite work in Tokugawa Confucian studies to appear in recent years is McMullen's monograph on the scholar and activist, Kumazawa Banzan.³⁸ The author's meticulous depiction of Banzan as an exemplar of progressive Confucian "humanism" is bracing after decades of criticism by the "new" intellectual historians of the "liberal, humanist vision that privileges the individual," to use Yamashita's parlance.³⁹ Whether one agrees or not with McMullen's interpretive stance (and his corollary critique of the so-called new historians for "short-ending" Tokugawa Confucianism), few will dispute that the author's forays beyond the

³⁷ Gregory J. Smits, *Visions of Ryūkyū: Identity and Ideology in Early-Modern Thought and Politics* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999); cf. the same author's "The Intersection of Politics and Thought in Ryūkyūan Confucianism: Sai On's Use of Quan," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 56 (1996): 443-77; and his "Unspeakable Things: Sai On's Ambivalent Critique of Language and Buddhism," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 24, nos. 1-2 (1997): 163-78. See also Smits' "Ryūkyūan Uses of Chinese Confucianism," in *Ryūkyū in the History of East-Asia, Asia, and the World*, ed. Josef Kreiner (Bonn: Japanologisches Seminar der Universität Bonn, 2001).

³⁸ Ian James McMullen, *Idealism, Protest, and the Tale of Genji*, *Oxford Oriental Monographs* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999). Another major study of Banzan and his predecessor Nakae Tōju has just been published by Jean-François Soum: *Nakae Tōju (1608-1648) et Kumazawa Banzan (1619-1691) -- Deux penseurs de*

l'époque d'Edo (Paris: Institut des Hautes Études Japonaises / Centre d'Études Japonaises de l'INALCO, 2000). See also Soum's essay, "Kumazawa Banzan (1619-1691): réformiste et homme de terrain," in Girard, Horiuchi, and Macé, *Repenser l'ordre*, 46-86.

³⁹ Yamashita, "Reading Tokugawa," 25.

confines of Confucian exegetical and didactic documents into the world of *Tale of Genji* criticism are invaluable contributions to our understanding of the relationship between Confucian thought and literary interpretation in Japan's early modern era.⁴⁰ More importantly for the field of Tokugawa religious and intellectual history, McMullen's creative use in his 1999 monograph of Banzan's *Genji* discourse (among others) to elucidate the Confucian scholar's commitment to reforming the sociopolitical order of his time helps redress the "old" Tokugawa intellectual historians' alleged lack of interest in the political aspects of Confucian "spirituality." The development of the field in the direction of sharper political contextualization is evidently not a function of the individual scholar's involvement in the so-called new intellectual history.

A few monographs on Confucian academies have also appeared in the last two decades, but for the most part they do not directly address issues in the study of religion.⁴¹ Kassel's study of the Kangien school run by the eclectic Confucian scholar Hirose Tansō enlarges upon the earlier discussion of this school in Rubinger's book on private academies; M.E. Tucker takes up the important case of Okayama's Confucian school.⁴² Najita proposes that Mencian and

⁴⁰ Ian James McMullen, *Genji Gaiden: The Origins of Kumazawa Banzan's Commentary on the Tale of Genji*, *Oxford Oriental Institute Monographs* 13 (Ithaca, NY: Ithaca Press for the Board of the Faculty of Oriental Studies, Oxford University, 1991); McMullen, *Idealism, Protest, and the Tale of Genji*.

⁴¹ See, however, Willem Jan Boot's recent "Education, Schooling, and Religion in Early Modern Japan," in *Two Faces of the Early Modern World: The Netherlands and Japan in the 17th and the 18th Centuries*, ed. Y. Shirahata and W. J. Boot (Kyoto: International Research Center for Japanese Studies, 2001), 15-34.

⁴² Marleen R. Kassel, *Tokugawa Confucian Education: The Kangien Academy of Hirose Tansō (1783-1856)* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1996); Richard Rubinger, *Private Academies of*

naturalistic strains of thought elaborated by Itō Jinsai, on the one hand, and Kaibara Ekiken and Nishikawa Jōken, on the other, supplied early modern merchant scholars with an open-ended discourse that allowed them to formulate their own “intellectual history.”⁴³ Although in the final analysis, as noted above, Najita’s book is concerned primarily with the conceptions of an educated merchant sector, the author successfully shows how the ideas propagated at the school formed part of the wider social and intellectual process of the time, and in so doing he makes an important contribution to the project of including the thought of commoners in Tokugawa intellectual history. Not coincidentally, Najita also displays sensitivity to Buddhist and other non-Confucian influences on Kaitokudō thought, and offers engaging reflections on issues of interest to religion scholars, such as the idea of the Confucian academy as a “community of faith.”⁴⁴ Perhaps future studies will pursue the insight that Confucian schools were not only groups of thinkers, but social structures

comparable to religious institutions, insofar as they were characterized by shared belief systems, group rituals, and master-disciple ties. A socially-based approach to Tokugawa Confucian groups is sorely lacking in Western-language scholarship, though Ikegami offers a sociological analysis of the samurai class with which most *jusha* associated.⁴⁵ Confucian scholars occupied an intriguingly liminal position in the Tokugawa social order, but they have not been treated as a social type by Western scholars since Hall’s succinct 1967 essay.⁴⁶

Several studies of independent thinkers and critics of the Confucian system have appeared during the last decade, notably essays by Pye, Ketelaar, Barrett, and Durt on the critical thinker Tominaga Nakamoto, and translations by Yasunaga and Hunter of Andō Shōeki’s writings (Yasunaga’s book includes an engaging introductory essay on Shōeki’s life and thought).⁴⁷ Joly in the meantime has produced a

Tokugawa Japan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982); and Mary Evelyn Tucker, “Confucian Education in Tokugawa Japan: The Case of the Shizutani School in Okayama Prefecture,” in *État, société civile et sphère publique en Asie de l’est*, ed. Charles Le Blanc and Alan Rocher (Montreal: Université de Montréal, 1998), 157-89.

⁴³ Tetsuo Najita, *Visions of Virtue in Tokugawa Japan: The Kaitokudō Merchant Academy of Osaka* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 16-17.

⁴⁴ Najita, *Visions of Virtue*, 60. Najita’s recent work has not been as well received as his study of Kaitokudō. See, e.g., W. J. Boot, “Approaches to Ogyū Sorai: Translation and Transculturalization,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 54, no. 2 (1999): 247-258, in which Boot also treats Ansart’s important monograph, *L’Empire du rite: La pensée politique d’Ogyū Sorai, Japon 1666-1728* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1998); and James McMullen: “Ogyū Sorai and the Definition of Terms,” *Japan Forum* 13, no. 2 (2001): 249-265.

⁴⁵ Eiko Ikegami, *The Taming of the Samurai* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).

⁴⁶ John W. Hall, “The Confucian Teacher in Tokugawa Japan,” in David Nivison and Arthur Wright, eds., *Confucianism in Action* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1967), 268-301.

⁴⁷ Michael Pye, trans., *Emerging from Meditation* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1990); James E. Ketelaar, *Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan: Buddhism and Its Persecution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 3-42; Timothy H. Barrett, “Tominaga Our Contemporary,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Third Series 3, no. 2 (1993): 245-52; Hubert Durt, *Problems of Chronology and Eschatology: Four Lectures on the Essays on Buddhism by Tominaga Nakamoto (1715-1746)*, Italian School of East Asian Studies Occasional Papers 4, edited by A. Forte (Kyoto: Istituto Italiano di Cultura, Scuola di Studi sull’Asia Orientale, 1994); Toshinobu Yasunaga, *Andō Shōeki: Social and Ecological Philosopher of Eighteenth-Century Japan* (New York and Tokyo: Weatherhill, 1992); Jeffrey Hunter, trans., *The*

full-length study of Shōeki's notion of *shizen* (defined as the spontaneous movement of "vital principle"), in which the author entertains, among other issues, the question of Daoist influences on Shōeki's thought, the latter's critique of the legendary sage-kings of ancient China (in reaction to Ogyū Sorai's views), and intriguingly, the conservative ideologization of the term *shizen* in Japan in comparison with that of *nature* in France during the same period.⁴⁸ Consideration of gender is also beginning to inform scholarship on Tokugawa discourses, as exemplified in the recent work of Burns and Gramlich-Oka.⁴⁹

Animal Court: A Political Fable from Old Japan [Hosei monogatari by Andō Shōeki] (New York and Tokyo: Weatherhill, 1992).

⁴⁸ Jacques Joly, *Le naturel selon Andō Shōeki: Un type de discours sur la nature et la spontanéité par un maître confucéen de l'époque Tokugawa: Andō Shōeki (1703-1762)* (Paris: Maisonneuve & Larose, 1996). See also Jacques Joly, "L'idée de shizen chez Andō Shōeki: Comparatisme et récupération," *Revue Philosophique de Louvain* 92, no. 4 (1994): 546-49; and the author's recent essay, "Andō Shōeki (1703?-1762) et la critiques des saints du Confucianisme," in Girard, Horiuchi, and Macé, *Repenser l'ordre*, 267-310.

⁴⁹ See Susan L. Burns, "The Body as Text: Confucianism, Reproduction, and Gender in Tokugawa Japan," in *Rethinking Confucianism: Past and Present in China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam*, ed. Benjamin Elman with John Duncan and Herman Ooms, UCLA Asian Pacific Monograph Series (Los Angeles: UCLA Asia-Pacific Institute, 2002); and Bettina Gramlich-Oka, "Tadano Makuzu and Her *Hitori kangae*," *Monumenta Nipponica* 56, no. 1 (2000): 1-20. See also Janet Goodwin, Bettina Gramlich-Oka, Elizabeth A. Leicester, Yuki Terazawa, and Anne Walthall, trans., "Solitary Thoughts: A Translation of Tadano Makuzu's *Hitori kangae*," 2 pts., *Monumenta Nipponica* 56, nos. 1-2 (2000-01): 21-38; 173-195. Yuki Terazawa has completed a dissertation on early modern and modern medical practices that foregrounds issues of gender: "Gender, Knowledge, and Power:

Confucian influences in Tokugawa literature and the fine arts, as opposed to discursive representations of thought, apparently have little interest for Western scholars, though Keene has written an essay on Confucian elements in Chikamatsu's plays.⁵⁰ Perhaps more representative of late twentieth-century approaches to Confucian themes in literature and art is Delprat's study of anti-Neo-Confucian currents in Hiraga Gennai's *gesaku* writings; or, more recently, Gerhart's examination of the contribution of the official Tokugawa painter, Kano Tan'yu, to early shogunal ideological strategies, which encompassed Confucian as well as Shinto and other religious themes.⁵¹

Reproductive Medicine in Japan, 1790-1930" (unpublished Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles, 2001).

⁵⁰ Donald Keene, "Characteristic Responses to Confucianism in Tokugawa Literature," in *Confucianism and Tokugawa Culture*, ed. Peter Nosco (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 120-37.

⁵¹ Adriana Delprat, "Forms of Dissent in the Gesaku Literature of Hiraga Gennai (1728-1780)" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1985); Karen Margaret Gerhart, *The Eyes of Power: Art and Early Tokugawa Authority* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000). See also Arthur H. Thornhill III, "Impersonality in Bashō: Neo-Confucianism and Japanese Poetry," in *Self as Image in Asian Theory and Practice*, edited by Roger T. Ames, et al. (Albany: SUNY, 1998), 341-356. Two new collections of essays that contain significant contributions to the study of Tokugawa thought are the aforementioned *Repenser l'ordre*, ed. Girard, Horiuchi, and Macé; and *Rethinking Confucianism*, ed. Elman, Duncan, and Ooms. In addition to the essays mentioned elsewhere in this survey, pieces in the former collection relevant to Confucian thought are Olivier Ansart, "Les chemins de la justification," *Repenser*, 3-48; and Herman Ooms, "Logique des idées et logique de la pratique dans le Japon des Tokugawa," *Repenser*, 125-166. Essays on Confucian themes in *Rethinking Confucianism*

Buddhist Studies

Considering the proliferation of Buddhist temples and obligatory parishioners under the Tokugawa rule, the relative dearth of European and American scholarship on early modern Buddhism is striking. This neglect allegedly stems from the influence of modern Japanese Buddhist scholars who have argued (not entirely without justification) since the Meiji period that Tokugawa Buddhism was intellectually dull, if not moribund. During the last decades, however, both Japanese and Western scholars have begun to reread known primary sources, to explore documents catalogued by local history societies, and to discover new ones in temple archives. A wider range of views about the significance of Buddhist phenomena during the period is thus beginning to emerge. In the West, intellectual history dominated this field through the late twentieth century, but institutional and social history is now rapidly gaining momentum and, if we are to judge by recent dissertation topics, is about to overtake the former approach.

Watt's studies of the Shingon Ritsu master, Jiun Onkō, whose moral teachings later became an important source of Meiji Buddhist ideology, pioneered the field of Tokugawa Buddhist studies in the early 1980s. His concerted attention to the relationship between Jiun's Buddhist ideas and the Confucian intellectual environment is noteworthy, especially in comparison with more recent Western-language studies of Tokugawa Buddhism.⁵² The overwhelmingly majority of

include Kate Wildman Nakai, "Chinese Ritual and Native Identity in Tokugawa Confucianism;" and Herman Ooms, "Human Nature: Singular (China) and Plural (Japan)?"

⁵² Paul B. Watt, "Jiun Sonja (1718-1804): Life and Thought" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1982); "Jiun Sonja (1718-1804): A Response to Confucianism within the Context of Buddhist Reform," in *Confucianism and Tokugawa Culture*, ed. Peter Nosco (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 188-214; and the same author's "Sermons on the Precepts and Monastic Life by the Shingon

Western studies of Tokugawa Buddhism during the last twenty years have focused on Zen figures, however. I will not speculate here why Westerners of this generation have been preoccupied with Zen almost to the exclusion of other forms of Japanese Buddhism, both inside and outside the academy. Hardacre reasons, I think correctly, that the recent surge in academic studies of Zen Buddhism is part of a general movement to counter the idealized image of Zen that was popularized by D.T. Suzuki and his followers in the fifties and sixties.⁵³ In any case, the increased academic attention to Zen history has resulted in a number of excellent, in-depth studies of Tokugawa Zen Buddhist leaders and their teachings. Dissertations, books, articles, and translations by Tyler, Haskel, Schwaller, Waddell, Mohr, Baroni, Gross, and Williams have given us a basic fund of knowledge about the development of Zen Buddhism during this period. Haskel's contextualization of Rinzai Zen master Bankei Yōtaku, a popularizer who preached to large crowds of laypeople, elucidates the reformist impulses of early Tokugawa Zen.⁵⁴ Tyler and

Vinaya Master Jiun," *The Eastern Buddhist*, ns 25, no. 2 (1992): 119-28. A full-scale treatment of Jiun's even more explicit preoccupation with Shinto themes still awaits publication.

⁵³ Hardacre, "The Postwar Development," 208.

⁵⁴ Peter Haskel, "Bankei and His World" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1988). Haskel's dissertation remains unpublished, though he and Waddell have produced readable and accurate translations of Bankei's sermons; Peter Haskel, *Bankei Zen: Translations for the Record of Bankei*, ed. Yoshito Hakeda (New York: Grove Press, 1984); Norman Waddell, trans, *The Unborn: The Life and Teaching of Zen Master Bankei, 1622-1693* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1984). More recently, Peter Haskel has published a translation (with introduction) of Tokugawa Zen master Menzan Zuihō's biography of the Sōtō teacher Tōsui Unkei (d. 1683): *Letting Go: The Story of Zen Master Tōsui* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001).

Ooms each make modest but perceptive contributions to our understanding of the ethical stance and ideological role, respectively, of another early Tokugawa Zen preacher, Suzuki Shōsan.⁵⁵ Schwaller and Baroni cover the leading figures of the Ōbaku Zen sect, which is important especially because of its impact on the dominant Sōtō and Rinzai Zen schools of the time.⁵⁶ Baroni's book in particular sets in relief the role of intercultural tensions in the seventeenth-century Japanese reception of this Ming Chinese form of Buddhism, which differed considerably from earlier Song imports. The Tokugawa intra-Zen polemics oddly parallel Japanese Confucian debates over the relative orthodoxy of the Song versus Ming (and later, Qing) Confucian schools.

The construction of a Tokugawa history of Rinzai, which was (and is) smaller and more

elitist than the Sōtō sect in Japan, has long been a challenge to both Japanese and Western historians because of the difficult, fragmentary nature of primary sources. Mohr's extraordinarily learned study of Tōrei Enji, the successor of the great Zen master Hakuin, supplies information about the early contours of the Hakuin school that is indispensable for understanding the nature of the Rinzai sect as it exists today.⁵⁷ For example, Mohr points out Tōrei's failure to advocate systematic koan practice--suggesting that this vaunted "Hakuin" approach is in fact a creation of the nineteenth century at the earliest.⁵⁸ Moreover, unlike other scholars in Zen studies, Mohr is not afraid to compare and contrast the ideas of figures across sectarian lines; in his exploratory essays he helps undermine conventional assumptions about the self-enclosed nature of the three Zen sects of this period.⁵⁹ On

⁵⁵ Royall Tyler, "The Tokugawa Peace and Popular Religion: Suzuki Shōsan, Kakugyō Tōbutsu, and Jikigyō Miroku," in *Confucianism and Tokugawa Culture*, ed. Peter Nosco (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 92-119; and Ooms, *Tokugawa Ideology: Early Constructs, 1570-1680*. Tyler earlier produced a useful translation and introduction to Shōsan's vernacular writings: *Selected Writings of Suzuki Shōsan* (Ithaca, NY: China-Japan Program, Cornell University, 1977). See also Winston L. King, *Death Was His Koan: The Samurai-Zen of Suzuki Shōsan* (Berkeley, CA: Asian Humanities Press, 1986).

⁵⁶ Dieter Schwaller, "Der Text Mukai Nanshin der Japanische Zen-Mönch Chōon Dōkai," *Asiatische Studien/Études Asiatiques* 42 (1988): 107-19; *Der Japanische Ōbaku-Mönch Tetsugen Dōkō: Leben, Denken, Schriften* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1989); *Unreiner Zen? Zwei Texte des Ōbaku-Mönch Chōon Dōkai (1628-1695)* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1996); and Helen J. Baroni, "Bottled Anger: Episodes of Ōbaku Conflict in the Tokugawa Period," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 21, nos. 2-3 (1994): 191-210; *Ōbaku Zen: The Emergence of the Third Sect of Zen in Early Tokugawa Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000).

⁵⁷ Michel Mohr, *Traité sur l'inépuisable lampe du Zen: Tōrei et sa vision de l'éveil*, 2 vols., *Mélanges Chinois et Bouddhiques* 28 (Bruxelles: Institute Belge des Hautes Études Chinoises, 1997).

⁵⁸ Mohr, *Traité*; and the same author's "Emerging from Non-Duality: Kōan Practice in the Rinzai Tradition since Hakuin," in *The Kōan: Texts and Contexts*, ed. Steven Heine and Dale S. Wright (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 244-79. Mohr has also written a detailed essay on Hakuin that usefully supplements Philip B. Yampolsky's classic study, *The Zen Master Hakuin: Selected Writings* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971); see Michel Mohr, "Hakuin," in *Buddhist Spirituality: Later China, Korea, Japan, and the Modern World*, ed. Yoshinori Takeuchi (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1999), 307-28. See also Mohr's recent "L'héritage contesté de Dokuan Genkō (1630-1698): tradition et conflits dans le bouddhisme Zen du XVII^e siècle," in *Repenser*, ed. Girard, Horiuchi, and Mace, 209-266.

⁵⁹ Michel Mohr, "Examining the Sources of Japanese Rinzaï Zen," *Japanese Journal of Japanese Studies* 20, no. 4 (1993): 331-44; and his "Zen Buddhism During the Tokugawa Period:

the Sōtō side, Bodiford takes an in-depth look at the construction of sectarian policy in this period, while Gross discusses the issue of lineage transmission with reference to the ideas of Manzan Dōhaku, a leading sectarian reformer of the period.⁶⁰

This spate of more contextualized Zen studies, whatever the driving forces behind it, goes a good way toward dispelling, at least in the academic world, the image of the so-called “free-floating” or “timeless” Zen popularized in the mid-twentieth century.⁶¹ The evolution of scholarship on the Zen monk-poet Ryōkan is illustrative of the same trend. Earlier translations of Ryōkan’s poetry, such as Yuasa’s work, have now been supplemented by Abé and Haskell’s *Great Fool*, which includes extensive commentary as well as new translations of Ryōkan’s writings.⁶² Abé and Haskell make a

point of relating the poet’s work and ideas explicitly to the socioreligious conditions of the time in which he lived. Ryōkan’s popular image in modern Japan as a failed monk or misfit loses much of its force in the face of the authors’ argument that his behavior was a conscious critique of the Tokugawa regime’s temple bureaucracy.⁶³

Recent literary studies of Tokugawa religious themes also include Barnhill’s use of anthropological theory to interpret Bashō’s religious sensibilities and Heine’s arguments for the centrality of Pure Land Buddhist themes in Chikamatsu’s plays.⁶⁴ It is difficult, of course, to draw general conclusions about trends in the development of Tokugawa intellectual and religious history based on the study of great monks, poets, and playwrights; yet Western academics have been less interested in the informal religious sentiments and practices that were disseminated on a large scale during the

The Challenge to Go Beyond Sectarian Consciousness,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 21, no. 4 (1994): 341-72.

⁶⁰ William M. Bodiford, “Dharma Transmission in Sōtō Zen: Manzan Dōhaku’s Reform Movement,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 46, no. 4 (1991): 423-51; Lawrence William Gross, “Manzan Dōhaku and the Transmission of the Teaching” (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1998). David Riggs is writing a dissertation on Sōtō reformist activism titled “Menzan Zuihō and the Reform of Japanese Sōtō Zen in the Tokugawa Era” (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 2002).

⁶¹ “Free-floating Zen” is Sharf’s usage; see Robert Sharf, “Whose Zen? Zen Nationalism Revisited,” in *Rude Awakenings: Zen, the Kyoto School, and the Question of Nationalism*, ed. James W. Heisig and John C. Maraldo (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1994), 43; “timeless” is Williams’; see Duncan Ryūken Williams, “Representations of Zen: An Institutional and Social History of Sōtō Zen Buddhism in Edo” (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 2000), 1.

⁶² Nobuyuki Yuasa, *The Zen Poems of Ryōkan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press,

1981); Ryūichi Abé and Peter Haskell, *Great Fool: Zen Master Ryōkan--Poems, Letters, and Other Writings* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1996).

⁶³ Patrick McElligott similarly adopts a “life-and-thought” approach to the poet Kobayashi Issa in his “The Life and Work of Kobayashi Issa” (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of London, 1984), but according to his abstract he does not dwell on the Buddhist elements in Kobayashi’s thought. For a recent discussion of Tokugawa Buddhism in relation to Christianity, see Frédéric Girard, “Discours bouddhiques face au christianisme,” in *Repenser*, ed. Girard, Horiuchi, and Macé, 167-208.

⁶⁴ David L. Barnhill, “Bashō as Bat: Wayfaring and Antistructure in the Journals of Matsuo Bashō,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 49; no. 2 (1990): 274-90; Steven Heine, “Tragedy and Salvation in the Floating World: Chikamatsu’s Double Suicide Drama as Millenarian Discourse,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 53; no. 2 (1994): 367-93. On Bashō, see also Gary Ebersole, “Matsuo Bashō and the Way of Poetry in the Japanese Religious Tradition” (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1981).

period through vernacular texts, oral performances, and the like. A range of popular didactic literature circulated widely beginning at least in the seventeenth century, but few of these texts have received scholarly attention.⁶⁵ Sanford discusses and partially translates the widely-read *Ikkyū banashi*, a series of humorous moral tales inspired by Ikkyū Sōjun, the unorthodox Zen poet of medieval times; Ooms mines a group of syncretic, anonymous tracts inspired by popularized Neo-Confucian notions of the "Way of Heaven" (*tendō*).⁶⁶ The most extensive recent consideration of how Buddhist ideas were disseminated, as distinct from their doctrinal content, is Harrison's dissertation on Pure Land preaching styles.⁶⁷ Otherwise, we have seen few reverberations in the Tokugawa context of the recent interest in performed religious culture among Western scholars of medieval and contemporary Japan.⁶⁸ Buddhist-

⁶⁵ See Sawada, *Confucian Values and Popular Zen*, 17-26, for a summary of Confucian and Zen Buddhist genres of Tokugawa vernacular didactic literature.

⁶⁶ James H. Sanford, *Zen-Man Ikkyū* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1981), 245-296. These legendary stories seem to be the source for the animated Ikkyū stories shown on Japanese television today. The Shingaku "Ikkyū" text, "A Word to the Wise," another Buddhist-type vernacular didactic product, is translated in my "No Eye: A Word to the Wise," *The Eastern Buddhist*, ns 24, no. 2 (1991): 98-122. For Ooms' contributions in this regard, see his *Tokugawa Ideology* and his "'Primeval Chaos' and 'Mental Void' in Early Tokugawa Ideology: Fujiwara Seika, Suzuki Shōsan, and Yamazaki Ansai," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 13, no. 4 (1986): 245-60.

⁶⁷ Elizabeth G. Harrison, "Encountering Amida: Jōdō Shinshū Sermons in Eighteenth-Century Japan" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1992).

⁶⁸ E.g., Irit Averbuch, *The Gods Come Dancing: A Study of the Japanese Ritual Dance of Yamabushi Kagura* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell

University East Asia Program, 1995); Jane Marie Law, *Puppets of Nostalgia: The Life, Death, and Rebirth of the Japanese Awaji Ningyō Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997). Susan Matisoff's "Holy Horrors: The Sermon-Ballads of Medieval and Early Modern Japan," in *Flowing Traces: Buddhism in the Literary and Visual Arts of Japan*, ed. William LaFleur, James Sanford, and Masatoshi Nagatomi (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 234-61, deals briefly with early modern performative phenomena. See also David Lee Fish, "'Edo Sato Kagura': Ritual, Drama, Farce and Music in a Pre-Modern Shinto Theatrical" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1994).

Although the social, political, and economic aspects of religious institutions are increasingly taken into account in Edo-period Buddhist studies, for the most part, as we have seen, Western scholars have focused on the doctrines and, to a lesser extent, praxes propagated by well-known Buddhist masters.⁷⁰ Recent graduate studies, however, indicate that interest in the social and economic aspects of Edo Buddhism is growing. This trend promises Western readers a more complete picture of how Buddhist temples and their staff affected the everyday lives of people in Tokugawa society--knowledge that is

University East Asia Program, 1995); Jane Marie Law, *Puppets of Nostalgia: The Life, Death, and Rebirth of the Japanese Awaji Ningyō Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997). Susan Matisoff's "Holy Horrors: The Sermon-Ballads of Medieval and Early Modern Japan," in *Flowing Traces: Buddhism in the Literary and Visual Arts of Japan*, ed. William LaFleur, James Sanford, and Masatoshi Nagatomi (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 234-61, deals briefly with early modern performative phenomena. See also David Lee Fish, "'Edo Sato Kagura': Ritual, Drama, Farce and Music in a Pre-Modern Shinto Theatrical" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1994).

⁶⁹ Riley Kelly Lee, "Yearning for the Bell: A Study of Transmission in the Shakuhachi Honkyoku Tradition" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Sydney, 1993); Tone Takahashi, "Tozan-Ryū: An Innovation of the Shakuhachi Tradition from Fuke-Shū to Secularism" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Florida State University, 1990).

⁷⁰ Marcure's description of the *danka* system through which the Tokugawa shogunate controlled Buddhist temples and their parishioners is a rare early exception; Kenneth A. Marcure, "The Danka System," *Monumenta Nipponica* 40, no.1 (1985): 39-67.

indispensable for understanding the nature of today's Japanese Buddhist communities. Along these lines, Hur has published a full-scale analysis of the Edo temple Sensōji in its local context; he emphasizes the ways in which the Buddhism of this important temple was shaped by the economic and ritual needs of its patrons.⁷¹ Williams has completed a marvelously wide-ranging dissertation on the Tokugawa history of the Sōtō Zen sect that accounts for its explosive growth in terms of social and economic factors, such as the willingness of Sōtō priests to accommodate popular pharmacological needs.⁷² Wright's study of Mantokuji, a Tokugawa ancestral temple that operated as a "divorce temple," emphasizes its role in legitimizing the shogunal house, especially the latter's female members, and in serving the economic and political needs of the samurai and privileged commoner women who patronized it.⁷³

⁷¹ Nam-lin Hur, *Prayer and Play in Late Tokugawa Japan: Asakusa Sensōji and Edo Society* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, Harvard University Press, 2000).

⁷² Williams, "Representations of Zen." For a socially-based approach to Tokugawa Buddhism see also Alexander M. Vesey, "Entering the Temple: Priests, Peasants, and Village Contention in Tokugawa Japan," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 28, nos. 3-4 (2001): 292-328. Vesey is currently completing a dissertation at Princeton University on the social history of Buddhism in the Kantō area during the Tokugawa, titled "The Role of the Buddhist Clergy in Early Modern Japanese Villages."

⁷³ Diana E. Wright, "The Power of Religion/the Religion of Power: Religious Activities as Upaya for Women of the Edo Period. The Case of Mantokuji" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1996); "Severing the Karmic Ties That Bind: The 'Divorce Temple' Mantokuji," *Monumenta Nipponica* 52, no. 3 (1997): 357-80. Although not specifically concerned with Buddhism, among the recent socially-informed histories of religious practice I would also include Reiko Sono's work

Thornton for her part employs Weber's notion of the routinization of charisma to account for the development of the social organization of the Ji sect of Pure Land Buddhism from medieval times through the first century of the Edo period.⁷⁴

The new socially-oriented histories of Buddhism fill an important need in the field for detailed information about Tokugawa religious institutions; without works like these, Western observers will continue to underestimate the scope of religious life in early modern Japan. Of course, each new wave of interpretive approaches harbors the seeds of its own demise; preoccupation with the social and economic functions of religious communities can become as insular in its own way as infatuation with intellectual "traditions" taken out of their social context. The ideal approach to the study of religion is concerted attention to particular institutions, practices, and ideas in relation both to each other and the wider world. Especially in the case of Japanese Buddhist studies, concentration on local, contextual factors in the development of temple communities, sects, or

on early Tokugawa ritual systems, titled "Gift Society: Rituals of Exchange in Tokugawa Iemitsu's Japan (1623-1651) (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 2001). See also Helen Hardacre's recent book, *Religion and Society in Nineteenth-Century Japan: A Study of the Southern Kantō Region, Using Late Edo and Early Meiji Gazeteers* (Ctr. for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan Press, 2002), as well as her article in "Sources for the Study of Religion and Society in the Late Edo Period," *Journal of Japanese Religious Studies* 28, nos. 3-4 (2001): 227-260. This issue of the *Journal*, titled "Local Religion in Tokugawa History" (edited by Barbara Ambros and Duncan Williams), is a major contribution to the social history of Tokugawa religion. It brings together the work of several emerging and established scholars whose work has been inspired by Tamamuro Fumio's call for localized research methods in the study of Japanese religions.

⁷⁴ Sybil A. Thornton, *Charisma and Community Formation in Medieval Japan* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University East Asia Program, 1999).

practices loses power when it is not informed by awareness of patterns throughout Buddhist history in Asia, or for that matter, religious history in general. In practice, this means perusing formal and popular doctrinal texts, as well as the detailed economic and social data conserved in temple archives, and interpreting these holistically in such a way as to contribute to broader scholarly debates--a daunting task.

Heterodox and Popular Religious Movements

The topic of Christianity in Japan is receiving less attention in recent years compared to other religious phenomena.⁷⁵ With regard to the Tokugawa, coverage inevitably focuses on the Kakure Kirishitan communities, with occasional forays into later, isolated Christian influences in the nineteenth century.⁷⁶ Ōhashi calls attention to the influence of social class within the Kirishitan community, arguing that the government at first targetted the foreign missionaries and their samurai converts and only later shifted its attention to the general populace.⁷⁷ Because of its underground past, however, treatments of the Kirishitan movement usually concentrate on modern survivals more than any specific Tokugawa history.⁷⁸ Turnbull's

⁷⁵ Hardacre, "The Postwar Development," 201, 213.

⁷⁶ Essays that treat nativist reactions to and interpretations of Christianity are Devine, "Hirata Atsutane and Christian Sources," 37-54; Breen, "Shintō and Christianity," 49-60; and the latter's "Accommodating the Alien: Ōkuni Takamasa and the Religion of the Lord of Heaven," in *Religion and Japan: Arrows to Heaven and Earth*, ed. P. F. Kornicki and I. J. McMullen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 179-97.

⁷⁷ Yukihiro Ōhashi, "New Perspectives on the Early Tokugawa Persecution," in *Japan and Christianity: Impacts and Responses*, ed. John L. Breen and Mark Williams (London and New York: MacMillan Press and St. Martin's Press, 1996), 46-62.

⁷⁸ See for example, Mary Ann Harrington,

thorough monograph relies on primary historical documents as well as contemporary fieldwork, but even so he deals mostly with today's Kakure communities.⁷⁹ His and Whelan's studies of the 1823 Kirishitan scripture, *Tenchi hajimari no koto*, offer additional insight into the Tokugawa configuration of the Kirishitan belief system; Turnbull in particular suggests that the content of this canon may shed more light on the early Catholic missionaries' accommodationism than on the alleged indigenous "corruption" of Christian ideas.⁸⁰ Nosco in turn discusses issues of secret transmission in the Kakure Kirishitan movement.⁸¹ Much remains to be done, however, on underground movements in general (such as the *kakure nenbutsu* phenomena), following the lead of Japanese scholars.

It is no coincidence that in studies of heterodox movements, new religions, and so-called folk religion, attention is frequently focused not only on the doctrines or ideas of the religious subjects in question, but also

Japan's Hidden Christians (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1993), only half of which ostensibly deals with early modern developments.

⁷⁹ Stephen Turnbull, *The Kakure Kirishitan of Japan: A Study of Their Development, Beliefs and Rituals to the Present Day*, *Japan Library* (Richmond, Surrey, UK: Curzon Press, 1998).

⁸⁰ Stephen Turnbull, "Acculturation among the *Kakure Kirishitan*: Some Conclusions from the *Tenchi Hajimari No Koto*," in *Japan and Christianity: Impacts and Responses*, ed. John L. Breen and Mark Williams (London and New York: MacMillan Press and St. Martin's Press, 1996), 63-74; Christal Whelan, trans, *The Beginning of Heaven and Earth* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996).

⁸¹ Peter Nosco, "Secrecy and the Transmission of Tradition--Issues in the Study of the 'Underground' Christians," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 20, no. 1 (1993): 3-30; Ikuo Higashibaba, "Beliefs and Practices of Lay Christians in Early Modern Japan" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Graduate Theological Union, 1997) is a general treatment of the ideas and practices of the early Kirishitan community.

(sometimes overwhelmingly) on their practices and institutions. Intellectual history plays a less important role here than in the mainstream fields, if for no other reason than that primary statements of these groups' beliefs were never recorded in the first place, are not extant, or at best, still languish (often in near-undecipherable form) in little-known private collections. However, the condition of these sources is not the only factor in the downplaying of popular thought. The ideas of the spokespersons of these movements (whether founders or articulate members) are often not deemed intellectually creative enough to merit exhaustive analysis. Late twentieth-century European-language studies of popular religious phenomena (*minshū shūkyō*), including the early new religions, tend to depict them as communities or episodic movements, often with more attention to their social, economic, and political dimensions than is common in treatments of outstanding thinkers. To be sure, the ideas associated with non-mainstream religions are not always assumed to be without interest; in some cases, they constitute the chief topic of study. A rare example of this approach is Parker's dissertation on Nyoraikyō, an obscure late Tokugawa movement that remains understudied because access to the group's Edo-period sources is routinely denied to outsiders, particularly scholars (both Japanese and other). Parker, who was greatly aided by Murakami Shigeyoshi and his assistants at the time, Kanda Hideo and Asano Miwako, devotes approximately two-thirds of his text to a description and analysis of the founder Kino's teachings.⁸²

Regardless of the availability of sources, concentration on thought is in fact a critical first step in the study of small, obscure, and heterodox religious groups. Without extensive clarification of the vocabularies and discourses peculiar to

⁸² Kenneth Wayne Parker, "Okyōsama: Documentation of the Founding of Nyorai-Kyō, Japan's First New Religion" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1983). Asano, formerly of Aichi Kyōiku Daigaku, and Kanda, of Tenri Daigaku, are the current experts on Nyoraikyō today.

these movements, analysis of their rituals and institutions (much less interpretation of these groups within a wider intellectual or social context) simply cannot proceed. Close attention to articulations of belief is particularly desirable in the study of groups in which doctrines were purportedly revealed to uneducated or illiterate religious figures (because of the difficulty of sorting out the various "voices" involved in the formulation of credal statements); but it applies to all studies of non-mainstream religions, since the members of these associations do not necessarily share the theoretical premises of the established Buddhist, Confucian, or Shinto systems with which scholars tend to be familiar.

The importance of mountains in Edo religious history has been recognized in a number of Western-language essays in recent years. Tyler and Collcutt identify the distinctive religious concerns of the leaders of Fujikō (the devotional movement dedicated to Mt. Fuji) and their common ground with Confucian conceptions of the time.⁸³ Miyazaki pioneers the Western-language study of Fujidō (a Fujikō offshoot) in a nuanced essay on the group's conflicting responses to the nativist ideologies of the late Tokugawa and early Meiji.⁸⁴ Hardacre touches

⁸³ Tyler, "The Tokugawa Peace and Popular Religion: Suzuki Shōsan, Kakugyō Tōbutsu, and Jikigyō Miroku," 92-119; Martin Collcutt, "Mt. Fuji as the Realm of Miroku: The Transformation of Maitreya in the Cult of Mt. Fuji in Early Modern Japan," in *Maitreya, the Future Buddha*, ed. Alan Sponberg and Helen Hardacre (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 248-69. See also H. Byron Earhart, "Mount Fuji and Shugendō," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 16, nos. 2-3 (1989): 205-226.

⁸⁴ Fumiko Miyazaki, "The Formation of Emperor Worship in the New Religions--the Case of Fujidō," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 17, nos. 2-3 (1990): 281-314. The moral ideas and ritual practices of Maruyamakyō, a later outgrowth of Edo-period Fujikō, are discussed in my "Mind and Morality in Nineteenth-Century Japanese Religions: Misogi-Kyō and Maruyama-

on mountain religion in her essay on conflicts between Shugendō and the emergent new religions in the Bakumatsu period.⁸⁵ Dissertations by Devi and Thal treat the Konpira pilgrimage movement associated with Mt. Zōzu, a mountain in Kagawa prefecture. The former reportedly highlights the “pragmatic and utilitarian” aspects of this syncretic movement; the latter treats especially the Meiji reconfiguration of Konpira pilgrimage practices, but is well worth consulting for retrospective insight into the group’s late-Tokugawa history.⁸⁶ Formanek has recently written on the relevance of the Edo-era Mt. Tateyama pilgrimage to modern Japanese life; Miyazaki and Williams take up practices related to Osorezan, and Ambros discusses the role of the *oshi* or mountain guides at Ōyama.⁸⁷ Bouchy’s and

Kyō," *Philosophy East & West* 48, no. 1 (1998): 108-41.

⁸⁵ Helen Hardacre, "Conflict between Shugendō and the New Religions of Bakumatsu Japan," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 21, nos. 2-3 (1994): 137-66.

⁸⁶ Shanti Devi, "Hospitality for the Gods: Popular Religion in Edo, Japan: An Example" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Hawaii, 1986); Sarah E. Thal, "Rearranging the Landscape of the Gods: A History of Konpira Pilgrimage in the Meiji Period" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1999).

⁸⁷ See Susanne Formanek, "Pilgrimage in the Edo Period: Forerunner of Modern Domestic Tension? The Example of the Pilgrimage to Mount Tateyama," in *The Culture of Japan as Seen through Its Leisure*, ed. Sepp Linhart and Sabine Früstück (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1998), 165-93; Fumiko Miyazaki and Duncan Williams, "The Intersection of the Local and the Translocal at a Sacred Site: The Case of Osorezan in Tokugawa Japan," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 28, nos. 3-4 (2001): 399-440; and Barbara Ambros, "Localized Religious Specialists in Early Modern Japan: The Development of the Ōyama *Oshi* System," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 28, nos. 3-4 (2001): 329-372. Ambros is completing a

Rotermund’s research on mountain itinerants deserve more attention from Anglophone scholars of Japanese religions.⁸⁸ In her work on the *nenbutsu*-reciting ascetic Tokuhon, for example, Bouchy treats the adept’s life, his understanding of religious practice, and his relations with other wandering ascetics and with the Pure Land sect; she also addresses more general issues, such as the nature of the *nenbutsu* and its function in popular religious contexts.

Neither Shugendō nor localized mountain groups, which tended to combine elements from diverse religious systems, have received the sustained scholarly attention they deserve, however. This apparent oversight is partly related to the early Meiji state’s “cultural revolution,” as Grapard calls it--the proscription of syncretic religious phenomena. The policy of *shinbutsu bunri* (separation of gods and Buddhas) led in some areas of Japan to the destruction of documents, artifacts, and oral/ritual traditions. Grapard, incidentally, is one of the few scholars who has explicitly argued for the need to address the “combinatory” nature of Japanese religion (his own research centers mostly on medieval Buddhist-Shinto religious systems).⁸⁹ Also

dissertation on the Ōyama mountain pilgrimage movement “Mountain of Great Prosperity: The Ōyama Cult in Early Modern Japan” (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 2002).

⁸⁸ Anne-Marie Bouchy, *Tokuhon, ascète du nenbutsu: Dans le cadre d'une étude sur les religieux errants de l'époque d'Édo*, Cahiers d'études et de documents sur les religions du Japon 5 (Paris: École Pratique des Hautes Études, 1983); Hartmut O. Rotermund, *Pèlerinage aux neuf sommets: carnets de route d'un religieux itinérant dans le Japon du 19e siècle* (Paris: Édition du CNRS, 1983).

⁸⁹ Allan G. Grapard, “Japan's Ignored Cultural Revolution: The Separation of Shinto and Buddhist Deities in Meiji (*shinbutsu bunri*) and a Case Study: Tōnomine.” *History of Religions* 23, no. 3 (1984): 240-265; later published in revised form in the author’s *Protocol of the Gods: A Study of the Kasuga Cult in*

hard-hit during the first Meiji years were heterodox or non-established religions that had proliferated (usually underground) in the late Tokugawa; when constrained to reconfigure their doctrines and institutions under the now mutually exclusive rubrics of "Shinto" and "Buddhism," these groups lost their incipient identities. The same difficulty applies to the study of several other phenomena that disappeared in the middle of the nineteenth century, such as Onmyōdō (yin-yang divination). In Western languages only Hayashi valiantly attempts to treat the early modern phase of this prognosticatory system, which at least in its social presentation possessed distinctive religious overtones.⁹⁰

Nevertheless, the paucity of sources, as I have indicated, is not the only reason for Western scholars' lack of enthusiasm for historical studies of popular, interreligious phenomena. Some Tokugawa syncretic movements are well-documented, despite the ideological trauma and severe decline that they suffered in the Meiji.⁹¹ Critical annotated editions of several major texts of the older new religions were made available in 1971 in volume 67 of *Nihon shisō taikai*, edited by Murakami Shigeyoshi and Yasumaru Yoshio.⁹² Yet no Western-language scholarly

Japanese History (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and Oxford: University of California Press, 1992), 237-258.

⁹⁰ Makoto Hayashi, "Tokugawa-Period Disputes between Shugen Organizations and Onmyōji over Rights to Practice Divination," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 21, nos. 2-3 (1994): 167-89.

⁹¹ I was fortunately able to draw on a well-preserved collection of sermon records, regulatory documents, primers for children, and block-print pictures when investigating the ways in which Shingaku preachers reinterpreted Buddhist, Shinto, and Confucian ideas for Tokugawa popular audiences; Sawada, *Confucian Values and Popular Zen*.

⁹² See Murakami Shigeyoshi and Yasumaru Yoshio, eds. *Minshū shūkyō shisō*, *Nihon shisō taikai* 67 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1971).

monograph on the Tokugawa phase of a new religion has been published in the last twenty years, and periodical literature on the preMeiji development of these groups is limited.⁹³ Folk religious phenomena or episodic movements, such as pilgrimages, have also been relatively little studied in the West, with a few important exceptions (including Foard's work and the

⁹³ Emily Ooms' *Women and Millenarian Protest in Meiji Japan: Deguchi Nao and Ōmotokyō* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University East Asia Program, 1993) concerns a movement that emerged after the Meiji Restoration, but her treatment, in which she draws on the work of Yasumaru Yoshio, is useful for understanding popular religious culture of the late Tokugawa. For periodical literature, see Carl Bradley Becker, "Religious Healing in the 19th Century 'New Religions': The Cases of Tenrikyō and Christian Science," *Religion* 20 (1990): 199-215; Helen Hardacre, *Kurozumikyō and the New Religions of Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press., 1986), 37-73; Nathalie Koamé, "Aux origines d'une ville religieuse: Tenri," *Cipango* 7 (1998): 168-82; Alan L. Miller, "Internalization of Kami: Buddhist Affinities in Kurozumi-Kyō," in *Kurozumi Shinto: An American Dialogue*, ed. Willis Stoesz (Chambersburg, PA: Anima Publications, 1989), 135-55; Gareth Putnam, "Tenrikyō: From Japanese Folk Religion to Universal World Religion," *Japanese Religions* 11, no. 4 (1981): 37-52; Sawada, "Mind and Morality; Willis Stoesz, "The Universal Attitude of Konkō Daijin," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 13, no. 1 (1986): 3-29; and the latter's "The Universal Attitude of Kurozumi Munetada," in *Kurozumi Shinto: An American Dialogue*, ed. Willis Stoesz (Chambersburg, PA: Anima Publications, 1989), 115-33; Bart Stroupe, "Healing in the History of Tenrikyō, the Religion of Divine Wisdom," *Tenri Journal of Religion* 17 (1983): 79-132. Robert Ellwood, *Tenrikyō, a Pilgrimage Faith: The Structure and Meanings of Modern Japanese Religion* (Tenri, Japan: Oyasato Research Institute, Tenri University, 1982) deals in part with Tenrikyō history (esp. pp. 24-51). In general, I have excluded denominational literature from this survey.

mountain pilgrimage studies cited above).⁹⁴ Most recently, Kouamé has completed a full-length study of the Shikoku pilgrimage as it developed during the Edo period.⁹⁵ Davis offers stimulating if not always convincing sociological and anthropological insights into the *okage-mairi*, *ee-ja-nai-ka*, and social protest movements of the late Tokugawa.⁹⁶ Further studies along these lines have not appeared--few sociologists have had the breadth (or temerity) to address Japanese historical phenomena in the way that Davis does.

A small number of Japan historians have assayed socially-based analyses of popular religious phenomena of the period. It must be said that Western authors and editors of surveys and essay collections on early modern Japan have not always regarded Tokugawa "religion" as a topic worthy of distinctive enquiry, though recent histories give late Edo religious movements more attention.⁹⁷ Alex Vesey recently pinpointed the issue when he informed me that the general thrust of his dissertation is "institutional in nature (a stance taken in the hopes of making 'the study of Buddhism' more palpable to the larger body of early-modern historians who normally would not give a hoot about religion)." When Tokugawa historians do take up religion, it is usually depicted as one dimension of a larger social or

political drama. Wilson persuasively interprets both the new religions and pilgrimage movements as active forces in the Bakumatsu social ferment.⁹⁸ Harootunian elucidates the political significance of the new religions by interpreting them as forms of opposition discourse, parallel to nativism and the later Mito school.⁹⁹ McClain has written an informative analysis of local festival practices in Kanagawa during the Tokugawa period.¹⁰⁰ He emphasizes that seasonal religious rituals functioned as political strategies engineered by domain leaders, but he does not neglect the other side of the coin, whereby the populace reclaimed festival practices for its own purposes. The author's concern with the social and political functions of these spectacles does not overwhelm his sense of their genuinely religious dimension--a rare balancing act. Rotermund for his part has produced a rich study of the religious practices associated with the prevention and treatment of smallpox in Edo Japan.¹⁰¹ Hopefully historians of the Tokugawa

⁹⁴ James H. Foard, "The Boundaries of Compassion: Buddhism and National Tradition in Japanese Pilgrimage," *Journal of Asian Studies* 41, no. 2 (1982): 231-51.

⁹⁵ Nathalie Kouamé, *Pèlerinage e société dans le Japon des Tokugawa: Le pèlerinage de Shikoku entre 1598-1868* (Paris: École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 2001).

⁹⁶ Winston Davis, "Pilgrimage and World Renewal: A Study of Religion and Social Values in Tokugawa Japan," *History of Religions* 23, nos. 2-3 (1983-84): 97-116. Revised version published in Winston Davis, *Japanese Religion and Society: Paradigms of Structure and Change* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1992), 45-80.

⁹⁷ E.g., Conrad Totman, *Early Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

⁹⁸ G. Wilson, *Patriots and Redeemers in Japan*.

⁹⁹ Harry D. Harootunian, "Ideology as Conflict," in *Conflict in Modern Japanese History: The Neglected Tradition*, ed. Tetsuo Najita and J. Victor Koschmann (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 25-61; and his "Late Tokugawa Culture and Thought," in *The Cambridge History of Japan, Volume Five: The Nineteenth Century*, ed. Marius B. Jansen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 168-258.

¹⁰⁰ James L. McClain, "Bonshōgatsu: Festivals and State Power in Kanazawa," *Monumenta Nipponica* 47.2 (1992): 163-202.

¹⁰¹ Hartmut O. Rotermund, *Hōsōgami, ou la petite vérole aisément: Matériaux pour l'étude des épidémies dans le Japon des XVIIIe, XIXe siècles* (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 1991). For an English-language presentation of Rotermund's research on this topic, see his "Demonic Affliction or Contagious Disease? Changing Perceptions of Smallpox in the Late Edo Period," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 28, nos. 3-

will continue to foster an appreciation of the complexity of religion during this period as a wide-ranging cultural and social process.

General, Thematic, and Interreligious Studies

We have seen no book-length characterizations of religion during the Edo period as a whole in the Western academy during the past two decades. The reluctance to address the grand sweep of several centuries of diverse phenomena is a natural corollary of the increasing specialization and sophistication of scholars of Japanese religious culture. The detailed studies of specific figures, movements, and institutions that have appeared in the late twentieth century are in fact attempts to compensate for the overly-general nature of earlier postwar treatments. Bellah's sociological study of early modern religious life, *Tokugawa Religion*, is based on questionable theoretical premises and draws on now-dated Japanese scholarship.¹⁰² Yet it has become a widely-read classic (now in its second edition), whereas the more recent, "sophisticated" monographs on Tokugawa religious history mentioned in this essay appeal only to a narrow audience of specialists. Perhaps it is time for one of these specialists to venture a broader, updated analysis of Tokugawa religious culture. The intellectual history of this period as presently constituted in the West has not proven much more amenable to general treatments. Most surveys and wide-ranging essays on Tokugawa thought as a whole are the work of Japanese scholars in translation.¹⁰³

4 (2001): 373-398.

¹⁰² Robert N. Bellah, *Tokugawa Religion: The Cultural Roots of Modern Japan* (New York: The Free Press, 1985; rept., with a new introduction, of the 1957 edition).

¹⁰³ Examples are Bitō Masahide, "Thought and Religion: 1550-1700;" and Kurozumi Makoto, "The Nature of Early Tokugawa Confucianism," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 20, no. 2 (1994): 331-375. Two early classics in translation are Maruyama Masao, *Studies in the Intellectual History of Early Modern Japan*

More ambitious are intellectual histories that attempt to characterize disparate phenomena in terms of specific commonalities or themes. Harootunian draws on diverse intellectual and religious systems to illustrate pre-Restoration patterns of political and social thought, such as the drive toward "secession."¹⁰⁴ Najita uses the themes of "nature" and "history" to characterize eighteenth-century thought.¹⁰⁵ Ng adopts a novel approach to the cultural history of the period by concentrating on the influence of the *I Ching* (Book of Changes) across a wide spectrum of social and religious contexts--Shinto, Buddhism, medicine, economic theory, and the military, among others.¹⁰⁶ I briefly explore variations in the theme of "linguistic alienation" during the late Tokugawa across Confucian, Buddhist, and Shinto-type contexts.¹⁰⁷ Polemics between spokespersons of different religious communities also provide a framework for comparative and thematic analysis, though interreligious disputes often turn out to have economic, social, and political subtexts, to judge by several studies included in a special issue of the *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* on

(Princeton and Tokyo: Princeton University Press and University of Tokyo Press, 1974); and Yoshikawa Kōjirō, *Jinsai, Sorai, Norinaga: Three Classical Philologists in Mid-Tokugawa Japan* (Tokyo: Tōhō Gakkai, 1983).

¹⁰⁴ Harootunian, "Late Tokugawa Culture and Thought," 168-258.

¹⁰⁵ Tetsuo Najita, "History and Nature in Eighteenth-Century Tokugawa Thought," in *Cambridge History of Japan, Volume Four: Early Modern Japan*, ed. John Whitney Hall (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 596-659.

¹⁰⁶ Wai-ming Ng, *The I Ching in Tokugawa Thought and Culture* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000).

¹⁰⁷ See Janine A. Sawada, "The Confucian Linguistic Community in Late Tokugawa Japan," in Tu Wei-ming and Mary Evelyn Tucker, eds., *Confucian Spirituality* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2002).

religious conflict in Japan.¹⁰⁸ Ooms' *Tokugawa Ideology*, quite apart from its chief accomplishment of identifying the diverse sources of the shogunate's official ideology, is remarkable for the way in which the author draws out his thesis from materials that are highly diverse, both in terms of socioreligious identity (Buddhist, school Shinto, Confucian, popular syncretic) and textual genre (anonymous didactic tracts, learned treatises, legal codes).¹⁰⁹ Scholars of religion who operate in the intellectual history mode can learn much from Ooms' theoretically-informed approach, which shows how a system of ideas is in fact a constant process of interaction across a wide gamut of texts and/or spokespersons.

The more ambitious the theme or theory, of course, the less attention to particular contexts. The deliberate exclusion of considerations of intellectual lineage or other chronological factors, as I noted above, marks several works in the "new" or "postmodern" styles of Tokugawa intellectual history. Sakai's study of the debate over language that took place in the eighteenth century leaves the reader without any refuge at all in an "historical imaginary" (except in his footnotes). He warns us at the outset of his book that he does not "aspire to know the 'thought' of an author or the genealogy of a school," and indeed that he uses the rubric "eighteenth century" only in a symbolical sense "to allude to the locus of a discursive space" in which the status of language was discussed.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ Hardacre, "Conflict between Shugendo and the New Religions;" Hayashi, "Tokugawa-Period Disputes;" and Janine A. Sawada, "Religious Conflict in Bakumatsu Japan: Zen Master Imakita Kōsen and Confucian Scholar Higashi Takusha," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 21, nos. 2-3 (1994): 211-30.

¹⁰⁹ Ooms, *Tokugawa Ideology*.

¹¹⁰ Naoki Sakai, *Voices of the Past: The Status of Language in Eighteenth-Century Japanese Discourse* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), 5. For a review article on this book, see Herman Ooms, "Tokugawa Texts as a Playground for a Postmodern Romp,"

Concluding Reflections

A key issue in the debate between proponents of the "new" and "old" intellectual history is the relative valuation of diachronic and synchronic approaches to the material at hand. Najita summed up the emerging appreciation of "synchronous" approaches to history in 1982 when he remarked that

[i]ncreasingly . . . the tracing of chronological sequence has come under critical scrutiny. It is not necessary that one historical phase produce another. . . . A chronological series, in other words, represents a particular "totalization" from the perspective of the historian's construction rather than encompassing an homogeneous flow.¹¹¹

The tendency to neglect synchronic factors in the study of religion -- whether contemporaneous economic or political conditions, on the one hand, or the discourse shared by diverse members of the particular "intellectual generation" in question, on the other--is closely related to Western scholars' overemphasis on high intellectual history or doctrinal studies in this field. While past historians sometimes approached the other extreme, depicting religion as an epiphenomenon or mere reflection of the "hard" social or economic realities of the time, for the most part late twentieth-century religious and intellectual histories of the Tokugawa period have followed diachronic models in which the main focus of interest is the way in which great religious leaders and thinkers purportedly revived,

Journal of Japanese Studies 22, no. 2 (1996): 385-400. In closing this section, I should add that the history of Tokugawa science and of "Dutch learning" (*rangaku*) are receiving more attention in the European academy lately. See *Repenser l'ordre*, ed. Girard, Horiuchi, and Macé, esp. 377-494.

¹¹¹ Tetsuo Najita, "Introduction," in *Conflict in Modern Japanese History: The Neglected Tradition*, ed. Tetsuo Najita and J. Victor Koschmann (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 5-6.

developed, or dissented with preexisting “traditions.” In proportion to the degree of this unilinear emphasis, the interreligious and intersocial dimensions of these systems of thought tend to be marginalized: they appear to be extraneous elements that do not neatly fit into our “totalizations.” As a result, the religious sentiments of the majority of the people, who were not necessarily consciously engaged with a mainstream “tradition” that is well-studied today, seem less creative and significant. Approaches informed by discourse analysis do not necessarily solve this problem. “Obscure” forms of thought and practice will remain obscure to us until we take them seriously--whether we treat them as intertraditional “developments” or as “spaces” within the so-called period discourse.

All this is not new. Yet despite the general recognition by scholars that the religion of the Tokugawa period was an ever-changing composite of rituals, ideas, and institutions, the field of religious studies as constituted in the West today perpetuates the treatment of individual traditions (or discourses) in that complex, in isolation from each other and, in some cases, from immediate economic or political conditions. Area studies and history faculty no doubt urge their students to attend closely to the social, political, and economic significance of religious phenomena. One might expect that, as opposed to religion scholars, they would also encourage the sort of cross-over research that is needed to redress the conventional preoccupation with single religious “traditions” (or as the case may be, discursive “formations”). Hardacre has remarked that

[w]hereas world religions took a particular religion as the framework of analysis, area studies facilitated an approach in which a particular country or society, and religious life as practiced there, constituted the basic unit of analysis. Thus, whereas a world religions approach to Japan would inevitably give a dominant position to Buddhism, an area studies approach would tend to be more attentive to the variety of religious life, recognizing within the religious life of a single individual or community the influence

of folk religious ideas, Shintō, new religions, and Christianity, as well as Buddhism.¹¹²

However, even the doctoral theses generated by history and area studies departments tend to focus on single schools of thought, discourses, or sectarian institutions to the exclusion of others. Faculty in these departments appear to be as diffident as those in religious studies about fostering projects that take into account the overlapping, multireligious character of early modern Japanese ideas and practices. No doubt this hesitation is due to practical considerations. It is difficult if not impossible for a graduate student in any department to complete in a timely fashion a dissertation that requires expertise in more than one religious (and therefore linguistic) system of this period. Given these constraints, as well as simply the established structures and economic interests of universities today, graduate students almost inevitably specialize in Buddhism, on the one hand, or Confucian or nativist thought, on the other. The graduate study of Japanese religions at American research institutions in particular is dominated (with one or two important exceptions) by Buddhist studies faculty, while dissertations in Tokugawa intellectual history (Confucian or nativist) are usually supervised by area studies and history scholars. The study of religious phenomena that are not clearly identified with these formal systems of thought does not really have the status of a field; the seemingly amorphous new religions or episodic movements of the Edo period are most often studied as background for social scientific analyses of contemporary Japanese religions. A student who wishes to gain the skills necessary to examine non-mainstream phenomena or themes across religious systems in the Tokugawa context must therefore battle against these ideological/institutional divisions--not only in graduate school, but also in the job market. Senior scholars are no doubt in a better position to cross boundaries, experiment, and train themselves in unfamiliar areas.

¹¹² Hardacre “The Postwar Development,” 196-197.

The accompanying bibliography documents that the representation of Tokugawa religious phenomena in European-language scholarship advanced immensely during the last two decades of the twentieth century. For most of this period, intellectual history dominated the subfields of nativist, Confucian, and Buddhist studies--and its practitioners, regardless of their theoretical framework, focussed on the products of educated thinkers. In the meantime, however, boundaries have become more permeable in the increasingly interdisciplinary climate of today's academe. Students of early modern religion, especially those who study Buddhist-related phenomena, have begun to emphasize the social and economic significance of their materials, and many individual scholars across the subfields are now more appreciative of the ways in which diverse religious elements functioned interactively in specific Tokugawa contexts.

Nevertheless, taken as a whole, scholars of Buddhism, on the one hand, and historians of Confucian or nativist culture, on the other, are in need of more interaction. To my mind, these academic groupings are more hard-edged than the interpretive communities hypothesized by Yamashita, which after all evolved from each other (allegedly). The modernization, tradition, new intellectual, and postmodern scholars whom Yamashita discusses at least tried to read each other's works, even when they disagreed intensely. It is true that Fish's notion of the interpretive community originally referred to groups or institutions that put forth a particular interpretation of a text, as opposed to a different interpretation of the same text by another community. It may be argued that Confucian, nativist, and Buddhist studies scholars (in both Japan and the West) are in fact reading different "texts," in which case Fish's term is inapplicable to their "communities." I am suggesting, however, that we reevaluate our concept of what constitutes a "Confucian text," a "Buddhist text," or a "nativist text"--and by extension, a Confucian, a Buddhist, or a nativist. Most educated persons in the Edo period were well-read in a number of canons and drew from them, even if reactively or inadvertently; the less-educated for their part were routinely exposed to multireligious vernacular and oral texts. The entire range of

intellectual and religious discourse of the period in question, regardless of the group with which each segment of it is conventionally associated, constitutes the larger text over which our interpretive communities should dispute.

Nam-lin Hur, *Prayer and Play in Late Tokugawa Japan: Asakusa Sensōji and Edo Society* (Harvard University Asia Centre, 2000)

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As Bashō lay on his sickbed in the spring of 1687, he heard the sound of a booming bell, and wondered, 'Is it Ueno? Is it Asakusa? (*Zokuminashiguri*)' He was not just hesitating between two temples, but between two entire socio-political constructions of Buddhism. The Ueno Kan'ei-ji had been built to match the Hieizan Enryaku-ji, and to make this clear it was located in a similar north-easterly direction, and bore the name of the era (*nengō*) of its foundation – as was rare in temple nomenclature. The Kan'ei-ji was home to a wealth of politically and institutionally important edifices, not least the Tōshō-gū, and [the] mausolea of about half the subsequent shoguns. Ueno was full of pomp and magnificence, if not exactly always fun. Its twin was the Shiba Zōjō-ji, which housed the other mausolea and a second Tōshō-gū.

The Asakusa Sensō-ji was, to use a vernacular appropriate to the flavor of the place, a different kettle of fish. The temple did have something to do with fish in fact, since it began as a place of veneration in 628, when two fishermen hauled up a Kannon statue and enshrined it there. The Sensō-ji thus long antedated the Kan'ei-ji whose era-name badge locked it clearly into the modern world of the Tokugawa regime (Kan'ei is 1624-44). The Sensō-ji's history, by contrast, was lost in legend and myth. The Tokugawa had patronised it directly for a time, and Ieyasu thought its holy image had assisted his victory at Sekigahara, but they soon shifted attention (in 1625) to the new sacred site then emerging in architectural glory.

Ueno and Asakusa, the Kan'ei-ji and the

Sensō-ji, were thus opposing pans on the balance of Edo Buddhism. They were (and are), though, not far apart geographically, since both were at the *kimon* of the Castle. The Zōjō-ji, being further away, at the *ura-kimon*, rather fell out of the equation. The institutions of the two north-eastern temples were also closely entwined. Ueno gained control of Asakusa. From 1685, it arrogated the power to nominate the Sensō-ji head, and when the Sensō-ji's often-bulging offertory boxes were emptied, they were emptied into the coffers of the Kan'ei-ji. Hur is very specific on financial matters, and supplies several useful tables.

As everyone who studies the period knows, the Sensō-ji acquired the homely name of 'Asakusa Kannon', and became a focus of disportment for the constricted Edo populace. Its proximity to the Yoshiwara after that pleasure quarter relocated in 1657, gave it more than a whiff of the secular, not to say the venal. Many was the man who claimed to be going to pray but found his steps moving involuntarily onwards. There were *misemono* and eating stands, and, we learn from Hur, 220 toothpick sellers by 1807 (more than double the 98 there some fifty years earlier) (p. 66). I guess you didn't go to the Yoshiwara with bits of fish hanging from your teeth, or perhaps there were other reasons for this concentration – Hur offers no opinion. In short, the Asakusa Kannon stood for a good time, but also for the possibility of a miracle that might change one's life, as it had changed Ieyasu's. The precinct was a place of infinite possibility, of which the freak shows, waterworks and rare foods were merely the this-worldly extensions of a larger cosmic scheme. The Asakusa Kannon offered no death rituals, which made it almost unique. Its sub-temples did perform funerals, and had *danka*, but the main temple did not. It was thus a place of the potential within the here-and-now.

Hur goes so far as to assert, "prayer patrons never bothered to attempt to understand the mechanisms of the prayer rituals that Sensōji offered them. What they wanted was material evidence – something that gave them tangible proof of Sensōji's religious fame and efficacy" (p. 40). This sounds like a false dichotomy to me, and although evidence for the one is provided in this book, I do not detect evidence for lack of the

other. Hur actually quotes very few comments from Edo sources (although there were have been plenty to chose from) of what people thought they were doing when they went to Asakusa. The point is surely, that the Senjō-ji was about magic and about being surrounded my mystery. Mysteries are not understood. Saying people were never bothering hardly gets to grips with the issue.

And this brings me to the most peculiar thing about Hur's book. He shuns concern with the study of *religiosity*. Rituals are barely taken seriously. As the reader is presented again and again (and again) with the postulate that the Sensō-ji is about a prayer/play bond which obviates the need to say any more. The book's title has it there clearly, which is fair enough, but the chapter titles are then: "The Buddhist Culture of Prayer and Play", "The Built-in Unity of Prayer and Play", "The Cultural Politics and Prayer and Play" and then the conclusion is entitled "The Cradle of Prayer and Play". We fast weary of this simplistic analysis. A more comparative approach that showed just how this kind of Buddhism might have sat together with other kinds, or how the Sensō-ji operated with other temples, or indeed household *butsudan* etc., is not investigated.

I read this book when it was a PhD dissertation, and found it informative. I got the feeling this time around that an editor had asked for more context, and there is a clear attempt here to set the Sensō-ji in a larger world. But that isn't a larger world of Buddhism. There are interesting sections on the decline of home-ownership, the breakdown of the *machi*, the decline of communal spirit, and much more. But these discursive essays within the book are not fully woven in, and investigation of the footnotes reveals they have not really been Hur's research interests, but are add-ons.

Finally, as an art historian, I must object to the use of visual evidence. The Sensō-ji has a wealth of pictures associated with it, from hand scrolls to prints, not to mention its *ema* and architectural and sculptural treasures. Hur was not under any obligation to address these things (Helen Baroni's recent book *Obaku*, manages to miss all visual matters but still be complete on its own terms), but he has chosen to put them in. It is alarming, therefore, that all the prints are referred

to as paintings – thereby sewing misunderstanding of the significance of the artifact concerned - and that all the figures are taken from secondary publications, even though it would have been easy to obtain clean reproductions taken from the originals.

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