

make Japan the “green archipelago” that it is today. Likewise, late Tokugawa Japan’s “struggle to stand still” resulted in permanently reconfigured social and economic relations and radically new modes of discourse—all of which must be understood in light of the ecological story but not subsumed completely within it.

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

Kumayama chōshi, Tsūshi hen.

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

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In our last issue I reported on an innovative approach to local history in Japan, the *Ōaza* volume of *Kumayama chō shi*, a town situated along the Yoshii River in Okayama Prefecture. Last spring, the general history volumes (*tsūshi hen*) were published (a final volume of documents, technical papers and reference materials will be published shortly). To get to the distinctive features of these two volumes of general history must go beyond the major organizing principle of the editors. In contrast to the first volume which was organized around settlements, these volumes take a fairly common form: Volume one (pre-modern eras) begins with a discussion of natural conditions (animal and plant varieties, land use, climate) before analyzing the historical era in sections divided along standard chronological periodization. At the end of volume two (post-*kinsei*), the editors return to topical organization in extended chapters on local customs and dialect.

As indicated in my previous review, pre-Meiji documents are not found in any great number in the Kumayama area, and consequently I was interested in how the editorial committee would deal with pre-modern eras. One approach, quite naturally, was to employ documents from collections in major prefectural archives and museums. But more interesting (to me) is the lengths to which collections outside of Okayama were exploited. Willingness to exploit material from Kyoto University archives, for example, permitted a brief exploration of women’s inheritance of property in the early medieval period of Kumayama history. Likewise, the region’s ties to national political developments is explored through the association of Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa’s wife, Hino Tomiko, with Kumayama. Of more direct interest to *kinsei* literature specialists, the final chapter of volume one contains a rather extended discussion of *waka*, *eika*, and *haikai*. Special emphasis is given to the stimulus provided by the visit of Okayama *samurai* and scholar, Hiraga Motoyoshi. Although the sections on *kinsei* religion are brief, three sections may be of some interest to readers. One deals with the suppression of the Fujufuse sect of Buddhism. Although this region is not known for the widespread presence of Christianity, archaeological finds (substituting for manuscript materials) suggest the extension of Christian influence even into an area that would have been relatively isolated in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Finally, the *kinsei* section ends with a discussion of *yōnaoshi*. In the realm of institutional history, the discussion of the Okayama domain’s retainer fief system strikes me as particularly interesting. Standard explanations stress the daimyo’s confiscation of all practical control over the fiefs of landed retainers. In English, the work of John W. Hall on Bizen reflects this emphasis. Nonetheless, *Kumayama chō shi* (I, pp. 660-64) takes a somewhat different approach, stressing the division of farmers among fiefholders (*hyakushōwari*) and the continued role of landed retainers in collecting land taxes (despite their loss of any ability to set tax rates), exploitation of mountain and forest resources, and so forth. In addition, other forms of obligations to landed retainers remained and were divided among individual villagers. Such evidence raises the question of whether Western scholarship (at least) has over-stated the completeness of the seventeenth century tendency to fictionalize retainer

fiefs. The description of local administration reveals a fairly weak *oj ya* system (early in the era, a *tomura kimoiri* system) in which groups of 10-20 villages were overseen by a senior headman (*ojōya* or *kimoiri*) who received a rice stipend from the domain. Nonetheless, by mid-late 18th century, financial pressures conspired with other factors to reduce the number of these officials and often to appoint temporary administrators. As a result, the domain's total financial obligations to these officials was reduced substantially, without apparent loss of administrative effectiveness. Clearly the tie between villages on the one hand, and samurai representatives of retainers and domain on the other, was significant in Kumayama despite substantial loss of retainer autonomy. Local histories such as this are written to mark milestones in community history, and, when they are done sensitively, to evoke among residents a sense of historical place. They do not aim to revise major interpretations of Japanese history. Nonetheless, the story they tell can help create a more finely nuanced understanding of the impact of broader national developments at a local level. These volumes perform both functions nicely.



Sexuality and Edo Culture, 1750-1850 An International Conference

Indiana University, Bloomington
August 17-20, 1995

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

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

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