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**Introduction**

An enlightened or ideal ruler (*meikun*) is one who excels in sagacity and has an excellent reputation as a ruler. In early modern Japan, most of the rulers considered to be enlightened were less the emperor who was placed at the apex of authority or the shogun who held national power and authority but rather the daimyo who controlled local areas. In terms of having been called an enlightened ruler, there was no difference between the eighth shogun Tokugawa Yoshimune who governed the entire country and the daimyo who ruled regional domains, men like Hoshina Masayuki, Tokugawa Mitsukuni, Maeda Tsunanori and Ikeda Mitsumasa in the early part of the period, and Hosokawa Shigekata, Tokugawa Harusada, Satake Yoshikazu, Matsudaira Sadanobu and Uesugi Harunori in the middle of the period. Even though they were not known nationwide for being enlightened rulers like those listed above, there were still quite a few daimyo who were called enlightened rulers or wise rulers within the history of the narrow confines of their own domains.

There are many different perspectives from which to talk about these enlightened rulers among the daimyo, but in this report I plan to take up Ikeda Mitsumasa, lord of Okayama domain, who was one of the early ones, clarify the way in which an enlightened ruler was constructed and the elements that went into constituting its image, and then putting these together extract the consciousness of the state that the image of the enlightened ruler represented.

There are various interpretations regarding whether the early modern state (the state represented in the bakuhansen system) should be seen as a state with centralized authority or as a state with partible authority, but in all of them, since the debate over the relative importance of the ruling authority held by the bakufu (the shogun) and the domain (the daimyo), which in both cases had the same characteristics, becomes a debate over measuring the strength or weakness of the bakufu and domains using the same yardstick for both, the downside is that it ends up trapped in a blind alley. I argue that my investigation into the image of the enlightened ruler is one method for overcoming this kind debate on the nature of the state in the bakuhansen system.
The Accounts Constructed for one of the Enlightened Rulers among the Early Daimyo

Ikeda Mitsumasa was born in 1609 and died at the age of 74 in 1682. In 1616 at the age of eight he succeeded to the Himeji domain in Harima worth four hundred twenty thousand koku bequeathed to him at the death of his father, Toshitaka, but mistrusted because of his youth, in 1617 his holding was reduced to three hundred twenty thousand koku and he was moved to the Tottori domain in Inaba and Hōki. In 1632 at the age of 24 he was ordered by the bakufu to swap domains with his cousin Ikeda Mitsunaka, his cousin within the same Ikeda family who had succeeded to the lordship of his domain at the age of three and so he was invested in the Okayama domain with a holding of three hundred fifteen thousand koku in Bizen. Thereafter until 1672, for the forty one years until he became 64, he held onto his position as lord of Okayama domain where for many years he kept his own diary and employed a Confucian political philosophy that centered on issues of benevolent government, so that by diligently spending his days in hard work, he managed to construct a domain system and execute political policies with an unbending posture that ingratiated him neither with the bakufu nor the other domains. Even after his eldest son Ikeda Tsunamasa became the domain lord, for the ten years until his death, Mitsumasa continued to express himself on domain policies.¹

Seeing Mitsumasa as an enlightened ruler began while he was still alive among his immediate circle. The first example of this can be found in his close associate Tsuda Nagatada who kept a record of Mitsumasa's speech and deeds while he was serving as lord of the domain that envisioned him as an enlightened ruler.² Four years after Mitsumasa’s death in 1686, a “shrine to a fine lord” (Hōretsu-shi) that enshrined Mitsumasa was built in the Shizutani school founded in the last years of Mitsumasa’s reign, and as we can see from the fact that the name of this school was changed to Shizutani shrine in 1875, this enshrinement was the equivalent to deifying him upon his death. That the appellation “Hōretsu” along with “rekkō” and “hōretsu-kō” came to be used as a special term designating Mitsumasa in later records of enlightened rulers means that this was also the period in which his public designation as an enlightened ruler came to be constructed. In 1689 Ikeda Masatomo compiled “Dialogue by a mighty ruler” (Rekko mongo), and in 1704 the magistrate in charge of the Shizutani school wrote what should be seen as a chronology of Mitsumasa’s life called “An account of the fine lord’s mortuary temple” (Hōretsu shidō-ki). In that same year, a gilt bronze statue of Mitsumasa was installed in the Hōretsu shi.

In the domain rules and regulations issued in 1723, the term “the age of Shintaro” appeared and we know that it was also used enhance the authority of the regulations issued to the retainers. Then around 1748 or 1749 a domain retainer wrote the text called “Elegant record” (Yūhiroku) that provided the basic materials for anecdotes about Mitsumasa as an enlightened ruler in later years. In the latter half of the eighteenth century “Chapters of a leader” (sosshō roku) was written by a domain retainer and “Reminiscences of a mighty ruler in Kibi” (Kibi rekko

¹Taniguchi Sumio’s Okayama hanseishi no kenkyū (Hanawa Shobō, 1964) contains a detailed narrative from which this summary was drawn. See also Chart 1.

iji) was written by a Confucian scholar. In the first half of the nineteenth century another Confucian scholar wrote “A record of utmost respect and admiration” (Gyōshi roku). In addition there are numerous other monographic accounts about this enlightened ruler. Even historical and geographical descriptions of Bizen like “The secret record of knowledge about Kibi” (Kibi onko hitsuroku) or genealogies like “An abbreviated version of the history of the Ikeda family” (Ikeda-ke rireki ryakki) gave considerable weight to the facts they included about Mitsumasa. Mitsumasa’s fame as an enlightened ruler was not confined just to his own domain or to Kamogata domain, a branch of Okayama where in the latter half of the eighteenth century the domain lord Ikeda Masaka had his own retainers use for their edification Mitsumasa’s dying instructions compiled in a book titled “Ruler’s regulations” (kunsoku). Rather his name was so widely known even outside his domain that it appeared in all sorts of accounts.

The Image of the Enlightened Ruler vis-a-vis the Shogun, the Retainers, and the Peasants

Even taking into account that for the long period of over half a century Mitsumasa maintained the position of domain lord in the family-related domains of Tottori and Okayama, his life was amply endowed with the conditions for him to be advertised as an enlightened ruler with proof of his powers of self-regulation in the maintenance of his health and proof of his political power in his containment of political strife. This report is not about Mitsumasa’s achievements in and of themselves, however, and there is a separation between his achievements and the anecdotes told about him as an enlightened ruler, but nevertheless, they were combined into an image of the famous ruler that in its entirety comprised both. Here I want to emphasize the dimension that gave direction to a mode of being that came to be desired by later daimyo, retainers, and peasants. The accounts of enlightened rulers give the appearance of having collected trifling incidents remembered quite by accident, but if they are viewed synthetically, it is clear that they were constructed out of phenomena that showed three relationships: Mitsumasa’s relationship with the bakufu, his retainers, and the people of his domain.

The statement for which Mitsumasa is best known as an enlightened ruler goes as follows: “The highest lord has been entrusted with all the people in the country of Japan by heaven. The provincial ruler is entrusted with the people of his province by the highest lord (shogun). The house elders and the samurai help their lord and work to make the people secure.” This statement represents the nucleus of accounts about Mitsumasa as an enlightened ruler. Its literal meaning is that the shogun holds all the people of Japan in trust from heaven, the daimyo hold the people of a single domain or province which is one part of Japan in trust from the shogun and the daimyo’s retainers assist their ruler in looking after the welfare of the people of the domain. In a related section, we can find a noteworthy passage that begins with “loyalty in a time of war” and ends with “loyalty in a time of peace.” Here Mitsumasa extricated himself from a way of thinking that had in mind the capability of a warrior during a time of

1For the accounts about this enlightened ruler please see Chart 2.

2“Gyōshi roku” section 3 in Kibi gunsho shūsei vol. 4 (Kibi Gunsho Shūsei Kankōkai, 1931) p. 209.

3Ibid.
nationwide strife not to begrudge dying in battle before his lord's horse, to seek instead the warriors' transformation into domain retainers who would render service to their lord through their skill in administration and governing the people.

In accounts of enlightened rulers, these words have taken on an independent existence as Mitsumasa's immortal sayings, but it must be realized that in reality these constitute but one admonition in a long document directed at all the retainers issued around 1652 or 53 and then only a fraction of that. Throughout these exhortations Mitsumasa censured the retainers with a force equivalent to abusing someone to his face. We know that at that time Mitsumasa was in an extremely tense situation vis-a-vis his retainers, and thus in order to create this immortal saying found in accounts of him as an enlightened ruler this one section has been cut adrift from its context and made to stand alone. In other words this immortal saying has been squeezed out from the entirety of his efforts to overcome the dissension and antagonism between him and his retainers, and it is the result of a transformation in that relationship.6

Concerning his relationship with the people of the domain, accounts of Mitsumasa as an enlightened ruler picture him as a lord to be appreciated above all others. He is depicted as a daimyo who rewarded good deeds done by the people, who put relief (o-sukui) into practice and to whom gratitude was paid for the blessings his long live bestowed on the domain. The actual relationship between Mitsumasa as a domain lord and the people of the domain, however, was one filled with tension, and when the bakufu's traveling inspectors made their rounds of the domain, they received vehement petitions from the peasants regarding his regulation of religion and his plundering of their resources. In his actual administration Mitsumasa aimed at putting relief into practice, but based on the concept of "the rice fields of the realm" (tenka no denchi), he believed that to put relief into practice for just anyone and everyone would end up being unfair, so he gradually reached the point of putting relief into practice on a selective basis. Thus even though he put up a remonstrance box (isamebako) and used it to absorb dissatisfaction, he forcibly strengthened his control over the people of his domain through his political policies.7 Just as Mitsumasa tried to overcome the dissension between himself and his retainers by intensifying the concept of loyalty, however, it is clear that he tried to overcome the tension between himself and the people of the domain through intensifying the concept of "relief." Both of these concepts hold an important place in the ruling class thought of early modern Japan.

Turning to Mitsumasa's relationship with the bakufu, we see that in accounts of him as an enlightened ruler, many anecdotes come to the surface to show the confidence in which he was held by the shogun and the elders (tairō) as well as his intimacy with those in authority, but the real Mitsumasa was a daimyo regarded with suspicion by bakufu bureaucrats. He was entirely too fond of scholarship concerning politics, and because he enforced a policy of having people prove they were not Christians not by being registered as Buddhists but by being registered at

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6Fukaya Katsumi, "Meikun sōzō to hanpei kokka" (2) Bungaku kenkyū ka kiyō no. 41 (Waseda Daigaku Daigakuin, Tetsugaku, shigaku 1995) 1996.

Shinto shrines, in terms of the bakufu line he was suspected of treason, even to the extent of having his son and heir Tsunamasa summoned for questioning. There was even tension between Mitsumasa and the bakufu regarding the way Christianity was to be rooted out within the domain. On the other hand, however, he received special consideration from shogun Iemitsu allowing him to set up a subsidiary to Tōshōgū in Okayama in which to worship the apotheoized Tokugawa Ieyasu, and when there were floods and other natural disasters in his domain, he was able to play on his closeness to the shogunal household to the greatest possible extent in acquiring financial assistance, and it is also true that he tried to make the most of sidling up to the bakufu in reigning over his own domain. Along these lines he took up and polished the phrase “direct administrative intervention” (jiki no shioi) by the lord and made this into his own personal obligation.8

The Image of the Enlightened Ruler and Consciousness of the State

What kind of state consciousness did this kind of image of an enlightened ruler manifest within the context of the bakuhan state system?

The words defined above as Mitsumasa’s immortal saying demonstrate that the shogun’s authority prevailed overwhelmingly over that of the daimyo. They also demonstrate, however that the shogun himself was in a relative position in that he had been delegated by heaven, the daimyo were not simply officials dispatched by the shogun but used freely their own retainers who served only them and them alone, and the daimyo were themselves political subjects who had the responsibility for the welfare of the people in the domain that they had received in trust from the shogun. One explanation for the bakuhan state system that takes the position of emphasizing the daimyo’s “right to their own administrative intervention” (jibun shioi ken) has it that the shogun and the daimyo each possessed part of authority. This perspective that defines domain authority as a small state by asserting the partibility of authority has been around for a long time. As I indicated in the introduction however, no matter where the debate goes concerning centralized versus partible authority, insofar as it takes as its chief object the issue of the ratio at which the same level of authority was divided and held, it simply ends up being an argument over relativity that does no more than reiterate the relative importance of the authority of each.

In the consciousness of the state suggested in the image of the enlightened ruler, the authority of the shogun and daimyo differ precisely in terms of level. Just as both appear in terms of the relationship between lord and retainer, their separate authorities exist in a hierarchical relationship based on status. Even the high position given the accounts of enlightened rulers among the daimyo by the shogun, the bakufu bureaucrats, and the roving inspectors in itself reflects that fact. What is important, however, is that this kind of daimyo was not a provincial governor (kokushi) but acted consistently throughout as the lord of a state (kokushu). I think this is an expression of the world of the domain that within the state generalized by the bakufu did not ever try to abandon the aim of seeing itself as a state authority with its own independent existence in terms of state consciousness. This can be understood historically in the following way.

8Fukaya Katsumi. “Hōkoku yōshi: meikun sōzō to hanpei kokka” Okayama han kenkyū no. 11. (September 1994) Okayama Han Kenkyū Kai.
Out of the strife generated in the warring states period, the establishment of the bakuhan system was the result of the regional small public authorities (kōgi) that had appeared as a manifestation of the authority of a number of sengoku daimyo being taken away to be concentrated and absorbed into one public authority through the overwhelming strength of a central unified political power. The daimyo were nevertheless not transformed into high level bureaucrats, rather as hereditary possessors of dominions they maintained their positions as feudal lords and while taking their place in the master-servant relationship as proxies for public authority, in the broadest sense they ended up being positioned as constituents of the public polity. It can thus be said that the domain lords of bakufu and han in their totality constituted public authority. To put it another way, this unified public authority forced the daimyo to serve as retainers in terms of the status system and it had the power to force the way they controlled their domains to conform fundamentally to the center’s “public administrative intervention” (kōgi shioki) but in the end it was not able to take away the state-like characteristics of the daimyo domains. For this reason it never tried to stop the daimyo domains from being small states.

These small states, however, were not small portions of a level playing field that constituted the entire state in the bakuhan system; instead they tried to maintain themselves at the subordinate level where they stood in the status system. In this sense, if we take bakufu authority which was central unified political authority as the superordinate state and the daimyo’s controlling authority and the areas they each controlled as being in the position of subordinate states, then the top and bottom combination of all of the many subordinate states plus the bakufu’s authority as the single superordinate state constituted the state in the bakuhan system. Thus in the sense that in terms of status they exhibited subordination while they also exhibited state-like independence, I would like to call these units the domain-bounded state (hanpei kokka). The ultimate loss of state-like characteristics by these low ranking states and their descent into local self-government came with the Meiji state. Let me say as an aside that while I can not at this point enter into the relationship between the imperial court and domain lord Mitsumasa or the image of Mitsumasa as an enlightened ruler, I see the emperor and the court as constituting not the substance of authority in the bakuhan state but rather as constituting the substance of a golden crown of prestige that had substance in and of itself. All of these various substances went into the composition of the state in the bakuhan system in its broadest meaning. This is what constituted the early modern state in Japan. Concerning the possibility of the domains becoming states, there is the position that sees a strengthening in the independence of domains through political reforms in the last half of the early modern period, leading to the appearance of the domain state. In my opinion, this kind of tendency can be perceived in monopsonist policies and market policies, but at the same time a strengthening in the bakufu’s leadership can be seen in things like measures to counter peasant uprisings and financial policies. This position too cannot be divorced from arguments over relative importance in the partibility of authority.

\footnote{In reference to this point, please see Fukaya Katsumi, \textit{Kinsei no kokka: shakai to tennō} (Azekura Shobō, 1991).}
Conclusion

I would like to summarize my position as follows. Through tension and dissension with the people of the domain, retainers, and the bakufu, daimyo administration, that is to say, concepts and methods with more universality for the early modern polity came to put in an appearance. These erased and caused the transformation of tensions, dissension and antagonisms obtained in the actual process and caused the emergence of the portrayal of the enlightened ruler, an image that enormously amplified the inherent temperament and ability of intelligent daimyo.

Once the enlightened ruler had been created, his posthumous instructions and deeds came to offer an idealized form for what would be a desirable daimyo, a desirable retainer, and a desirable peasant as well as the relationships that ought to exist between them and thus came to stipulate the attitude of those who came after him. At the same time, if you look at the image of the enlightened ruler as a representation of state consciousness, the formation of the image of the lord as something that could be called an enlightened ruler makes an assertion that the daimyo's dominion had self-governing capabilities as a single-unit state at the same time that it also manifested satisfaction and compliance with the fact of dependency as a subordinate state vis-a-vis public authority, the superordinate state, what might be called delegated rule (yorij). The image of the enlightened ruler manifested both of these dimensions in its idealized personality, and I interpret it as the sovereign symbol of the domain bounded state shining like a star overhead in the world of the domain that contained daimyo, retainers, and peasants.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>Born in Okayama castle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meets Ieyasu at Fushimi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/14</td>
<td>Succeeds to Himeji domain in Harima (420,000 koku)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/6</td>
<td>Ordered transferred to Tottori domain in Inaba and Hōki (320,000 koku)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/</td>
<td>Receiving one character from shogun Iemitsu’s name, he changes his</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>name from Sachitaka (?) to Mitsumasa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/</td>
<td>Accompanies shogun Iemitsu on his procession to Kyoto and is appointed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to the position of vice-major general in the left imperial guards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/18</td>
<td>Ordered transferred to Okayama domain in Bizen (315,000 koku)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1645</td>
<td>3/2 Given permission to set up a branch of Toshōgu by shogun Iemitsu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1647</td>
<td>5/17 Second daughter Teruko is adopted by Iemitsu and married to the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ichijo family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1652</td>
<td>9/18 Bakufu senior councillors warn Mitsumasa’s son Tsunamasa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>regarding rumors of his father’s treachery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/</td>
<td>A great flood. Mitsumasa returns to his domain to plan for rebuilding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and reforms the system of local fiefs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/</td>
<td>Reducing the number of temples, Mitsumasa uses a system of Shinto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>registration against Christians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/</td>
<td>Over 100 schools are established in the domain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shizutani school is established as the domain school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/22</td>
<td>Mitsumasa dies in the western enceinte of Okayama castle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Chart II

Accounts of Ikeda Mitsumasa as an Enlightened Ruler

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nagatada jihiatsu oboegaku</td>
<td>Tsuda Nagatada</td>
<td>1654-63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Rekkō mongo</td>
<td>Ikeda Masatomo</td>
<td>1689</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hōretsu shidōki</td>
<td>Ichiura Seishichirō</td>
<td>1704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yūhirokū</td>
<td>Mimura XXX</td>
<td>1748 or 49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bihan shūgirokū</td>
<td>Kondō Atsushi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Kunshoku</td>
<td>Kondō Atsushi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Amayo no akari</td>
<td>Yuasa Jōzan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sosshōrokū</td>
<td>Kondō Seigai</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kibi onko hitsuroku vol 101: Yūhirokū</td>
<td>Ozawa Ichidayū</td>
<td>1790s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Ikeda-ke rireki ryakki</td>
<td>Saitō Seijiemon Kazuyo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Kibi rekkō iji</td>
<td>Yūasa Shinbei Mototada</td>
<td>1797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Gyōshiroku</td>
<td>Hayakawa Joemon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Gyōshiroku furoku</td>
<td>Hayakawa Joemon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition are many other texts including Ibōroku, Yushō gen, Onko zakki, Eika yōhen, Sekiji shasō, Bizen shōshō gokajun, Bizen kokusei kikigaki etc. (Ikeda Mitsumasa kōden).
A Study of the Early Modern Samurai Honorary Ranking System: The Movement to Promote Ikeda Tsunamasa

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Translated by Philip C. Brown

Introduction

Interpretations of the system for honorary ranking military houses (daimyo, hatamoto, retainers) vary widely depending on the individual historian. According to some, the honorary ranking system was simply a formality and therefore devoid of meaning. Others argue that the mere existence of the system meant the continued existence of the court and Emperor, which had entered an extreme state of decline, and therefore the honorary ranking system was extremely important. Which of these positions is correct?

Even in the Edo period when the Shogun ruled all Japan, daimyo received appointments of court rank. At the apex of this honorary ranking system was the Emperor, and the Shogun and largest daimyo were ranked under him. So in form, the Emperor appointed the Shogun and large daimyo, and the court issued a variety of commissions: proclamations (kuzen' an), court rank certification (iki), and Imperial commands (senji). If we stress this formal aspect, in the Edo period the Emperor was lord and he was in command of the honorary ranking system.

However, I believe that this perspective is mistaken. That is because the agent who determined court appointments of daimyo was the Bakufu. Even in the appointment of courtiers (kuge) to high rank, the permission of the Bakufu was necessary. The court and Emperor were informed by the Bakufu as to which appointments of daimyo should be made and they only prepared their documents as ordered. In addition, and distinct from the case of the courtiers, even though the bushi were appointed to a court rank this did not form a master-follower relationship. Although the honorary rank names were the same as for the court, the ranking of bushi had unique elements, too. If we stress this actual facet of the system, we can understand that the Edo Bakufu created this honorary ranking system and through it controlled daimyo. At that time, the Shogun, daimyo, and court all understood that the Shogun granted honorary ranks to the bushi.

Thus the early modern honorary ranking system is a significant element of the relationship between Bakufu and daimyo for us to investigate. Within the ranks of earlier scholarship there are those who would agree with me. However, these earlier studies generally approach this subject from the point of view of the Bakufu. Thus, although they have illuminated Bakufu policies on the honorary ranking system and the consciousness of the Bakufu, they have not clarified the consciousness of the daimyo and the domain (han) perspectives of the honorary ranking system. The perspectives of the domains on the honorary ranking system were distinct from those of the Bakufu. Furthermore, we must also consider qualitative differences among the various types of daimyo: including fudai, tozama, and others.
Here I will examine the perspectives of daimyo on the issue of court rank appointments. The principal documents I have examined for this project are from the Ikeda-ke bunko hansei shiryō (Ikeda Library Domain Administrative Documents). The movement to promote Ikeda Tsunamasa in honorary rank is, within this body of material, the oldest specific example of such a movement. Based on the use of this clutch of documents, which we can say are among the best concerning the honorary ranking system of the early modern military houses, I wish to reconsider the ranking of bushi in the early modern state, and open a new facet in interpretations of the relationship between Bakufu and domain.

The Movement to Promote Ikeda Tsunamasa to Rank of Shōshō

On the fifth day of the twelfth month of Genroku 9 (1696), Ikeda Tsunamasa, daimyo of Okayama in Bizen Province (about 320,000 koku), just arrived at Edo Castle, was informed orally of his promotion from the honorary rank of jūjū to shōshō by the Senior Counselor (roji) of the Shogun. This kind of year-end appointment to a new honorary rank was a customary observance of the New Year’s festivities at Edo Castle.

This raising or lowering of honorary rank determined the treatment of daimyo who participated in Bakufu ceremonies and processions. The mid-eighteenth century incident in which the Date family, daimyo of Sendai domain in Mutsu Province (about 600,000 koku), and the Shimazu family, daimyo of the Kagoshima domain in Satsuma Province (about 730,000 koku), consumed themselves in mutual rivalry for promotion in honorary rank, is a famous example of the competition that the honorary ranking system engendered.

Before proceeding further, let me first indicate the basic structure of the early modern honorary ranking of military houses. These are presented in Table I. We can group them into four basic levels, each of which contained smaller, but still significant, differences in ranks:

- First level: Dajōdaijin (Grand Minister) to Naidaijin (Interior Minister)
- Second level: Dainagon (Grand Counselor) to Sanji (Consultant)
- Third level: Chūjō (Lieutenant General) to Shihon (Fourth Rank)
- Fourth level: Shotaiifu (Stewards)

Of these, chūjō and shōshō were originally military offices and the others were civil offices. However, in the early modern honorary ranking system of the military houses, there was no distinction between military and civil ranks. With the exception of a very short period of time in the early Edo period, appointments to the rank of Naidaijin and higher went only to Shogun, and those ranks from Chūnagon and Dainagon went only to the families of Shogunal blood-related (shimpan) domains. Because they were incorporated into a master-servant relationship based on appointment to Bakufu office posts such as Senior Counselor (roji) and the like, these were the highest ranks to which ajidai daimyo could aspire. Many daimyo were appointed shotaiifu but almost on one other than daimyo was appointed to this honorary rank.

At the time of the efforts to persuade the Bakufu to promote him to shōshō, Tsunamasa requested the cooperation of the Bakufu sobayōnin (Managerial Secretary) Yanagisawa Yoshiyasu. The actual negotiations were undertaken by the respective senior representatives of their retainer band (kashin). On the Okayama side was Edo
rusuiyaku (Edo House Manager) Yoshizaki Jimbei, and on the Yanagisawa side were two of his highest-ranking retainers, the karō Hiraoka Sukechika and Yabuta Shigemori.

The first step in the negotiations began when a formal request (gansho, Document A) from Tsunamasa was brought to Hiraoka and Yabuta and the two of them agreed to review it. This was designed to obtain the agreement of the Shogun and Yanagisawa on the content of the request. The two offered a broad array of suggestions and Tsunamasa rewrote the request based on their guidance. This new request (Document B) was then carried to Yanagisawa's Edo residence and presented to him. Yanagisawa, receiving this request, promised Tsunamasa his cooperation. It is thought that after this the second request was presented to Shogun Tsunayoshi through Yanagisawa's good offices. Subsequently Tsunamasa's request for promotion to shōshō was granted. This was all a result of receiving the assistance of Yanagisawa's two karō in revising the original draft.

Thus, the first draft written by Tsunamasa reflects the consciousness of a daimyo seeking promotion in honorary rank. Conversely, the request, rewritten based on the suggestions of Hiraoka and Yabuta reflects the Bakufu consciousness of rank promotion.

Let us investigate the content of these two documents.

According to Document A, there were two reasons that Tsunamasa desired promotion to shōshō. The first reason was that his own son's first rank (the one received upon the formal attainment of manhood, gempuku, the first time one was eligible to receive a formal honorary rank) was shotaifu, and such low ranking was not a credit to his ancestors. Second was opposition to the earlier promotion of Tsunakiyo, daimyo of the Okayama branch Tottori domain, to shōshō before Tsunamasa himself had received this rank. In addition to attempting to have Tsunamasa promoted to the same honorary rank that Tsunakiyo had received earlier, because Tsunamasa was head of the main branch of the family, this was also an effort to have the Bakufu clearly distinguish Okayama domain as superior in rank to Tottori.

Regarding the first point, for generation after generation the first honorary rank of an Ikeda daimyo had been jija, and there had been no initial ranks at the lower level of shotaifu. However, since at this time the Bakufu policy regarding honorary ranks was to move in the direction of granting daimyo lower ranks, the possibilities were great that Tsunamasa's son would be appointed shotaifu. In order to protect against this, Tsunamasa thought that it was necessary for himself to receive a position in rank.

Concerning the second point, since Tsunamasa was nine years older than Tsunakiyo, he had been made jija eight years earlier than Tsunakiyo. However, in the previous year Tsunakiyo had been appointed shōshō before Tsunamasa.

The justifications for Tsunamasa's promotion evident in the first draft of the request deal only with problems within Okayama domain and within the Ikeda family. It is significant that at no point in this document is there any expression of a consciousness of being a subject of the Emperor or of service in response to Shogunal blessings. Therefore this draft request indicates that the daimyo consciousness of honorary rank was one of relative position to the other daimyo and maintenance of status within a family.

Let us next look at the second and ultimately successful request. In this document it is clearly stated that appointment of honorary ranks is a Shogunal blessing. Furthermore, Tsunamasa requests the promotion to shōshō
and once again vows to serve the Bakufu faithfully. The surprising element is that the content of the first document is completely expunged from the second.

The fact that a request incorporates all of the points insisted on by the recipient in order to achieve one's desire is probably fairly standard across time and place. In negotiations between domain and Bakufu, too, daimyo must have had to hide their true voice behind a public facade (tatemae). Analyzing this only from the Bakufu's side, and then treating it as the actual voice of the daimyo would be to commit a serious error, since daimyo presented their requests in the public facade of the Bakufu's consciousness.

In earlier research there is an understanding that the real power of respect for the Bakufu and the Shogun can be appreciated through the appointment of daimyo to honorary ranks. According to this perspective, the role of the honorary rank system was to circumvent and control a certain opposition and contradiction in the relationship between domains and Bakufu and to strengthen the ties between domain and Bakufu. However, saying that in return for service to the Bakufu the daimyo received appointments of honorary rank is nothing more than taking at face value what is a public facade of representing the Bakufu perspective. That daimyo placed importance on the honorary rank system is, of course, correct, but this was not because they held the Shogun and Emperor in respect. To daimyo, the honorary rank system was a fundamental measure of their place relative to other daimyo and a support for family status. That is, through the honorary rank system the Shogun sought to control daimyo, but daimyo saw it as an element of the lateral relationship among daimyo themselves more than as a function of their relationship with the Shogun.

In addition, in other previous research there is an understanding that sees legitimation of the daimyo's right to rule his domain as stemming from his holding court rank. This perspective tends to treat lightly the fact that the Shogun determined daimyo appointments to honorary ranks. Furthermore, this understand is contradicted by the fact that in the Genroku era there were daimyo who did not receive appointments to court rank. The Shogun Tsunayoshi failed to appoint some to honorary ranks, perhaps in order to break daimyo management of their lands. Moreover, the reason for daimyo not having honorary rank was not the village disturbances (ikki) had occurred in their domains. Tsunayoshi sought to lower daimyo honorary ranks in order to increase the authority of the Shogun relative to them.

Conclusion

In this article we have investigated the early modern honorary rank system for military houses from the perspective of the integration of daimyo based on materials found in the domain documents of the Ikeda Family Library. As a result, we have been able to discern a daimyo attitude toward the honorary rank system that differs from that of the Bakufu. To daimyo, this rank system was a fundamental means to maintain the position of a house among related families and a way to measure position among daimyo. As was the case in the rivalry between the Date of Sendai domain and the Shimazu of Satsuma domain, we see a rivalry between Okayama domain and the Ikeda family branch of Tottori domain. The daimyo appear to have wanted promotion in rank for reasons other than out of respect for the Emperor and Shogun.

However, the conclusions of this presentation do not suggest that the authority of daimyo was relatively autonomous of the Bakufu. Rather in the point of the daimyo having superficially to represent the Bakufu perspective,
I believe we find an indication of the fundamental character of the Bakufu-domain relationship—the autocratic character of the Bakufu. Not only in the second request, but after his promotion to shōshō, Tsunamasa repeatedly and continually had to express his subservience to the Bakufu. The overwhelming character of Bakufu authority is indicated by the enforcement of daimyo humility in requests made to the Bakufu as well as by the necessity for daimyo to perform in such a way as to heighten Bakufu authority.

Finally, we must offer some explanation as to why daimyo so strongly desired honorary ranks that were only one standard for indicating house ranking. Among standards for indication daimyo house rank in addition to court rank, we have domain putative value (kokudaka), size of domain territory, seating order at official functions at Edo castle, among other indicators. Each of these was closely associated with daimyo house status, but were difficulty to change, or to use to advance one’s position. In contrast, the court ranks not only reflected household status but also were associated with the daimyo as individuals and therefore could be changed and used to advance daimyo themselves. In other words, there was no measure better than advancing in court rank, if one wished to advance relative to other daimyo and support one’s house state.

In closing, we must here note the difference between fudai and tozama daimyo. It was possible for fudai daimyo to be appointed to Bakufu office, but tozama could not receive such appointments. To fudai daimyo, such promotion to Bakufu offices was a very meaningful standard for measuring household status. In contrast, for the tozama daimyo there was no other route than advancement in court rank. Therefore, while all daimyo desired court rank appointments, those who were most concerned about them were the tozama daimyo. Movements to promote daimyo in court rank were largely among tozama daimyo, and Ikeda Tsunamasa was one of these.

Table I

Organization of Daimyo Honorary Ranks

First Level

Dajōdaijin (Grand Minister)
Sadaijin (Minister of the Left)
Udaijin (Minister of the Right)
Naidaijin (Interior Minister)

Second Level

Dainagon (Grand Counselor)
Chūnagon (Middle Counselor)
Sangi (Consultant)
Third Level

Chûjô (Lieutenant General)
Shôshô (Commander)
Jijû (Chamberlain)
Shihon (Fourth Rank)

Fourth Level

Shotaifu (Stewards)

Document A

(Draft Request for Promotion, presented by Yoshizaki to Yanagisawa, dated ninth lunar month, twelfth day of Genroku 9 [1696]; Japanese text may be found reprinted in Hori Shin, “Okayama han to buke kan’i: Ikeda Tsunamasa no shôshô shôshin wo megutte,” Shikan 133 [September 1995]: 7-8.)

The heads of the Ikeda house have for generations been appointed to jijû rank as their first appointment (shôkan) and have never been appointed shotaifu. Until the time of the fourth Shogun Ietsuna, there were requests from the Bakufu about the history of first appointments for each daimyo house. Perhaps because appointments of bushi to honorary ranks were a formality and did not involve appointment to administrative office, we have heard that it is difficult to receive the same honorary rank as that held by our father. However, in my generation, although it is said that the Shogun has not been displeased with us, the appointment of our son to shotaifu would be incomprehensible to our ancestors. Therefore we first request promotion for ourselves to the honorary rank of shôshô.

Next, a second reason concerns the relationship with our relatives, the Ikeda family, daimyo of Totton domain. The Ikeda Tottori daimyo family are maternal relatives of the Tokugawa family, but they are also a branch family of the Ikeda house. Until the age of Tsunamasa’s father, Mitsumasa, Mitsunaka (n.b., an earlier Tottori daimyo) and the Tottori domain retainers all understood this. However, since the promotion of Tsunakiyo (n.b., current daimyo of Tottori) to shôshô, the daimyo of Tottori domain has acted as though there were no relationship between Okayama and Tottori domains, and they discuss nothing with the Okayama domain. If things remain as they are, no matter what kind of event befalls the Tottori domain, they will probably discuss nothing with Okayama domain. This is highly regrettable. Since these are the circumstances, even if I (n.b., Tsunamasa) am promoted to shôshô, after Tsunakiyo, conditions will remain the same. If we might make an additional request, it is to underscore
the importance for both the Okayama and Tottori families that you order that, as heretofore, the Okayama daimyo leads the Tottori daimyo and preserves the relationship of main house and branch house among the Ikeda family.

Document B

(Request for Promotion, written and presented by Ikeda Tsunamasa along with an Ikeda house genealogy to Yanagisawa, dated ninth lunar month, sixteenth day of Genroku 9 [1696]; Japanese text may be found reprinted in Hori, "Okayama han to buke kan'i," 10.)

I, Tsunamasa, have received numerous Shogunal blessings, and as his humble servant, I cannot adequately express my gratitude. Yet if he should deign to promote me to shōshō, I will henceforth even more endeavor gladly to serve him in whatever capacity he may desire. Therefore I earnestly implore that this promotion be granted. I have not discussed this matter at all with the Senior Counselors (rōjū), and I have trusted only Yanagisawa, relying on him alone to make this request to the Shogun on my behalf.
Central Control or Parallel Evolution
Samurai Landholding in Tokugawa Japan

J.F. Morris
Miyagi Gakuin Joshi Daigaku

Introduction

It has long been a central tenant of Tokugawa history that samurai fiefs "effectively" became defunct during the 17th century. This typically is understood (in the English-language literature) as reflecting a tightening of "central control" over divisive tendencies throughout the Tokugawa polity and an important step in achieving political stability.

While it is undeniable that samurai fiefs underwent fundamental changes between the 16th and 17th centuries, it is an overstatement to say that these disappeared from the Tokugawa political structure. Fiefs granted as holdings in land are estimated to have existed in some 16% of all domains, accounting for some half of the kokudaka of the same.

Since the holders of the overwhelming majority of these fiefs did not hold full and independent rights of administration, jurisdiction and taxation, their existence has often been dismissed as "insignificant." This approach tells us a lot about what the fief holders did not do; it tells us nothing about what they did do. Yet trying to move beyond this negative approach is difficult because we know so little about landed-fiefs in general, and what we do know does not lend itself to generalisation.

Notwithstanding how little we actually do know about landed-fiefs, there has been a change in emphasis in scholarship within the last decade. This has come about from a growing realisation among some scholars that despite landed-fiefs having been pronounced dead many times over, the institution did not disappear from the Tokugawa Polity, and moreover, that it continued to exercise a strong influence over the self-perceptions of samurai of this period. This change in emphasis has yet to be accepted as the general consensus (the two "rising stars" of generalistic formulations about the Tokugawa Polity, Mizubayashi Takeshi and Kasaya Kazuhiko, despite the considerable difference in their approach to describing the Tokugawa Polity, agree that landed-fiefs are of no significance), yet recent developments in research suggest that there is a need to take another look at

1) 例えば、山口啓二『鎮国と開国』（岩波書店、日本歴史叢書、1993年、114頁）、朝尾直弘「『公儀』と幕藩領主制」（歴史学研究会・日本史研究会編集『講座日本歴史』5近世 1 65、75頁）。

2) 近世武士の自律制を強く主張する笠谷は、その一方では、武士の自律性の基盤（あるいはもっとも原理的な表象）としての知行地についてまったく否定的である。このことは、笠谷の近世武士の理解には、1964年以降の藩政の中の地方知行についての研究が実質的に入っていないことからくる、彼自身の研究史の整理の仕方によるものである。笠谷は、水戸の論が過度に上位権力の集権性を
landed-fiefs. Studies of the Tokugawa Polity have moved beyond an economic deterministic approach to take account of such matters as sources of legitimacy, the role of the status system in determining samurai behaviour, and to reconsider the earlier emphasis on the sole concentration of power in the hands of the upper echelons of society. These new approaches are all especially relevant to thinking about landed-fiefs.

This paper will move beyond particularistic studies of individual fief systems to draw together a typology of the variety between fief systems, and the points of convergence between the systems themselves and the logic informing these systems to see what light newer approaches in scholarship may have to shed upon our understanding of the samurai of the Tokugawa Period.

Landed-Fiefs: are they insignificant?

It has long been one of the central tenets of Tokugawa Period history that landed-fiefs (地方知行制) are insignificant. Put simply, the argument that landed-fiefs are insignificant for anything but perhaps the first 50 years or so of the Tokugawa period is based upon two sets of assertions.

The first set of assertions concerns the problem of how to define “insignificant.” It is argued that even in those domains which did retain the system of landed-fiefs throughout the Tokugawa Period, the institution had become “fictionalised” (形骸化) by the mid 17th. The actual standard used to determine whether the fief system of any particular domain had become “fictionalised” or not varies from scholar to scholar. Apart from Sasaki Junnosuke’s 佐々木潤之介 gun’yaku ron 貢役論 which assumed that the primary function of landed-fiefs was to serve as a vehicle for obtaining labour service from peasants for military service, most of the theories proposed for judging the degree of “fictionalisation” of landed-fiefs depend upon measuring the perceived “realities” of mid-Tokugawa Period landed-fiefs with some externally derived standard for defining “feudal lordship.”

The standard most commonly applied is to see to what extent fief-holders held independent rights of taxation, administration and jurisdiction. These three “rights” represent respectively: the right to extract surplus product from the ruled as ground rent, control over the administrative apparatus necessary to maintain this on a long-term basis, and command of the power of non-violent coercion necessary to ensure that rent is duly paid. Together, these three rights effectively comprise the means of “extra-economic compulsion” (or “non-economic compulsion”) of the classic Marxist model of feudalism as a system of economic exploitation through class relations. Leaving aside the question of whether one wishes to pursue a Marxist model or not, taken on its own terms, this standard has many problems.

First of all, it is tied into 19th century notions of “feudalism.” In particular, it assumes that “feudalism” represented a state of either total anarchy (or something very close to this). This problem is related to another shortcoming of this model, i.e. that taken on its own terms, it confuses the necessary conditions for procuring surplus production with the actual process of procuring the same. These two problems are intertwined. Independent
rights of taxation, administration and jurisdiction are originally rights that belong to the State: if these rights were ever actually held fully by "independent feudal lords," then this would mean that an important part of State authority had effectively disintegrated to the point of extinction, leaving nothing but a condition of anarchy. Rather than accept the "all or nothing" approach implicit in the model presented, where State authority and the authority of "feudal lords" are diametrically opposed to each other, it is both more realistic and historical to assume a relationship between State authority and the authority of individual lords, where the relationship between the two is more symbiotic than oppositional. The rights of taxation, administration and jurisdiction are concerned with the maintenance of the overall social order and provide the framework within which individual lords collected surplus produce from their fiefs. Put more simply, the problem of how to actually collect the surplus produce on one's lands is a fundamentally different problem from such matters as how to catch, try and punish a person for theft, for example. It is highly questionable whether the model of feudalism implicit in this standard ever existed anywhere, but the historical bankruptcy of this model becomes clear when we apply it to the formation of the Tokugawa Polity.

Perhaps the single most dominant theme in research within Japan into the formation of the Tokugawa Polity over the past twenty years has been the focus on the grounds for the legitimacy of the national government and its acquisition of State powers. While there is considerable difference in the emphasis placed on the relative importance of the role of the social roots of legitimacy and its roots in pre-existing State organs, there is at least general agreement that legitimacy within the Tokugawa Polity did not come simply from the acquisition of lands and power by the various hegemons. If we no longer expect the national government of the Tokugawa State to create its own legitimacy out of nothing, then why should we expect lesser lords to exist within the artificial vacuum required by the definition of an "independent feudal lord" that has been applied to date?

The third problem with the aforementioned definition of "significant" rights of rule concerns the focus implicit within the definition on rule as being essentially coercive in nature. Few scholars today would depict the Tokugawa Polity as deriving its legitimacy solely from the coercive powers at its disposal. Yet the trinity of "full and independent rights of taxation, administration and jurisdiction" (as conceived within the original definition at least) is essentially a combination of nonviolent coercive forces and instruments thereof to acquire surplus production from the producer. Yet if the higher levels of authority within the Tokugawa Polity derived their legitimacy from sources other than their own innate powers of coercion, violent or otherwise, should not authority or rule at lower levels also be considered in terms other than the coercive powers available to lords at these levels? Earlier studies of landed-fiefs have made it clear that there was a significant decline in the powers available to fief-holders in the formative stages of the Tokugawa Polity, but these studies are less informative when it comes to questions concerning the possible sources of legitimacy of fief-holders and explanations relevant to those regions where the landed-fief system did not disappear.

If the definition of "significant" rights of rule for fief-holders is of questionable applicability, then the problem of how prevalent the system of granting landed-fiefs was within the Tokugawa Polity is also less clear than generally assumed. Despite the inherent unreliability of any "guestimate" of the number of Han retaining the system of granting landed-fiefs, there is no question that their number was small: a figure of less than 20%, quite possibly closer to 10%, is probably not too inaccurate. It is also clear that while the number of Han retaining this system was small overall, they were mostly the larger Han, and therefore accounted for a considerable portion of the Tokugawa
polity, possibly as much as half overall measured in terms of kokudaka. The main problem with this figure is not so much its inherent inaccuracy, but rather the problem of defining what constitutes a landed-fief system.

The single largest problem here is whether it is correct to limit the scope of the problem to that of Han. Scholars working on the Tokugawa Bakufu, both its political structure and matters related to local control on “Bakufu” lands, have always considered hatamoto fiefs to be “landed-fiefs,” either subject to the same forces leading to their “fictionalisation” as in daimyo domains, or otherwise, depending on the individual scholar’s stance. If one adds hatamoto to the category of landed-fiefs in general, then the figures given above for the prevalence of the system throughout the Tokugawa Polity lose a lot of their meaning, as the vast Tokugawa lands must thereby be added to the area wherein the landed-fief system prevailed. One of the more important results to be gained from this change in perspective is that it releases us from the sterile argument that landed-fiefs systems continued to exist only in the more peripheral and “backward” areas of Japan. Hatamoto fiefs existed not only throughout the Kanto Plain around Edo, but more importantly, in the “advanced” areas around Osaka as well.

Defining “landed-fiefs”

Landed-fiefs have figured prominently in explanations of the formation of the Tokugawa Polity, albeit in the sense that their demise, or the general restriction of the rights of rule of the fief-holders, has generally been taken to represent one of the major changes occurring in the formative stages of the Tokugawa Polity. Yet, notwithstanding the regularity to which it is referred to, no adequate definition of this institution exists. The very variety of the institution is part of the explanation for this state of affairs, but another aspect of this problem has been that the unrealistic definition of “significant rights of rule” applied so far has stifled attempts to move towards a more realistic appraisal. Two attempts to define landed-fiefs based on an analysis of existing fief systems have been made to date.

3) The figure most commonly used for the number of Han retaining the landed-fief system is 16 to 17% by the last decade of the 17th Century (Kanai Madoka 金井範『藩制成立期の研究』(吉川弘文館、1975年、15頁、第1表1) ). A more faithful recompilation of the source for this figure made by Fujii Jōji is given in the table below 藤井靖二「藩制成立論」(『日本史研究』139-140, 1974年、161頁). The two types of landed-fief in the table below (「地方」・「地方兼成」) together amount to 14.8% of all domains.

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<th>数</th>
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<tr>
<td>実数</td>
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<tr>
<td>地方</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>地方兼成</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>197</td>
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<tr>
<td>不明</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>計</td>
<td>243</td>
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(元禄年間始めごろ『土井庸発記』による)
Morris (1988) focused on collecting nengu 年贡 (and the various supplementary services) as the distinguishing feature of a viable landed-fief system. In Morris’s argument, a fief-holder’s right to the fief sprang from the act of enfeoffment by the granter of the fief. This is a statement of the obvious, but it also draws attention to the fact that the legal basis for the fief-holder’s control over the fief existed within a larger framework or hierarchy of rule. As legal entities, landed-fiefs did not exist in opposition to higher authority, but were its creation, and therefore the rights of such fief-holders existed as a sub-set of the creating authority. Moreover, collecting nengu meant that the fief-holder thereby incurred responsibility for the welfare of the cultivator(s) of his fief-land, entering into a contract of mutual obligation and responsibility of the sort that marked seigneurial rule generally in the Tokugawa State.

Within this general definition of landed-fiefs, Morris distinguishes three categories of fiefs. These were: (1) “special fiefs” where the holder was entrusted with some of the higher powers of public authority in addition to the right to collect nengu, (2) “ordinary fiefs” where the holder was essentially entrusted with collecting nengu, and (3) fiefs granted to the holder without any cultivator attached to the land, and which the holder was expected to cultivate himself. These three types of fiefs were granted in correspondence with the status of the holder: type (1) special fiefs were restricted to high-ranking daimyo vassals, while type (3) fiefs were granted to low-ranking retainers and rear-vassals. Thus in Morris’s formulation, the rights of the fief-holder were related to the relative status of that person within the overall status hierarchy.

Takano (1995) bases his definition of kyuujin ryoju 祐人領主 on the larger daimyo retainers who retained rights of administration and jurisdiction as well tax collection over their fiefs. In Takano’s opinion, these larger fief-holders should be considered to represent the defining standard for daimyo retainers, because their powers of rule both came closer to representing the daimyo model, and because they were in a position to conduct the traditional religious rites deemed necessary to support agricultural activities. These rites date back to the Ritsuryo Code of Ancient Japan, and were carried on as the sankajou no kissho 三ケ条吉書 conducted by the Kamakura and Muromachi Bakufu, and by the local lords (在地領主) of these two periods.

These two attempts to redefine landed-fiefs are complementary, despite initial appearances to the contrary. Takano does not intend to imply that fief-holders who did not hold powers other than the right to collect nengu are insignificant: his emphasis on the fact that there were daimyo retainers who did exercise rights other than tax collection is to highlight that such fief-holders could and did exist within the Bakuhan System. In Takano’s opinion, this form of fief-holding by larger retainers represented the ideal rather than the average form of fief-holding. Takano’s argument is also important in pointing towards sources of legitimacy based in traditional ideas about the

4) High-ranking vassals did not simply hold larger fiefs; they could serve as substitutes for the daimyo himself in performing service for the Bakufu when the daimyo was incapacitated, received court titles, and were allowed audiences with the Shogun (e.g. Sendai Han). This kind of large vassal should be seen as constituting part of the 御公卿 of their han. On the other hand, granting fiefs to footsoldiers (徒士) and ashigaru (足軽) without a cultivator attached to the land given is commonly understood as meaning that the fief-holder cultivated the fief himself. In reality, the fief-holder may have rented the land out to peasants, but in this case he collected rent under a private contract, and not as nengu, which is a public not a private duty. Granting land without a cultivator meant that these fief-holders of lower status were excluded from exercising the public right of collecting nengu.
obligations beholding a "lord," independent of any deed of superior authority towards the fief-holder. On the other hand, since Morris defines collecting nengu as involving the obligation to support the cultivator of fief land, this suggests that even those smaller fief-holders who did not have the resources that Takano's kyūminin ryōshu had available to them to provide both material and spiritual support, in principle at least incurred a duty to provide the material support necessary for their cultivators to avoid being driven off their land. This is a less ethereal way of suggesting the social basis of legitimacy for fief rule that Takano argues for in his emphasis on the ritual aspects of legitimate rule. Both scholars agree that whatever was the formal legal definition of the content of any particular fief, there was a large element of case-by-case negotiation between fief-holder and cultivators in determining the actual content of what transpired on the fief.

One other aspect of Takano's formulation of landed-fiefs is his emphasis on the role of the fief as providing the material basis for supporting the ie (家, イエ) = patrimony (?) of daimyo retainers. This is a rather complicated concept. At the most basic level, the fief provided income for the holder and his household. However, this income was not realised in simply economic terms. The ie of the fief-holder extended to include not only the immediate family of the fief-holder and his vassals, but also the commoners resident on the fief and the physical attributes of the fief, including the produce of the area. In Takano's studies of large fief-holders in Saga Han, Kyūshū, this communality was expressed in a regular cycle of ritual covering both the annual cycle of the seasons, and the life cycle of the fief-holder. This cycle of ritual differed for vassals of the fief-holder and for commoners, but at important points throughout the annual ritual cycle the fief-holder and his vassals participated with the commoners on the fief in praying for good harvests, and celebrating the fruits thereof.

Furthermore, focusing on the fief and its role in supporting the ie of the holder leads into another aspect of landed-fiefs that has been neglected to date, i.e. what was the defining characteristic of a samurai in the Tokugawa Period that separated a samurai from other lower-ranking members of bushi status. A textbook answer to this question would focus on such aspects as whether the person in question was allowed to wear two swords, use a surname, and other external signs of samurai status. For contemporary thinkers such as Ogusu Sorai 萩生徂徠, Dazai Shundai 太宰春台, and Fujita Tojuko 藤田東湖, though, in addition to these visible signs, a "true" samurai was a person who received land in fief and collected nengu; any other samurai was not to be properly trusted (Takano 1996, p. 330-1). The concern of contemporaries with maintaining some kind of link between samurai and "rule" of the land suggests why in many domains the system of allotting lands and cultivators to daimyo retainers was maintained despite the fact that these retainers no longer actually collected their own nengu from these nominal fiefs. Early postwar scholarship under the influence of Ito Tasaburō伊東多三郎 saw a clear trend in 17th century Japanese history towards the abolition of landed-fiefs and the adoption of stipends (俸禄制) instead of landed-fiefs. However, in retrospect, what is striking about the Tokugawa fief system is not just that the rights of rule over fiefs held by daimyo retainers were markedly reduced (if not totally eliminated) in many han in the first half of the 17th century, but that despite the clear trend towards curtailment of rights of rule, many han still clung to the outward forms of a landed-fief system. Not only did landed-fiefs not disappear in some han, but in other han considerable attention was devoted to maintaining the appearances of the system despite the fact that it no longer served any obvious purpose. This seeming irrationality in clinging to what to all intents and purposes had become a paper formality in many domains needs to be understood in terms of what these fiefs meant to contemporaries, as being
one of the hallmarks of a “true” samurai. The central importance of the landed-fief in defining the samurai self-image helps explain why some han did not abolish the system landed-fiefs, and why many others insisted in maintaining the appearances of a landed-fief system even though fief-holders did not collect any dues from their fiefs. Despite the interpretative importance given by scholars to the stipend system as the evolutionary successor to the landed-fief, for contemporaries, a stipend was a simply a sign of inferior status, and definitely not a step up any evolutionary ladder. It has long been recognised that there is no clear dividing line between landed-fiefs and nominal fiefs (蔵米知行) and that they represent a continuum on a sliding scale of degrees (Suzuki Hisashi 鈴木敏章). To date, scholars have tended to emphasise nominal fiefs as representing the more important part of this sliding scale, but the very fact that nominal fief systems could not do away with the residual aspects of landed fiefs (parceling out land and/or cultivators when awarding fiefs) suggests that the significance of the ideal of ruling a fief outweighed the actual realities of Tokugawa seigneurial landholding.

Our attempt to define landed-fiefs has been rather self-defeating, so far as arriving at a precise definition which enables us to move on to analysis of specific problems. Perhaps the most productive way to handle this state of affairs to accept this vagueness as part of the definition. Replacing the old sterile and limiting definition of an ideal type of “feudal lord” as representing the only meaningful type of fief with another limited definition will create more problems than it solves. The best compromise is to look for those parameters which mark off the outer limits of the subject.

At the most basic level, a landed-fief is a fief where the deed of enfeoffment (and accompanying supplementary documents) list the actual location of fief land by county, village, and plot of land as marked on the cadastral survey registers, and the nominal cultivator of each plot of land listed. Under this definition, nominal fiefs (蔵米知行) are also landed-fiefs, in intention, if nothing else. The most basic form of a landed-fief system where the holder still retained some meaningful rights of rule would be a system where the holder collected nengu directly from the fief. In this case, the right to “rule” the fief would derive from two sources: the act of investiture of the fief from a higher authority, and from the traditional relationship between ruler and ruled that still continued to persist throughout the Tokugawa Period. This latter source of legitimacy was closely related to the nature of control or “rule” exercised by the fief-holder over the fief being done so within the framework of the ie of the fief-holder. To see how this description (rather than definition) of landed-fiefs worked in reality, I would like to take a brief look at some actual examples of different fief systems.

Different types of landed-fiefs

1) Nominalised fiefs:

Okayama Han: Tozama, 315,000 koku, Ikeda Family. a famous case of a nominalised fief system (Taniguchi). From the mid-c17th (承応2年) the han decided the rate of taxation for each village as a unit. Fief-holders only collected nengu from their fief at the rate decided by the han in proportion to their holding in each village (note: they did not collect nengu from the han granaries, but were paid directly by the cultivators). Han assumed responsibility for providing assistance for impoverished and distressed peasants. BUT cultivators within the village were still divided up and assigned to fief-holders as subject to corvee service (務役). Permission from the fief-holder was
necessary for a “fief” peasant (or family member) to change place of residence to another village. Woodlands could be assigned to fief-holders. Fief-holders could induce the peasants assigned to them to provide loans (Taniguchi p. 99).

This case suggests that despite the weakness of formal control of the fief-holder over the fief, and in particular the fact that the han had assumed responsibility for maintaining the peasants on all fief-land (i.e. the social basis of independent legitimacy for fief rule a la Takano), the very fact of the existence of even nominal formal links (in this case, 百姓分) between fief-holder and peasants could lead to stronger social links forming between the two e.g. loans to the fief-holder. This points out the gap between formal limitations and existing real relationships between ruler and ruled.

Yonezawa Han: Tozama, 150,000 koku, Uesugi Family. Another classic case of a “nominalised” landed-fief system (Hanseishi Kenkyūkai). Notwithstanding, retainers still were able to collect non-rice agricultural products (e.g. vegetable oil, straw) at determined rates from the fief. Peasants badly in arrears in payments of nengu could be forced to provide a “hostage” to pay off the amount due with labour service (Watanabe Fumio).

Suggests the importance of landed-fiefs as providing not just income (rice), but also various items of consumption to support the economy of the fief-holder. Also, large numbers of both direct retainers and rear-vassals in Yonezawa were granted fief land without cultivators. This phenomenon is commonly connected to the history of Yonezawa of suffering being reduced to almost 10% of its original size between 1601 and 1662. There is a need to explain why both the han and its larger retainers did not cut their vassal numbers in accordance with this drastic reduction in holdings.

Kaga Han: Tozama, 1,000,000 koku, Maeda Family. Another classic case of a “nominalised” fief system. Could someone explain how the Maeda managed to implement a landed-fief here in the first place, since the Maeda did not/could not conduct plot-by-plot surveys of their land to begin with. Furthermore, all that has been written about nominalisation of fiefs in Kaga is concerned with questions of the exercise of power and the subsequent restriction of such powers after the implementation of the Kaisakuhō 改作法. Could anyone tell us (1) who collected nengu from fief-land, and (2) how the rice collected as such was either passed on to fief-holders, or marketed and the returns of the sales of such passed on, and (3) how the implementation of the Kaisakuhō reforms affected this situation?

2) Fiefs with control of both land and cultivator:

Nagoya Han (619,500 koku, Gosanke, Tokugawa) and Nanbu Han (100,000 koku, Tozama, Nanbu Family): Putting these two han together is close to blasphemy, Nanbu Han supposedly representing the most “backward” and “exceptional” part of the dark and benighted Tōhoku Region. However, these two fiefs systems have much in common. In particular, in both systems, fief holders not only collected nengu themselves, they also were responsible for drawing up the temple registries 宗門改帳 for the peasants on their fiefs. In both domains, fief-holders exercised more rights over the person of the peasants attached to their fiefs than is usual elsewhere. The legal basis for this control would have been the fact that they drew up the temple registers for their fiefs. These two han also share a similarity in the relationship between the daimyo and his retainers. In both domains, the core of the vassal band was comprised of local warriors who had control of their own local areas prior to the arrival of the daimyo (or the
extension of his rule to their local area). Suggests that the specific form that fief-holding takes is an expression of the relationship between the daimyo and his vassals, as well as between the vassal and the peasants cultivating fief land.

This type of fief in Nagoya and Nanbu is probably different from fiefs where a division of cultivators between fief-holders (百姓分) such as was conducted in Okayama. The important distinguishing feature is who drew up the temple register. That retainers in these two han drew up the registers suggests that they participated in the exercise of powers normally associated with the State’s powers of maintaining public order, rather than those powers directly concerned with collection of nengu (Ito Takayuki伊藤孝幸, and Morris Chap. 8).

3) Fiefs with control of land alone

Sendai Han, 620,000 koku, Tozama, Date Family. It was from a study of this han that Morris arrived at his division of landed-fiefs into the three categories mentioned above. The right of retainers holding normal type (2) fiefs were essentially restricted to collecting nengu and 諸役 according to a formula set by the han. In type (1) special fiefs, fief-holders exercised a wider variety of rights of control, but these should be properly understood as representing a division of the powers of State rule exercised by the daimyo, rather than a breakdown or dysfunction of Han control. Sendai Han is also distinguished by the large number of rear-vassals, many of whom engaged in cultivation of their fiefs. This phenomenon leads to questions as to who was a hyakushomu 百姓 and who was a member of the bushi status group, and who determined who had what status. Looking at the way status was determined and maintained suggests that retainers played an important role in determining this within their fiefs.

Many fiefs in Sendai were either largely or in part composed of land that the fief-holder had reclaimed through opening up waste land 新田開発. This has been understood as due to Sendai having a disproportionately large vassal band like Yonezawa, but this is putting the cart before the horse, as the vassal band actually expanded considerably in the first half of the c17th. This means that the “over-sized” Sendai vassal band grew with the surge in land reclamation, and therefore could not have been the initial cause of this surge. Seigneurial land-holding is Japan is distinguished by the fact that (theoretically) there was no private ownership of land by the ruling class. This meant that all land held by the ruling class was held as a fief granted from a higher authority. This characteristic of seigneurial land-holding provided the basis for the much-purported “concentration” of all land-holding in the hands of the Shogun. It needs to be borne in mind, however, that the Shogun himself no more held any private lands than the lowest-ranking samurai, and that the underlying principle that gave the Shogun such wide-ranging powers of control over seigneurial land-holding actually affected the Shogun, himself too. There was only possible exception to this principle, and that was on the part of the lowest-ranking samurai, not the Shogun. The closest thing to privately-held land in Tokugawa Japan was land that the owner had reclaimed, and held either as fief or as a cultivator, 「百姓前」 in Sendai terminology. One totally unexplored aspect of fiefs in Sendai is the possibility that there was a merging or blurring of the line between private and public holding of land, and that this had an important formative affect on the development of the fief system within this domain.
Concluding Remarks

This paper has been more speculative than analytical, and does not lend itself readily to a neat conclusion or summary. The basic theme should be rather self-obvious: that if we move beyond a economic-determinist approach to Tokugawa history, and start looking at such themes as the role of status and family systems in shaping the Tokugawa Polity, the role of the State and State authority, the tension between legal (Statist) sources of legitimacy and social sources of the same, then the role of landed-fiefs as playing an important role in determining the basic nature of Tokugawa Period samurai assumes a new importance. There are still a number of related aspects of the problem to which I have not had time to even hint at yet which are inter-connected in important ways with the nature of the Tokugawa samurai and land-holding. Rather than further confuse the issue, I will leave these until a later date.

This brief outline of landed-fiefs will probably not convince most of you the need to start revising your general introduction to Tokugawa Japan courses. At best I hope that it may help to make you a little more receptive to alternative approaches to analysing the power structures of the Tokugawa Polity, and the logic informing these structures.

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Whose Village? Whose State?  
Negotiating Taxes in the Bakufu Domain  
in the Late Eighteenth Century\(^1\)

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For many years notions of the Tokugawa hegemony have included bakufu "absolutism" and village "autonomy." Recently, both absolutism and autonomy have come under review in studies that re-examine power relationships between national and regional interests, and between state power and local communities. Out of this debate—and similar debates elsewhere on the relationship between state formation and popular culture—have emerged words such as negotiation. That word points to relationships between, on the one hand, a bakufu which claimed to be absolute and yet was practically restricted in what it could enforce and, on the other hand, village communities which legally were obliged to obey but found quite practical ways of advancing their own interests.

Nowhere are these interactive relationships more apparent than in the assessment and collection of the agricultural tax or nengu. For more than two hundred and fifty years, the Tokugawa shogun, the daimyo, and some lesser lords each sent an annual tax notice to every village or parts of a village that were included in their respective domains. Less promptly, often with difficulty, and sometimes after contesting crucial details, the villages paid all or part of what was asked. Their payments comprised the bulk of the regular revenues that supported shogunal, daimyo and fief governments. Moreover, the repeated requisitioning and paying formed the core of the ongoing, mutually contested relationships that tied the commoners of rural Japan with their rulers.

Economic historians Hayami Akira and Miyamoto Matao point to the elements of contest when they identify taxation as "the quiet battle" of the Tokugawa-dominated order.\(^2\) They conclude that, in the combat waged by rulers, farmers, and merchants to reap the benefits of economic growth, it was peasants and merchants—not shogun or daimyo—who were the overall winners. There is no doubt that, in the bakufu domain, revenues were relatively low from the mid-eighteenth century in at least three aspects: first, the absolute amounts collected declined somewhat over time; second, tax revenues declined relative to total agricultural output; and third, tax revenues were chronically less than the bakufu thought was adequate. Indeed, increasing the agricultural tax remained a major preoccupation for bakufu policy makers from the late seventeenth century.

What does the agricultural tax and its operation tell us about the nature of bakufu authority? At least three responses are possible:

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1 This is an abbreviated version of the original presentation. An expanded version will be published separately.

(1) One might argue that low taxes reflected a failed fiscal policy and/or caused bakufu authority to weaken. This is the thrust of a sizable body of scholarship that sees fiscal weakness as an element in the decline and eventual collapse of the Tokugawa system.

(2) A second answer also sees low taxes as symptoms of a failed fiscal policy. However, it finds other capabilities—for example, the power of legitimate coercion—as providing qualities necessary for the bakufu to grow as a state power.

(3) A third response—and the one I wish to pursue today—questions the assumption that low taxes indicated a failed fiscal policy. It suggests that the relatively low tax level of the Tokugawa domain indicated neither failed fiscal policy nor weak government so much as a government in which the exercise of authority was embedded in power relations that depended on negotiation.

Specifically, how did farmers and bakufu debate the rules of taxation? To address this question, I want to introduce a key issue that exercised both bakufu and villages in the second half of the eighteenth century, at the very time agricultural tax revenues throughout the Tokugawa domain had perceptibly declined. The crux of the problem was the definition and tax status of arechi, registered farm land that was no longer being planted for crops. Claiming hardship and population losses, certain villages petitioned the bakufu to allow tax deductions which would reflect the reduced area of land under cultivation. Pressed by the downward trend in its tax revenues, the bakufu at first denied the village claims, attempting to regulate farmers’ behavior more strictly and urging local officials to maintain tough standards. When these measures proved ineffective, it introduced new policies aimed at restoring productivity—and tax liability—to fields which had been abandoned by their registered cultivators. Farm communities, in turn, modified their strategies. In the negotiations over the abandoned fields, villages and government competed to interpret the rules of tax assessment in their favor. On the bakufu side, negotiations appealed to villagers’ self-interest as well as their obligations as taxpayers. Villagers, for their part, based their campaign on notions of political morality, backed up by a fine understanding of the mechanics of assessment, and a sense that, in the end, the village and its activities belonged to them.

Abandoned Fields in Shimotsuke

The issue of arechi was prominent in bakufu-village communications from the second half of the eighteenth century until well into the nineteenth. Although the problem was not peculiar to eastern Japan, it was particularly obvious in the Kanto provinces of Shimotsuke and neighboring Hitachi (present-day Tochigi and Ibaraki Prefectures), and other areas further north. There, land that was officially classified as paddy or dry fields had been allowed to fall long-term out of cultivation. In some cases, certain fields were left unplanted by large landholders who found it uneconomic to sow their entire acreage. In others, the entire holdings of a registered cultivator were abandoned because of sickness, shortage of labor, when the family line came to an end, or when family members took jobs elsewhere.

Note that, for the bakufu, the term arechi was an administrative category to be applied, sparingly, in the assessment of taxes. Crops left unplanted for reasons of personal or community “convenience” were not simply removed from the tax calculation. If, on the other hand, villagers persuaded the deputy that the runaways could not
be found or that the fields, because of unavoidable long-term damage or labor shortage, could not be cultivated, the fields might assume the status of "abandoned," and, for a given number of years, be tax-exempt.

Village records show that the increase in abandoned fields was reflected in a generally lower taxes in the bakufu-held areas of southeastern Shimotsuke from the 1760s. The Shimotsuke numbers, in turn, matched a general decline in agricultural tax revenues across the Tokugawa domain. In 1765, for example, total agricultural taxes assessed in rice, which had surpassed 1.32 million koku almost uninterruptedly since 1744, slipped to 1.28 million koku. Taxes assessed in cash dropped to their lowest level for almost a decade. Although sharp one-time drops were not unknown in a system that took account of crop failure, 1765 marked for the bakufu the beginning of a general, long-term shift in regular tax income that was never fully reversed.

Led by financial overseer Matsudaira Takechika, the bakufu responded with a campaign designed to restore the higher tax levels of the 1740s and 1750s. While abandoned fields were just one factor in a complex fiscal problem, it is not surprising that they received close attention. Usually bakufu leaders were tough, ordering villagers to work harder at farming and instructing deputies to be strict in assessing tax deductions. Administrators were aware that, not surprisingly, some fields lay uncultivated because farmers had left their villages for more attractive, wage-paying jobs elsewhere, allowing good farm land to sit uncultivated. On the other hand, they could not overlook evidence that many of the claimant villages were pathetically poor, under-populated, and genuinely in need of help. In addition to tax relief (including approval of arechi status) and encouragements to persevere with farming, policymakers developed the idea of encouraging migration into under-populated areas from nearby provinces, from Edo and even from the island of Hachiojima.

As a policy aimed at restoring tax revenues, the campaign to find new cultivators willing to take over the abandoned fields did not necessarily threaten village interests directly. A bakufu notice, which in 1773 asked deputies to find volunteers to move to the far northern provinces of Dewa and Mutsu, promised "unparalleled benefit for government and people." Nevertheless, in the 1760s and 1770s, the response to such invitations was not overwhelming. Perhaps the incentives were not attractive enough to encourage the landless to take on the challenge of producing crops and taxes. On the receiving end, even under-populated villages were unwilling to take the financial and other risks involved in accepting strangers as full, long-term members of their community.

The disjuncture was evident in negotiations that took place in the early 1770s between the headmen of two Shimotsuke villages and the bakufu deputy, Ukai Sanemichi. Ukai was attempting to import labor into Shimotsuke from the Pacific islands of Hachiojima and Kojima. Although the headmen acknowledged the problem of uncultivated fields and their obligation to restore them to a productive and taxable condition, they would not be pressured into ignoring equally important, village interests. It was, after all, their community. In the course of the negotiations, the Shimotsuke communities clarified that they were willing to accept a few immigrants who would work as low-ranking laborers for a limited term. They saw no advantage in using their own financial resources to help establish the newcomers, nor did they anticipate allowing them to become independent members of the village.

The Hachiojima plan was implemented, though later and on a scale considerably smaller than the bakufu had anticipated. In 1773 Deputy Ukai’s successor settled three single Hachiojima young men, aged 16, 17 and 19, in one Shimotsuke village. They were given subordinate status, lower than that of the ordinary farmers, and allowed to
work for a small allowance. Of the three, one died, one was adopted into a local household and eventually headed it; one remained in the service of a local family.

Conclusion: Negotiating Taxes in the Tokugawa Hegemony

How is the arechi issue relevant to this panel’s re-examination of bakufu authority? In her contribution to a recent volume that explores relationships between state and subjects in nineteenth century Mexico, Florencia Mallon uses the notion of hegemony in two distinct but related meanings. In one definition, hegemony is an end point in which a contract or agreement is reached among contesting forces. Those in power then rule through a combination of coercion and consent. Presumably, the Tokugawa bakufu reached this kind of hegemony some time during the seventeenth century. But hegemony, as Mallon points out, is also a process, or what she terms “a set of nested processes, constant and ongoing, through which power relations are contested, legitimated, and redefined at all levels of society.” Each episode in the contest impacts on the overall relationship without necessarily pushing it in a single or continuous direction.

The arechi or abandoned fields issue of the 1760s and 1770s forms an episode, one of many, that illustrates a process of contested relations between the Tokugawa bakufu and the villages of its domain. It was an issue in which the local communities took considerable initiative, demanding tax-free status for non-productive land. Their petitions reflected an assumption—shared by the government—that taxes should not destroy their livelihood as farmers. The appeals also relied on a detailed understanding of the technicalities of tax assessment. The bakufu responded at several levels, insisting first that villages accept tax responsibility and later attempting the more interventionist migration plan. But the cultivators in Shimotsuke resisted—this time using arguments that reflected their concern to solve the problem on their own terms, and thus protect the integrity of their communities.

Power relations were thus dynamic. Although the bakufu claimed absolute authority, it levied the agricultural tax in a changing context of rules and relationships that set boundaries on what it could claim and what it had to provide. Similarly, although village communities never doubted their obligation to support the state, they contested the amount, the timing and the nature of particular impositions. Sometimes their contestation erupted into organized, directly oppositional movements or ikki. Such countable incidents of direct commoner protest demonstrated, in heightened form, what issues like arechi showed on an everyday basis: a process of ongoing negotiation between commoners and government that was part of the normal operation of the Tokugawa hegemony.

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Some Observations

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Each of the papers in this panel touches on issues which individually are significant enough to warrant more leisurely consideration. We have Professor Fukaya on the subject of the relations between a daimyo and his retainers, a complex topic in which nothing is ever quite as it seems. There is Professor Hori on the virtually untouched theme of daimyo relations with their peers. Professor Morris directs our attention to the persistence of landed fiefs, a subject consigned to obscurity for a generation, and Professor Sippel moves well beyond the standard superficialities to look and the far from one-sided interaction between villagers and those who taxed them. Every one of these issues is of the greatest importance in determining precisely how Tokugawa Japan works. Perhaps one of these days, when more pressing matters of gender and sexuality have been resolved, we might see them receiving the notice they deserve.

For convenience I am dividing the four papers into two groups, an easy enough exercise, since Professor Fukaya and Hori, dealing as they do with the daimyo class, and specifically with two successive daimyo of Bizen, make a natural coupling, as do Professor Morris and Sippel, each of whom is concerned with the land—those who claimed authority over it, and those who worked it. The panel is in fact very nicely balanced between superstructure and substrucrure. I shall comment on each group first and then launch headlong into some observations.

Immediately after reading the Fukaya and Hori papers I grabbed for my copy of Dokai kōshūki. This, as many will know, is a work consisting of confidential appraisals of the state of each daimyo domain around the year 1690. The Bakufu commissioned them, and the officials it charged with the task of compiling them were most certainly not afraid to be critical where they thought criticism to be due.

So what do these reports have to tell us about the Bizen domain just eight years after the retired Mitsumasa’s death, and some eighteen years after Tsunamasa had replaced him as daimyo. It’s rather interesting, so I’ll quote a couple of passages.

The habits of the samurai are orderly, and many cultivate both the literary and military arts. However this is not due to the present daimyo, Iyo no kami. It is due to the legacy of his father, Shintarō Mitsumasa, who was unmatched in the practise of letters and military matters and possessed of an abundance of fine qualities. Because the policies of Mitsumasa’s time as they relate to government have not been altered, the people are happy and prosperous.

So that’s the Bakufu’s secret assessment of Ikeda Mitsumasa, who emerges from it sounding suspiciously like the meikun Professor Fukaya claims he wasn’t.

Mitsumasa’s son, Tsunamasa, who is the subject of Professor Hori’s presentation, does not fare nearly so well under Bakufu scrutiny. Here is what Dokai kōshūki says of him:
Tsunamasa is stupid by nature, and lacks discrimination. His father Mitsumasa was famous throughout the realm as a master of the literary and martial arts. The son is ignorant and illiterate. Although he owns a mountain of books relating to Confucianism and military affairs, he has not looked at any of them. In consequence he is obtuse and ill-behaved. He devotes himself day and night to drinking parties and disreputable behavior, neglecting the way of government.

In the context of Professor Hori's paper, therefore, we can certainly see why the Bakufu might have preferred his distant cousin over in Tottori, and why he might have been reluctant to give Tsunamasa the court rank he wanted—at least without some money changing hands. Professor Hori's paper skirts around this latter possibility quite delicately, but since it also refers to the daimyo of Sendai and Satsuma having "consumed themselves" in the mid-eighteenth century trying to have their status raised, it's not a completely impossible scenario.

Nevertheless, if the passages I've just quoted from Dokai kōshūki lend credence to the substance of Professor Hori's paper, they do raise some questions about the meikun issue presented to us by Professor Fukaya. I should say at this juncture that I find Professor Fukaya's argument entirely plausible and—except for the problem raised by the Bakufu's secret report—entirely convincing. Bering in mind the kinds of tensions that always existed between and daimyo and his vassals, it makes sense that the latter should try to control the former—unobtrusively if possible, but in any case control was an issue from which retainers simply could not afford to back away. Far too much was at stake.

So what more natural than that they should fabricate the picture of a model ruler, and use that as yet another instrument in their perennial attempt to keep their daimyo under restraint? Mitsumasa's vassals, the minute he was dead, started to create an image of their late lord not as he was, but as they would have wished him to be, and the way in which they hoped that his successors might be. Where the real Mitsumasa was suspected by the Bakufu, resented by his retainers, and disliked by his people, the phony one was universally loved, and for just the right set of qualities.

All of this makes sense to me but, as I said, it does leave us with the Dokai kōshūki testimony to explain away. We know the Bakufu had its doubts about Mitsumasa, so, in the context of a secret report, why should its inspectors have pulled any punches? If they could say that the living Tsunamasa was stupid and illiterate, why could they not say that the dead Mitsumasa was untrustworthy, authoritarian and greedy? Instead, at the very moment that the Bizen vassals are inventing their meikun image, the Bakufu seems content to accept it too. As the King of Siam once said on Broadway, "It is a puzzlement." I certainly don't have the answer, but it's certainly a query that needs to be raised. Perhaps Mitsumasa really was a meikun.

With the papers from John Morris and Patricia Sippel (both of whom, incidentally, I am proud to claim as my fellow-countrypersons—and perhaps it is here that I should express my gratitude to Phil Brown for acting as the panel's token American) we are brought very much closer to the land. There can be no doubt that both papers have got it right—in John's case, that the significance of jikata chigyō have been minimized all too often, and the hatamoto left out, in the general stampede to construct a picture of a Japan in which samurai all live in castle towns and draw salaries. In this, as in so much else in Tokugawa Japan, where experience varied wildly from place to place, we can really take nothing for granted. It is an interesting topic and, I suspect, an extremely complicated one.
Patricia Sipple’s paper, too, is absolutely convincing. It’s all very well to make diagrams of Tokugawa Japan’s power structure showing the shogun at the top, followed by the daimyo, followed by the samurai, followed by everybody else, especially the farmers, with everybody able to push around everyone beneath them, but we all know that’s a caricature. Villagers were not powerless, not nearly so powerless as the wording of Bakufu and han laws suggests. Their negotiating position was, if not one of equality, then certainly not far from it—the power structure, after all, needed them rather more than they needed the power structure. As Patricia says of the villagers of Nishi-Takahashi and Nishi-Mizunuma, “It was, after all, their community.” They could comply when it seemed appropriate, and resist when it seemed appropriate. Taken in conjunction with John’s paper, it made me wonder what on earth would have happened if the hare-brained scheme proposed by every ideologue from Ogyū Sorai to Ikuta Yorozu had been put into practice. If the samurai had been forced out into the countryside, and the doctrinaire position demanded, and made to work their fiefs as farmers, how would existing fief-holders have coped with the influx and, more importantly, how would the villagers? If the Shimotsuke villagers were uncooperative about bringing in a few farmers from elsewhere, imagine how they would have reacted to a mass invasion of soft-handed samurai.

Now Professor Fukaya has warned us against going down the blind alley represented by the debate over a centralized or decentralized Tokugawa Japan. On the whole I tend to agree with him, because it seems to me that the debate, such as it is, is not so much about the actual phenomena involved as it is about interpretations, and interpretations, as we know, can be influenced by many extraneous elements, among them temperament, perspective and opportunity. How are we to describe the bakufu taisei — is it incomplete central government or limited regionalism? Should we deplore a failure to proceed to total national integration, or applaud the resolute survival of regional independence? Is the glass of the bakufu taisei lamentably half-empty or heroically half-full? Pessimists might say the former, optimists the latter. Observe the glass from the top down and it appears half empty; from the bottom up, it seems half full. Neither position is totally right, and neither totally wrong, and in any case, both are oversimplifications. Two hundred and sixty-some years is a long time, and naturally there were fluctuations in the water level, both from time to time, and from place to place. Sometimes the level inched up a little, as it did under Tsunayoshi, for example, and sometimes it went down. It was certainly not static and, like just about everything else in Tokugawa Japan, was subject to enormous regional variation, so that, for example, the level in Fukuyama was always much lower than in Satsuma.

But what is certain, as these papers all demonstrate, is that each side of the bakufu taisei — the baku on one hand and the han on the other — had an essential role to play in the Tokugawa order. Take the status question which Professor Hori has presented to us. I quite understand that Tsunamasa was angling for higher court rank not from any wish to strengthen his links with Edo, but rather to re-establish his status vis-à-vis Tottori, and by implication with all the other daimyo as well. That’s a good point. But to get that status he had to turn to the Bakufu — there was just nowhere else to go.

Then, too, if you look up the Ikeda in Dokai kōshūki you don’t find them under that name. Instead they are the Matsudaira of Bizen, a family name granted to them by the Tokugawa, just as the Mitsu of Mitsumasa and the Tsuna of Tsunamasa were granted by the shoguns of the time. Presumably accepting these marks of Tokugawa esteem (not that they could readily be refused) was symbolic of something.
Equally symbolic was the elaborate ceremonial network centered around the shogun. I didn’t have time to check the Bizen situation, but the experience of successive daimyo of Utsunomiya was probably not too different in kind, if more modest in scale. Traditionally, on his accession the daimyo of Utsunomiya gave the shogun a sword, thirty pieces of gold, five rolls of crepe, a horse and a saddle. Twice a year he gave gifts of silver. Each new Year, on the occasion of the first Noh performance, he gave the shogun a wooden tray and some gold in lieu of sake; in early spring he gave him a box of mushrooms; in early summer a box of dried rice; in midsummer a box of noodles; in early autumn a box of salt fish; in winter a box of sweet potatoes. “So what?” you might say. Big deal. But these gifts of mountains, uplands, paddies and sea were all symbolic of the subordination of one to the other. Symbolic, yes, but we can’t discount symbols any more. Ritualistic, yes, but we can’t discount ritual, either. Maybe—gasp!—the names and gifts were actual stage props in a theater of authority and submission. Whatever they were, they clearly had some meaning.

Then there were the Bakufu’s practical powers — over foreign relations, foreign trade, adjudication of disputes, sankin kōtai, disenfeoffments, fief transfers, and forced labor. These were not negligible, even if not used to the fullest. Nor, it must be said, were those powers wielded entirely at daimyo expense. The fact is that daimyo during the Tokugawa period were safer than they had ever been, simply because of the monopoly of power the James White has pointed to. They did not have to worry about each other (except in status terms, as Professor Hori indicates), and they did not have to worry about being overthrown by their vassals; in oie sōdō the Bakufu almost invariably supported the daimyo and punished the vassals. In the Tokugawa period it was possible to become a daimyo at the age of two and go untouched through a normal life span. This was certainly not the case in earlier periods of Japanese history.

On the other hand, beyond these kinds of powers the Bakufu was not a government which had a great impact on the rest of Japan. The domains were substantially able to do as they wished in a number of areas—tax policies, trade policies, samurai numbers, law and order, to name a few. For most Japanese the central government as such hardly existed, represented only by posted proclamations. There was absolutely none of the paraphernalia of central governments elsewhere—no public statues, no heads on coins, no triumphal arches, no grand boulevards, nothing to impress on the general populace any sense of who the shogun might be, or what he might look like. Instead he was sheltered from public gaze by castle walls and palanquin lattices, and his government was no less secretive and remote. All the ofuregaki to the contrary, his government interfered as little as possible in everyday life. The number of things it simply could not do is legion. It couldn’t enforce a ban on tobacco growing, it couldn’t control prices, it couldn’t control consumers, it couldn’t restrict travel, it couldn’t prevent the alienation of land, it couldn’t close down the pornography industry, and on, and on, and on.

So it doesn’t matter much how we characterize the level of water in the glass, so long as we recognize what the outlines were. If we’re clear on those, then we can allow each other some latitude. We can even call it a compound state, if you think that sounds any better, as long as it does not imply stasis, and as long as it does not overlook the fact that there was a more or less constant tug-of-war going on at every level—centrifugal against centripetal, shogun against daimyo, daimyo against retainers, farmers against officials—all of them with legitimate interests to push. And it was not a system that sprang from any conscious design, from the brow of Ieyasu or Iemitsu
or anybody else. Ultimately, like all human endeavour, it was produced by a combination of many things—accident, ambition, compromise, fear, inertia and habit.

Inertia in particular hardly ever receives the recognition it deserves, but its importance in Tokugawa Japan is undeniable. It lay at the bottom of all the criticism leveled at the system by Confucian ideologues. With few, if any, exceptions, they disparaged the system of government, not because it was too repressive, but because it was not repressive enough. Because it was too indulgent, went the usual refrain, the samurai became flabby, the merchants arrogant, and the peasants revolting. No doubt all this was true, and the critics were right to draw attention to it, but they were not right to see it as a shortcoming. Because in so many ways the system of government was unorganized, haphazard in practice, if not in theory, lacking in discipline, and at best reactive rather than proactive, it allowed the development of what I suspect was one of the world's less disagreeable societies. We, with our different expectations, would certainly not have cared for it ourselves, but that is not really the point.
Indiana University turned into a hot spot for the research of sexuality in Edo culture when it hosted the international conference, “Sexuality and Edo Culture, 1750-1850” from August 17 to 20, 1995. As the organizer, Sumie Jones, mentioned in her opening remarks, sexuality in Edo culture has been largely ignored by academics in the U.S. and, to an even greater extent, Japan. The conference was designed to not only cast new light on the study of Edo culture within the U.S. and Europe but to also stimulate the scholar pursuing his/her research from within Japan.

Over twenty scholars from the U.S., Europe, Japan and Korea with specialties in literature, sociology, folklore, history and art history were invited to speak during the conference. The international and multi-disciplinary collaborations and conversations encouraged by the mix of Japanese specialists and non-specialists provided an ideal forum for the study of multi-layered Edo culture. Over three days, papers were loosely grouped into seven panels: “Positioning Shunga Historically,” “Eros and Consumerism,” “Otherness Within and Without,” “The Place of Love,” “Configurations of Gender,” “The Rhythm and Play of Flesh and Words,” and “Desire for Narrative in Stories and Pictures.” Although Edo culture was discussed from multiple points of view, some common issues and concerns ran through papers presented during the conference. It became clear by the last day of the conference that modernity, the fluidity of gender and genre, as well as performance were important features of Edo cultures and deserved further study.

Among the multiple points of view offered during the conference were those originating in a historical perspective. Two historians, Susan Burns and Henry Smith, demonstrated how important a solid understanding of specific historical conditions is to our understanding of Edo culture. In “Bodies Possessed and Hearts Disordered: Sexuality and Madness in Early Modern Japan,” Burns discussed how the analysis of “monotsuki” became a major obsession of the emergent psychiatric profession during the early Meiji period in order to show the constructedness of madness as well as the consequences, social and cultural, of such a construction. Smith turned a historian’s eye to shunga in an effort to distinguish between Edo attitudes and modern attitudes toward shunga. The work of literary historians such as that of Robert Campbell was also presented at the conference. In his “Poems on the Way to Yoshiwara,” Campbell poses the question: Why did Yoshiwara become the object of historical study?

Two art historians attempted to contextualize shunga by focusing on a particular artist and a particular shunga series respectively. Drawing from a case study of Utamaro, Matthias Forrer located shunga within the tradition of print and book publishing in Edo culture in “Shunga Production in the 18th and 19th Centuries: Designing ‘un enfer en style bibliographique.’” In “Shunga and Mitate: Suzuki Harunobu’s Eight Views of Modern Pleasure (Fūryū Zashiki Hakkei),” Hayakawa situated the shunga series in relation to the original Chinese series and Harunobu’s earlier non-shunga “Eight Views of Entertainment.” After discussing the nature of mitate, he gave a nuanced reading of the series which brought to light the pictures’ semantic richness. Like Hayakawa, Haga Toru offered a creative way of reading shunga. However, rather than focus on a particular series, Haga discussed more general aspects of
shunga in his paper “The Precariousness of Love.” According to Haga, the ingenious use of space in shunga prints i.e., verandas, balconies, windows, etc. underlined three important qualities of “love” for Edoites: transiency, improvisation, and “abnormality.”

Tanaka Yuko and Ueno Chizuko opened up new avenues in shunga research which originate in a female point of view by pointing to the way that shunga challenges traditional constructions of gender. In “Erotic Textiles,” Tanaka argued that shunga, rich in textiles, depends on the practice of “concealing but revealing” and effectively stimulated the viewer’s imagination. Working with the assumption that the eroticization of textiles is one of the most distinctive aspects of Japanese art, Tanaka argued that the change in role of fabrics signaled a shift in conceptions of the erotic. In drawing our attention to the structure of the erotic in shunga, Tanaka introduced a conception of the erotic female gaze, supposedly absent from modern erotic art in which naked female bodies are predominant. Ueno was even more explicit in her call for a recognition of the female perspective in a discussion of shunga, which she holds was made by and for men. In “The Formation of Female Sexuality in Shunga,” Ueno asserted that the presence of lusty pregnant women and eroticized mothers in shunga offer female sexuality a form of representation other than the traditional pleasure quarters. While acknowledging the fact that the eroticization of motherhood allowed a patriarchal society to reduce women to wombs, she discussed how shunga blurs the traditional boundary between the mother and the prostitute.

Sumie Jones also discussed shunga in terms of the blurring of boundaries in her paper, “Interminable Reflections: The Semiotic Flow in Edo Arts.” By using Suzuki Harunobu’s work in which a man and woman are transformed into identical twins by mirroring, she put forth her claim that repetition and reflection are among the most salient features of Edo arts. The fluidity of gender pointed out by Jones is in fact one of the most striking characteristics of Edo culture and represents a marked difference from the significance of gender difference in the Western tradition. This fluidity of gender can account for the prominence of male homosexuality in Edo culture, especially in the theater district and samurai society. During the conference, both Gary Leupp and Ujiie Mikito, two important specialists in male homosexuality, presented papers on the topic. Leupp presented evidence for demographic reasons behind the rise and decline of homosexuality in “Male Homosexuality in Edo during the Late Tokugawa Period, 1750-1850: Decline of a Tradition?” while Ujiie traced the roots of male homosexuality to the samurai tradition and described its decline during the Edo period in terms of changes in that tradition in “The Erotic Roots of Bushido: Male Love in Theory and Practice.”

Although their papers were highly informative and stimulating, I think that there has yet to be any detailed discussions of the aesthetic and philosophical sides of male homosexuality. Moreover, terms such as “homosexuality” and “love” used in English papers are loaded with other cultural discourses not present in their Japanese counterparts and hence extremely problematic. As Paul Schalow pointed out in his response to the panel, “Configurations of Gender,” “iro,” translated as love in English, does not distinguish between body and soul. Unlike love within the Judeo-Christian tradition which can be purely moral and spiritual, in “iro” sex and love are intertwined. Because of problems inherent in translations of iro, shudo or “nanshoku,” I think it was useful to hear a paper like Ujiie’s in the original Japanese. Finally, in spite of (or perhaps because of) the lack of representations of lesbianism in shunga that was pointed out by Ueno, female homosexuality in Edo culture remains an unexplored but potentially fascinating area of research.

Behind many of the conference papers was the belief that “modernity” or “modernism” is important for discussing all aspects of Edo culture and I might add, Japanese culture in general.
For some such as David Pollack, for example, modernity could be discussed in terms of a commodification of culture which figured heavily in the erotic imagination of Edo culture. In “Marketing Desire: Advertising and Sexuality in Edo Literature, Drama and Art,” Pollack argued that advertising practices are part of a larger economy of desire which forms the context of more remarkable manifestations of erotic life. For others speakers such as Charles Inoue, modernity was used to describe a more abstract set of beliefs prevalent in Japanese culture. In “Pictocentrism: The Chinese Roots of Japanese Modernity,” Inoue proposed that the balance of illustration and text was an important determinte of the semiotic structure of modern consciousness. A separation of word and image occurred during the last decades of the 19th century and the modern configuration of illustration and text that we encounter in “gokan” is the result of a logocentric realignment of signs that continued during the Meji, Taisho and Showa periods. Eiji Sekine also focused on the conceptual changes wrought by modernity through an analysis of literature. In “Love Triangle in Shunshoku Tatsumi no Sono,” he noted a changing conception of love and sexuality and located the change within the late Edo era. According to Sekine, Shunsui’s apparent reconfirmation of the traditionally valued harmony in love attenuates an ideologically unrecognized but nevertheless provocative conceptualization of part of a split sensibility toward reality.

Although neither Choi Park-Kwang nor Miyata Noboru explicitly discussed modernity nor did they concentrate on urban life in their papers, I found that their observations highlighted the link between the heightened attention to sexuality and the spread of urban culture. In his paper “Japanese Sexual Customs and Cultures Seen from the Perspective of the Korean delegation to Japan,” Choi offered an account of Tokugawa Japan as seen through the eyes of the Korean Delegation during the Edo period. According to Choi, the Koreans were scandalized by the immorality of the Japanese. Although from the paper it was difficult to see how urban culture figured into the observations of the Koreans, I think Choi’s comments pointed us in the right direction for further study. In my opinion, a comparative study of Confucianism and urban culture within Japanese and Korean cultures (as well as other Asian countries) would prove extremely fruitful. Furthermore, the fact that Choi was the only scholar speaking from a non-Japanese Asian perspective, pointed to a lack in the conference and perhaps in Edo studies in general.

As a leading Japanese folklorist interested in village life, Miyata Noboru presented important facts on the function of sexuality within Edo villages in “The Cult of Genitalia and the Return of the Land in late Edo Culture.” By looking at life in the country, Miyata provided another perspective on the effects of modernity in Japan. In his opinion, as a result of the decline of villages and growth of cities, a sexual religion emerged in the villages which drew the community closer together.

Along with “modernity,” performance is a facet of Edo culture analyzed by the participants. Nobuhiro Shinji, a distinguished scholar of Edo literature, taught us how to look at Santō Kyōden’s “books of manners” through the lens of the author’s private life. Furthermore, Nobuhiro showed us that such reading was encouraged by Kyōden who wanted the reader to be privy to his personal life because, as a quintessential Edo artist, his life and his work were his performance. In discussing the connection between the creative and the personal, Nobuhiro underlines the close relationship between the author and reader of books—an intimate relationship which reminds us of that between kabuki actors and their audience. Andrew Markus was also interested in the influence personal experience had on the creative life of the author. In his paper “Prostitutes and Prosperity in the Works of Terakado Seiken,” he discussed Seiken’s ambivalent depiction of prostitution in the Edo and Yoshiwara of the author’s time.
The charm of Edo culture is the fusion of high and low art. At the hand of Edoites, ideas, no matter how dry, could be turned into entertainment. In keeping with this spirit, the conference brought together intellectual and sensual pleasures and became a performance in itself. Howard Hibbett's keynote address, "The Yoshiwara Wits," best exemplified the mix of the academic and serious with the joyful and pleasurable. By citing stories and jokes, one after another, Hibbett gave us a witty guide to the Edoites' games with language and performance. Indeed, Hibbett's talk was in itself a refined performance. In addition, on the first evening of the conference, we enjoyed popular Edo songs by Nishimatsu Fuei whose performance vividly recalled the atmosphere of Edo (I was so impressed by her songs that I nearly wept when I heard her sing). She also accompanied John Solt during the conference itself while he read provocative translations of "Willow Leaftips." Participants also had the opportunity to attend an exhibition, "The Erotic Art of Ukiyo-e" mounted by the Indiana Art Museum as well as a special conference exhibition from the collections of the Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction.

Before ending I would like to make note of the highly qualified respondents who took part in the conference. The responses of George Wilson, Harold Bolitho, Michael Robinson, Andrew Gerstle, Norman Bryson, Paul Schalow, and Toru Takahashi to their particular panels were witty, lucid and often thought provoking. They all took their duties as respondents so seriously that I often thought that another paper was being presented when hearing their responses. Finally, let me say that I find it telling that both Professors Choi and Nobuhiro chose the conference as a reason for their first trips to the U.S. "Sexuality and Edo Culture, 1750-1850" was a ground breaking event. Let's hope that the questions raised here will spur Edo scholars on into the exploration of new territory.

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Gary Leupp is quite conscious of the political import of his study of the culture of male same-sex behavior in Tokugawa Japan. He expects that showing how nanshoku was socially constructed will bolster the argument that any and all sexual behavior is likewise a cultural product, and thus hopes to encourage his readers “to tolerate sexual diversity in the contemporary world.” (p. 9) While acknowledging the possibility of “essentialism” (the theory that homosexuality is innate and ahistorical), he ultimately takes the extreme social constructionist position that homosexual behavior is always the result of social conditions. His survey of nanshoku history leads him to the sweeping conclusion that nanshoku developed first as a result of the absence of women in monasteries, and soon spread to all-male samurai warrior bands. He proposes that nanshoku, having been institutionalized in these elite settings, was then adopted by impressionable “bourgeois society” in the Tokugawa period. Since there is little historical data to support this view, it appears that what inspires it is, ironically, a belief that heterosexuality is essential and that homosexual behavior only emerges when that essential identity is somehow thwarted.

That such an argument is unlikely to have any impact on contemporary hostility toward lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered persons, is not the point. The problem here is that this argument is based on circumstantial evidence. Leupp’s discussion of homosexual behavior in monasteries is a hodgepodge of references to events widely disparate in time and context. Most of the sources for this discussion of medieval period phenomena are Tokugawa period writers, men whose tendency to ridicule monks reveals an antipathy for Buddhism that completely obviates their reliability as objective sources. Furthermore, Leupp treats Japanese Buddhism as though it were a simple monolithic entity, remarking, for example, that “In Buddhist Japan . . . clerics were in theory denied all sexual outlets.” (p.36) This comment overlooks all of Pure Land Buddhist thought and ignores the profound ambivalence toward all aspects of monastic discipline that has characterized Japanese Buddhism, even the medieval Tendai school.

Leupp is on firmer ground when he gets past his introductory, background chapter and begins his study of nanshoku behavior in Tokugawa Japan. Here he pulls together a great deal of the relevant scholarship to date, culling literary, pictorial, and historical sources to produce a richly textured account of nanshoku. He tells us about men’s feelings as well as their conduct, provides economic and demographic data, discusses the impact of government policies and religious ideologies, weighs the influence of the factors of age and status, and considers how concepts of gender affected the conventions of nanshoku.

It is obvious to the most casual reader of nanshoku literature that its basic convention was the romantic or sexual relationship of an older male who played the active role in anal intercourse with a younger male who took the receptive part. Most often there were
status differences as well; monks became involved with acolytes, lords with their pages, and patrons solicited prostitutes. What is interesting in this regard, though, is that it was age that invariably correlated with sexual expression, not status. (pp. 137-144) As Paul Schalow also noted in *The Great Mirror of Male Love*, differences in age, however minor they may have been, were the basis for designating one partner to the senior role, and the other to the junior position. However, sexual receptivity did not correlate with social passivity or submissiveness. That is, a younger man of high status might, having noticed another’s love, initiate a relationship with an older man of lower status, yet the younger man is always depicted as the “insertee” in anal intercourse. Thus, our assumptions about the power dynamics in these relationships, that the lover dominated and the beloved was subordinate, are frequently stymied. A case in point is the story told in *The Great Mirror of Male Love* of a youth who angrily punishes his older but meekly acquiescent lover for an imagined insult, loses all sense of proportion, causes his lover’s death, and then takes his own life in remorse.

While Leupp mentions power as an issue in the culture of nanshoku, he does not delve deeply into the ramifications of the question. What Leupp does offer is some interesting data on sexual practices. Leupp also tackles the apparent problem of criticism of male-male sexuality that crops up in the sources by showing that what is actually problematized is the social disorder and physical violence that sometimes erupted in the context of love affairs between men.

In his final chapter, “Nanshoku and the Construction of Gender,” Leupp raises an array of challenging issues. Having demonstrated, for example, that heterosexual and “lesbian” fellatio was practiced, but that male-male fellatio was specifically avoided, Leupp speculates that this was because “Male-male fellatio was too ambiguous an act for men whose sexuality had been molded to fit clear active and passive categories. As a patriarchal, hierarchical class society, Japan had to preserve some exclusively heterosexual role, lest the whole basis of the society be undermined. Perhaps a ban on male homosexual fellatio was necessary to preserve the fundamental notion of male-female sexual roles.” (p. 194) Now, I am willing to entertain the notion that male-male fellatio was taboo because male-male sexuality was conceived on the basis of rigid active-passive roles and this sexual act did not clearly fit into this particular dichotomy. To suggest, however, that the very structure of heterosexuality in Japanese culture and “the whole basis of society” could have been threatened by this act is an extravagant claim.

Leupp seems to have felt compelled to account for the fact that passive partners in anal intercourse were not despised in Japanese culture. His logic is that in the West misogyny inspired disdain for men who took what was considered a women’s role but that this did not have the same effect in Japan because there women were held in relatively high esteem. While I appreciate the perspective that Leupp offers in this regard, that there was a disjunction between official Confucian ideology, which was infamously derogatory of women, and women’s actual roles and status in society, (p. 184-187) this is a good example of a persistent tendency of Leupp’s, namely, to posit the Western experience as natural and the Japanese difference as requiring explanation in Western terms. Isn’t it equally plausible that the notion that sexual receptivity is demeaning is primarily an attitude about sex, not about women, and that in Japan, fewer anxieties about sexuality left men and women free of this Western notion of sexual receptivity as demeaning?

Leupp describes sexual practice in Tokugawa Japan as a variegated and flexible world: Men’s taste in sexual partners ranged from women, to female impersonators, to youths, and, occasionally, to masculine men. He discusses a Japanese appreciation for androgyny at considerable length. This is interesting material but in another example of the persistence of a Western conceptual framework in his work, in his conclusion Leupp sums this all up with the simplistic assessment that “most Tokugawa men” were
"bisexual" (p. 199). This is also the root of his observation regarding pre-Tokugawa nanshoku that there was a “tendency to feminize the younger partner” and that “[h]eterosexual desire was evident in the construction of sexual objects made up, coiffured, and dressed much like women.” (p. 56) Leupp thinks of beauty as necessarily feminine or masculine, but I think human beauty in pre-Tokugawa Japan was conceived in terms that were not based on gender. It is not so much that youths were feminized, as that what was considered beautiful was, essentially, gracefulness and vulnerability. The first was usually a function of social status and the second is typically a function of age.

Leupp accomplishes in *Male Colors* what he had set out to do. He definitively demonstrates that nanshoku was a unique cultural phenomenon, one that was widely accepted and practiced. It is, nevertheless, unfortunate that this book is so dependent on Western conceptual categories, because sexuality is an area in which Japanese culture is dramatically different from the West and has the potential for radically expanding our understanding of the nature and parameters of human experience. Although this work does not contain that vision, now that this field is fashionable rather than taboo, perhaps it will inspire others to take up that task. *Male Colors* is welcome for drawing attention to the fact that there is an abundance of data on the subject.


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This book tells the compelling story of Japan’s vanishing breed of *shokunin*, artisans who produce fine handmade products in traditional styles, forms, and techniques. Much of the commentary on the twelve artisans chronicled here focuses on the painstaking fabrication processes involved. The exquisite photos of the artisans at work in their studios and statements by the artisans themselves draw the reader into their world, illuminating their motivations in pursuing professions that did not offer assurances of financial success or fame. More broadly, the book underscores how changes in lifestyle and technological advancements have fostered the transition from the early modern to the modern age.

The artisans highlighted here—a woodblock printer, metal carver, kimono tailor, crest (*mon*) printer, brush maker, Kabuki calligrapher, lacquerware maker, screen (*sudare*) maker, household shrine maker, cabinet maker, wood carver, and temple carpenter—all live and work in Tokyo, a city in which the plight of traditional culture is perhaps more dire than elsewhere in Japan. Rarely in the book does the reader sense the fate of other traditional crafts in Tokyo or elsewhere in Japan. In addition, because only male artisans are highlighted here, the important contribution of women to the history and preservation of traditional Japanese crafts is also unstated. Nevertheless, these artisan’s observations may be viewed as representative of the many challenges facing those who seek to preserve traditional crafts and customs.
These artisans fear that the public no longer appreciates or is capable of recognizing fine quality handmade products. Few, for example, can differentiate between factory produced die-cut metalwork and its hand carved counterpart, so there is dwindling interest in the higher priced handmade goods. Additionally, many of these products are becoming obsolete as customs change. For example, fifty years ago, four out of five families had Shinto shrines in their homes, while now the number is about two out of five. Other challenges involve the difficulties in obtaining necessary materials. For example, native cypress, necessary for temple construction, has become scarce; Southeast Asian teakwood is being used instead. Also, many craftsmen are forced to make their own tools or parts that would once have been supplied by specialists who have since gone out of business for lack of customers.

These artisans believe that for most contemporary Japanese, old ways and old objects are associated with poverty and discomfort. Despite the fact that training apprentices puts further strain on their time and income, they are committed to passing on their knowledge, more important to them than wealth, so most have been actively involved in training apprentices during the course of their careers. Yet finding apprentices with patience to learn and willingness to forgo potential for higher salaries is challenging. Some noted that women apprentices are increasing in number in traditionally male-dominated professions such as kimono tailoring.

Ranging in age from 46 to 88, with all but the youngest (the temple carpenter) born in prewar times, all these men learned their professions via the traditional apprenticeship system, which they believe superior to the education afforded at technical schools and more difficult than present-day apprenticeship practices. In the old system, for example, apprentices trained for ten or more years generally from their early teens, had two days off a month, and were required to do a year of “gratitude service” upon completion of their training prior to striking out on their own. They would learn the hard way, by trial and error, close observation of the master at work (generally with no verbal instructions but ample criticism), and progression of tasks from menial labor to more active involvement in execution. Nowadays, apprenticeships begin later due to compulsory education and are limited by law to five years with pay.

With few exceptions, these men did not come from long lines of families practicing their trades for generations, though the crafts they pursue are indeed centuries old. Most are second- or third- generation practitioners of a craft their fathers or grandfathers (or in some cases, other relatives or neighbors) took up during the Meiji period, and seem almost accidentally to have been thrust onto their career paths. Still, most seek to pass their shops or skills on to their sons or other relatives.

The artisans featured in this book distance themselves from artists, considering themselves professionals who make well-designed, high quality products that are (or were at one time) essential to the needs of society. Artists, they assert, are interested in originality, too often at the expense of quality, can be selective in acceptance of commissions and oblivious to deadlines. Although unstated in the text, these comments clearly apply to the definition of artists in modern Japanese society: in premodern times distinctions between “artists” and “artisans” were less defined. Ironically, although only some of the featured artisans sign their products, the high cost of their handiwork assures that their products are for elite consumers, not the plebeians who were their predecessors’ original clients. This is especially evident in the patrons for the woodblock printer Nagao Naotaō. Once prints were art for the working class; now museums worldwide seek out Nagao to print from precious old blocks in their collections.

Beyond teaching us a great deal about the specific crafts and craftsmen featured, this book offers numerous insights into the conflicts occurring as change continues in Japanese society. These are insights which, no doubt, are paralleled in other societies throughout the world where the transformations of the industrial age confront older living cultures. The volume concludes with a
glossary of terms, both technical and cultural, appropriate for novice readers, and a short bibliography of English and Japanese language sources.

Obviously this is a book aimed at general readers interested in traditional Japanese crafts, and at those who seek technical information on the production processes of these crafts, rather than at specialists of Japanese history and culture who would expect a more critical and well-researched text. Still, the perceptive (albeit nostalgic) tone of the commentary makes this much more than merely an annotated picture book or how-to craft manual. Thus, I think the book would be suitable as supplementary reading material in an introductory course on Japan.


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The Shisendō, or Hall of the Poetry Immortals, built by Ishikawa Jōzan in 1636, is one of the standard stops on the itinerary of every tourist to Kyōto, its unique charms acclaimed in every guidebook to the city. But it remains a perplexing place for foreign visitors, who can have little idea what to make of the rather cramped rustic structure with its exquisite small garden, both adorned with calligraphic plaques they can scarcely be expected to read or, when translated, to understand. Much like the literati life it represents, the Shisendō is over-inscribed, almost to the point of seeming to disappear entirely into text. One enters under a sign that announces the “Grotto of Small Possessions,” advances down a path to the gate overwritten with the words “Ancient Plum Barrier” and on to the “Wasp’s Waist,” steps up into the “Hall of the Poetry Immortals” itself with its small room dubbed “Pursuit-of-Art Nest,” which affords a view out over the garden with its “Ups-and-Downs Nest Gate.” One might ascend the steps to the “Tower of Intoning Poetry at the Moon” to gaze out at the “Pavilion of the Lingering Moon.” Even the famed deer-chaser (shikaoni), a small and humble bamboo water device in the depths of the garden, bears the elegant name of “archbishop” (shōzu). Where did these terms come from, one wonders, and what can they mean today?

Any lingering excuse for ignorance is now dispelled by this wonderful new book. It has been designed, in the spirit of the bunjin emphasis on the unity of the scholarly arts, with the intention of portraying Ishikawa Jōzan and his artistic creation in the round, examining in turn the life, the poet, the calligrapher, the designer and the landscape gardener. This approach was earlier used to
excellent effect by Stephen Addiss in his book on Uragami Gyokudō not only as the artist he is acclaimed today, but as musician, poet, and calligrapher as well.

The book begins with Thomas Rimer’s concise and evocative introduction to the life of Jōzan, illustrated with appropriate evidence drawn from his poetry. The central interest of Jōzan’s life, poetry in Chinese (kan-shih), is the subject of Jonathan Chaves’s essay on “Jōzan and Poetry.” Chaves translates sixty-three of Jōzan’s own Chinese poems, as well as one each by the thirty-six Chinese “Immortals” which he inscribed on the imaginary portraits by Kanō Tan’yū that grace the walls of the Shisendō (what we see today are copies, the originals deemed too faded to exhibit). The Chinese themselves would never have thought to create such a list, but Japan long had a native tradition of “thirty-six poetic immortals” (kasen), a classification scheme that became the expected way of listing famous poets (one even imagines that the Meiji writer Natsume Sōseki had his own list of thirty-six immortal British poets tucked away somewhere). The subject of Jōzan as calligrapher is ably covered in a short essay by Stephen Addiss, and as landscape gardener at greater length by Suzuki Hiroyuki, the text section concluding with an interpretive essay by Kato Shūichi (whose name for some reason appears neither on the book’s title plate nor in the brief sketch of contributors at the end). Excellent photographic plates in both color and black-and-white, most of considerable artistic merit, depict the important locations, views and objects, and inscriptions, and there are extensive notes on the significance of each, as well as translations into English of many of the inscriptions.

In another age, Jōzan might have expected to live and die as a samurai in the service of his feudal lord. And indeed, for the first thirty years of his long life, he admirably fulfilled the first part of that formula, even saving the life of one of Tokugawa Ieyasu’s own sons in battle. But the profound social, political, and intellectual changes that took place after the start of the seventeenth century resulted in new sorts of lives, and Jōzan is admired for having managed to recreate himself, with no small difficulty and with singleminded determination, into the very model of the Japanese bunjin or man of letters. In some ways this lifestyle followed the familiar one of the medieval suki or connoisseur of such native arts as waka and renga poetry, yamato-e painting, and chanoyu. The Buddhist monks of the Gozan had helped disperse primarily their practice of the Chinese arts, but also of newly Japanized ones as well, into the larger world following the destruction of the Buddhist institution that accompanied the Onin Wars. Jōzan’s version of the suki life, however, was based not on Buddhist but on neo-Confucian Chinese ideals, modelled closely on a new concern for the literary ideals of the wen-jen or Chinese man of letters.

As such, this way of life involved the working out of a new aesthetic basis in Japanese life. And indeed, as Rimer notes, much of Jōzan’s fascination for today’s Japanese lies in the fact that “he was one of the first figures in the Tokugawa period to exhibit in his work and life the contemporary aesthetic virtue that came to be known as furūi” (p. 22), a term that “suggests withdrawal from the oversophisticated, ultimately shallow cares of urban life, a pause to search for a natural elegance found in closeness to things at hand and to a simpler, fresher environment” (p. 23). This is no naive posture, however, but rather, as Rimer notes, one deeply informed by a rich knowledge of and concern for Chinese and Japanese literature. While Jōzan’s Chinese sources include the usual exemplars of eremetic retreat such as Chuang Chou, T’ao Ch’ien, and Han Shan, Rimer notes that Jōzan everywhere reveals a marked preference for Confucianism over Zen, and, furthermore, that “from the totality of the Confucian vision he selected an artistic posture rather than a moral stance” (p. 24). This is a choice which implied “the challenge of juxtaposing his vision of a Chinese gentleman with that of a Tokugawa samurai to invent a composite image which served as an objectification of the many facets of his personality.
This choice tells us how eclectic and individual, how uninvolved in the complex alliances and arguments of a later period, the early bunjin persona could be. One of Jōzan's best-known inscriptions, for example, the often-reproduced 1615 calligraphed plaque of "Six Be Nots" (Rokubutsu, reproduced on p. 206 but for some reason not translated), might provide a certain insight into this new sort of character. While it somewhat resembles the list of prohibitions posted outside the gates of Zen temples warning against such inimical items as alcohol, meat, garlic, weapons, and sex, Jōzan's list is more in keeping with the life of a sober-minded neo-Confucian urban hermit:

Be not negligent of fire
Be not forgetful of theft
Be not averse to early rising
Be not disdainful of simple food
Be not diverted from frugality and industriousness
Be not indolent in sweeping and cleaning

For all the years Jōzan spent in Zen temples, this could almost be the household credo of any good thrifty Kamigata merchant in a story by Saikaku.

Jonathan Chaves delves further into Jōzan's personal preferences with the observation that because "Jōzan admired Sung poetry but upheld the primacy of the T'ang," his list of thirty-six Chinese "immortals" might appear somewhat idiosyncratic today, eliminating as it does such renowned figures as Lu Yu and the entire Southern Sung school while including the relatively lesser-known T'ang poet Ch'u Kuang-hsi and the Sung philosopher Shao Yung. The rest of Jōzan's choices would probably appear on anyone's short list of great Chinese poets. His adamant refusal to include the famous Sung poet and statesman Wang An-shih, however—one of his friend Hayashi Razan's own candidates for the list—is a telling reflection of Jōzan's idiosyncratic ideological allegiances. This emphasis on T'ang over Sung was similarly a reflection of one neo-Confucian preference over another, inherited by Tokugawa intellectuals from the arcane quarrels of the Ming dynasty. Jōzan's own awareness of with these quarrels might be evidenced by his determination, finally unsuccessful, to banish from his pantheon Po Chü-i, that important Chinese paragon of classical Japanese poetic taste, as being too "vulgar." This opinion was, as Chaves notes, one that had became part of the common evaluation of Po's work in China (p. 28), but was certainly not in Japan, where even in his own lifetime Po's poetic oeuvre had been reduced to the early poems in the elegant Six Dynasties style alone, eliminating entirely the more famous bawdy songs and poems of social concern (the so-called hsin yueh-fu). This is not a Japanese judgment on Jōzan's part, therefore, but a Chinese one.

Stephen Addiss similarly finds it necessary to account for Jōzan's idiosyncratic tastes in calligraphic styles. Even while automatically adhering to the long-accepted idea that handwriting revealed character no matter what attempt one might make to disguise it, as Addiss notes, Jōzan "did his best to create a persona in his calligraphy as he did in every other aspect of his life" (p. 85). It is not surprising, therefore, that this contradiction should show through Jōzan's calligraphy in a way that it does not seem to do in his poetry, say, and Addiss does a superb job of using this unique window onto personality to analyze the precise nature of the early model of a bunjin persona that Jōzan constructed for himself. Jōzan's chosen style of writing was the antique and even somewhat
Gothic “clerical” or lishu (J. reisho) script, the standard form of calligraphy in Han dynasty China, but eventually replaced by the now-standard k’ai-shu (J. kaisho) or formal, hsin-shu (J. gyōsha) or running, and ts’ao-shu (J. sōsha) or cursive styles. Of course Jōzan could and did write in these standard forms as well: the illustrations includes a four-character phrase written in a powerful cursive hand—really almost the “mad” handwriting (k’uang-shu, J. kyōso) sanctioned for expressing extraordinary states of mind such as joy, grief, or political outrage—that stands out like a screech against the staid and formal “clerical” hand that characterizes most of his extant work. Its content, too, reveals a state of mind not readily apparent in Jōzan’s typically calm and reflective Chinese poems of eremitic withdrawal and elevated and refined sensibility, for it proclaims a state of moral emergency, made all the more urgent by the exclamation implied by the handwriting itself: “Still Like a Burning House!” This is not the literal warning against fire of the sort that heads Jōzan’s “Six Be Nots,” but a reference to the “Parable of the Burning House” chapter of the Lotus Sutra, reminding us that much of Jōzan’s study of Confucianism and Taoism took place in the context of Buddhist temples.

Addiss notes that while he adopted the antiquarian “clerical” script to his own purposes, emphasizing the importance of Han dynasty models (especially that of Chu Ko-liang, a famous warrior-recluse to whom the Japanese warrior-recluse might well have turned as a model), Jōzan’s hand is clearly informed more by Ming dynasty models. This is because Han models were difficult to come by, while the Ming versions were quite close to hand—for example in such Chinese editions in Japan as the Thousand-Character Classic in Four Scripts of 1603, or the Thousand-Character Classic in Ten Scripts of 1643. Addiss’s analysis of Jōzan’s brush techniques shows how the quaint effect of squared-off horizontals and verticals is balanced, softened and made dynamic by elegant and bold diagonal (Ch. na) strokes. He also notes that Jōzan’s use of the “flying white” (i.e., streaked) brush technique, far from representing the controlled effect of spontaneity typical of Zen inscriptions (as in the “Burning House” example), appears to be the result of the deliberate use of a split brush to leave a fine line within each stroke (or perhaps even of brushing carefully around each white line to produce a streak), yielding the effect of a highlight. (Is it even possible that Jōzan may have achieved this very precise effect by using a sharply-pointed piece of bamboo to scrape away drying ink?) These highlights, taken together with his fat, rounded brushstrokes, impart to his characters the impressive raised effect of the banzuke style of writing used on sumō and kabuki billboards, and still a popular “antique” graphic style today.

In “The Garden of the Shisen-dō: Its Genius Loci,” Hiroyuki Suzuki explains the special architectural flavor of the villa as a combination of the earlier temple-based style of shoin-zukuri construction, characterized by the triad of built-in study desk (tsukeshoin), display alcove (tokonoma) and staggered display shelves (chigaidana), along with the use of uncolored surfaces and planed wood; and the more contemporary sukiya-zukuri style of teahouse architecture with its unfinished wood (often with the bark left on), interesting textural effects, and occasional touches of color. “The sukiya style shuns orthodoxy,” notes Suzuki: “it is purposely lighthearted and self-consciously quaint—perfectly suited, it turns out, to men who had rejected cultural orthodoxy and left behind the ways of the world” (p. 101). He draws our attention especially to the unusual second-story gable with its large round window aperture, perched out over the roof, here translated (from the words inscribed on its faded plaque) as the “Tower for Whistling at the Moon” (shōgetsuko 1987)

more accurately "Tower for Intoning Poetry at the Moon" since it is ludicrous to imagine poets actually "whistling"). One of the very few such structures still extant, and uncommon even in Shōzan's own day, it qualifies as something as unusual as those quaint garden structures the English term "follies." Suzuki likens it to the familiar structures of the Kinkakuji and Ginkakuji temples, which he calls "rare surviving examples of medieval two-story structures" (p. 100) (which seems a bit misleading since the Japanese word nikaiya applies to the three-story Kinkakuji in the extended sense of nikai as "upstairs," rather than in its narrower sense of "second floor").

Similar structures for enjoying a distant view, Suzuki points out, existed earlier in the azumaya or gazebos (usually called tei or "pavilions") attached to Zen temples, for example the "Pavilion of the Whole World at a Single Glance" (Sekai ichiran tei) attributed (along with almost every garden of a certain age in the Kyoto region) to the great medieval Zen monk and garden-designer Musō Sōseki. By Jōzan's day there existed several examples of this sort of upstairs room; but in his case its real significance is the connection it suggests with Chinese practices as they were incorporated by Japanese literati: "The custom of climbing to the upper story to eat and drink, or to write Chinese or Japanese poems, was already becoming established, and with it the second story evolved from the decorative to the functional" (p. 101).

Suzuki rehearses at some length the likely Chinese precedents for Shisendo's "Ten Locales and Twelve Scene," for example in the long-established "Eight Scenes" of Chinese art, the Northern Sung "Ten Scenes of West Lake," and Hsai Kuei's "Twelve Scenes of Hills and Waters." I suspect that Jōzan might have also have looked for his inspiration to even earlier Chinese estates, such as the famous villa the T'ang poet Wang Wei built at Meng-ch'uan, his paintings and poetic inscriptions of which have been famous for centuries (though the paintings are no longer extant). A note on p. 107 does mention the T'ang poet-painter Chang Seng-yu, whose paintings at the Temple of the Single Vehicle (C. I-ch'eng-ssu, J. Ichijōji) in Nanjing were painted in "a 'concave-convex' style [i.e., shaded relief] style (C. yao-tieh, J. ototsu) which appeared three-dimensional, i.e., trompe l'oeil." It is thus no coincidence that Jōzan's villa is located in the Eastern Hills section of Kyoto known today as Ichijōji. Suzuki then enumerates each of the "Ten Locales" and "Twelve Scenes." These were not, as might appear to the untutored mind, merely pedantic antiquarian devices, but "were chosen to stimulate the imagination; they are an aesthetic method." "With the twelve scenes, Jōzan introduced a vast expanse into this little country house" (p. 109), and "provided his villa with great expanse and resonance in both time and space" (p. 110). In other words, Jōzan's use of this rather arcane mode of poetic reference actually served the quite concrete function of extending the spatial and temporal boundaries of his domain of the mind, and should thus be understood as an exact artistic counterpart to "borrowed landscape" (shakkei) garden design, in which the distant landscape is incorporated into an otherwise much smaller space to give greater compass.

In this unique place in the time and space of Japan, as Katō Shūichi notes in his rather rambling and impressionistic closing essay, "all of the littlest and seemingly most insignificant objects. . . Were ruled by a complex hierarchy that was visible only to its creator" (p.113). Now, thanks to this book, much of it has been rendered visible to us as well. Katō's retelling of Jōzan's life, told in the form of an imaginary dialogue with a mysterious, tough, but sensitive old man the author discovers lingering in the garden after closing time, differs in significant details and interpretations from those found in the other essays, indeed from those found in the standard sources of Jōzan's life. The essay, which is self-indulgent in that maddening way that only a Japanese essay by a very literate and scholarly senior essayist is permitted to be, makes sense only if the reader understands it as a kind of semi-historical fictional
romance about men and their ideas, one that attempts to get beneath the easy plausibility and dry factuality of our concept of “history” to something more substantially profound about the human condition that cannot be found in facts alone (for example, Katō’s hypothesis that Jōzan never married because of a tragic love for another boy when he was still young). At the end of the essay, the mysterious old man has mysteriously vanished: he is of course, as we had suspected all along from his oddly personal insights into Jōzan’s motivations, the spirit of Jōzan and his creation, its genius loci, hovering over his life’s work, and provides an appropriate ending to the fascinating story of Shisendō and its creator.


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The appearance of an anthology that draws Edo and Paris together within a single editorial scope is a major scholarly event. As McClain, Merriman, and Ugawa point out, these two metropolises of the early modern world have seldom been studied side by side, yet their commonalities are compelling. Both were administrative headquarters of unprecedented size within their respective countries, serving new dynastic regimes of unprecedented ambition and reach. Both the Bourbons and the Tokugawa peppered their capitals with monumental architecture, and both made other bold interventions in urban space as well. Yet neither king nor shogun was able to dictate single-handedly what went on in his capital. From the beginning, both sovereigns enlisted the burghers to administer many of their own affairs. Both likewise struck compromises in providing for urban needs: taking a direct hand in setting up waterworks and in policing the capital, for instance, while leaving food provisioning largely in the hands of merchants. Finally, both the French monarchy and the Japanese shogunate saw their capitals slip partially out of their control over time, as commoners assumed more responsibility for urban services, took over certain boulevards or blocks for their own purposes, created zones where persons of different statuses could mingle, and, with increasing frequency, rebelled in the streets.

The exploration of these parallels forms the heart of _Edo and Paris_. Intrigued by the “startling” similarity between these cities on opposite sides of the globe, the editors brought together a group of specialists to determine “what was common and what was culturally specific about the early-modern experience in two geographically separated societies” (xvi). They chose to focus on the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a period described in terms of a synchronous trajectory of state development (“from the 1590s, when the Bourbons and Tokugawa rose to power, until the 1780s and 1790s, when the monarchy fell and the collapse of the Kansei reforms marked the beginning of several difficult decades that culminated in the Meiji Restoration”) (xvii). Structurally as well as

1 The earlier date is more easily justified than the latter, and the editors heavily emphasize the parallels of the earlier part of the period. Not surprisingly, however, individual contributions tend to slip out of this time-frame, whose somewhat strained political symmetry does not accurately reflect the early modern experience of either city. The French contributions characteristically push backwards into the sixteenth century, while several essays on Edo trace trajectories that continue well into the nineteenth. An explicit discussion of this slippage would have enhanced the book.
partly bureaucratic, dynastic state, in which hereditary monarchs ruled with the aid of appointed officials. Such a formulation shifts attention from the ruler per se to the political-economic constellation as a whole. While the merits of any characterization can be debated (this one too, for instance, says nothing about cultural processes), the notion of “agrarian-bureaucratic states” does at least point toward the sort of broader terminology that will be needed to bring a multidimensional social world into view.

3. A third problem with this book’s framework is a disjuncture between the restricted geographical scope of the evidence and the broader claims of the conclusion. Focusing narrowly on two metropolitan areas can certainly illuminate contrasts and parallels between them. But the editors here want to go further, asserting that the like ultimately outweighs the unlike. While acknowledging a series of important differences between the two cities, they insist in the end that any contrasts between governance and urbanism in France and Japan “specify differences of degree and magnitude, not of kind,” for “in both societies the trajectory arched toward absolutism.” Not that either sovereign ruled single-handedly; “while absolutist state power was growing [?], neither Tokugawa shogun nor Bourbon king ever became omnipotent ... and indirect rule emerged as a defining component of the early-modern state in both France and Japan” (464). Yet whatever the compromises negotiated between rulers and residents, they argue, both Edo and Paris can be seen in the last analysis as members of a single species, “capitals of absolutism.”

This conclusion begs a comparison that is never broached within the framework of the book. For judging whether the similarities between Edo and Paris were ultimately greater than the differences implies an ability to compare these two capitals with other cities, in other times or places. If the reader is to be convinced that the contrasts between Edo and Paris were, indeed, “differences of degree and magnitude, not of kind,” the authors would have to plot Edo and Paris on a wider spectrum of urban formations and their relations to state power. But apart from some suggestive passages to this end in the two explicitly comparative essays, no such discussion is broached within the covers of this book. The relevant horizon of comparison is never specified. I would submit that the logical comparative framework is that of early modern state capitals across Eurasia. As Jack Goldstone has noted, the economic and political configuration of the early modern state system as a whole “was quite distinct from the largely local, subsistence, nonurban economies and feudal polities that preceded it, and from the industrial economies and democratic polities that followed.” And this was true not just in France and Japan, but throughout the rimlands of Eurasia. To be sure, the degree of commercialization and urbanization varied greatly from one region to another, as did the degree of power (de facto as well as de jure) wielded by the early modern sovereigns. Given this variation, it is indeed possible that Edo and Paris had more in common with each other than with contemporary agrarian-bureaucratic capitals elsewhere. But to determine that would require embedding this study in a context broad enough to illuminate what, exactly, distinguished these two cities from their contemporaries. Absent that sort of context, the assertion of commonality with which the book ends can be little more than a tautological reiteration of the “startling similarities” with which it began.

4. Specifying a broader comparative context would in turn enable future researchers to ask more pointed historical questions.


Goldstone, Revolution and Rebellion, 41
What was it about the early modern world, after all, that prompted both the Bourbons and the Tokugawa—and so many of their contemporaries—to invest in massive administrative headquarters? What did these unruly capitals do to justify the expense of their provisioning and policing? The answer surely turns on their function in the wider space of the state, itself a product of a competitive international state system. Cities concentrated the resources that were needed to transform a new dynast into the effective administrator of a sprawling and sometimes rebellious nation. What those resources were, and how the sovereign used his capital to control the realm (in the face of challenges from both within and without), are never systematically addressed in this book. Edo and Paris are approached here essentially as objects of state power, rather than as means to further that power. The preface's insight that they were built in the first place as tools with which to project the king's or shogun's authority outward is largely lost in the intramural focus of the succeeding essays. As a result, while the parallels that prompted the study are variously explored, they have yet to be explained.

Interestingly, the one extended explanatory passage by the editors analyzes not the similarities but the differences between the two capitals. Looking back in their closing essay on the volume as a whole, McClain and Ugawa note evidence of "significant and instructive variations between the two countries concerning styles of urbanism and absolutist governance." At the heart of those differences, in their view, is a consistent finding "that the Tokugawa shoguns wielded greater power than did the Bourbon kings" (460). In the tussle between those "above" and those "below" within the capital, the rulers of Edo are seen as consistently stronger than their counterparts in Paris.

This surprising observation is followed by a terse but far-reaching discussion of the salient reasons for the relative strength of the Japanese regime. At the national level, the Tokugawa are said to have enjoyed a more decisive military victory over their domestic rivals than did the Bourbons. This gave them a stronger fiscal base, which in turn helped them create a more pliant civil bureaucracy; "the shogun's enormous wealth, a consequence of Ieyasu's great military victories, seems to have given the Tokugawa regime economic leverage of the sort the Bourbons could only dream about." At the international level, meanwhile, the shogunate was spared chronic warfare, whose price for the French monarchy included "an eventual attenuation of state power as merchant-financiers made the crown dependent on them for credit." Finally, at the level of the city itself, the Tokugawa had essentially a blank slate to work with; merchants, aristocrats, and religious institutions had more entrenched privileges in 600-year-old Paris than in the new city of Edo. "Perhaps for that reason, the Tokugawa shoguns demonstrated a greater ability to dictate the use of space than did the Bourbon kings" (462). This perceptive passage is one of the most valuable contributions of the volume. But it is almost lost in the larger framework of the book, which subordinates all contrasts to an assertion of overarching likeness.

The kinds of methodological refinements proposed above—namely, specifying the social dynamics in the city, broadening the conception of the early modern configuration, embedding the Edo-Paris comparison in a wider geographical context, and asking focused questions about historical process—should allow future researchers to evaluate that assertion more fully. But I suspect that such methodological changes would also alter the terms of analysis in fundamental ways. In particular, what is represented here as the shared "weakness" of these absolutist rulers—their need to compromise repeatedly with capitalists—might well be revealed as a shared

4 The outstanding exception is the essay by Eiko Ikegami and Charles Tilly, which keeps the capital's function within the wider polity constantly in view.
strength of their respective regimes. Precisely because both the French and Japanese rulers were chronically short of money and had to make continual concessions to merchants, both the Bourbon kings and the Tokugawa shoguns inadvertently opened space for commercial development and industrial innovation. Not all early modern economies fared so well; as Edward Fox has noted, land-based kingdoms have often misunderstood the nature of mercantile wealth, and ended up killing the goose in their efforts to seize its golden eggs. But with the Bourbons and the Tokugawa, even the designation of a privileged elite failed to stifle economic competition. New generations of upstarts managed repeatedly to break the privileges of established groups, circumventing monopolies with sufficient success to secure tacit recognition and even (in some cases) legal privileges of their own. This process is well known for Tokugawa Japan. That similar upsets occurred in Paris as well is suggested by Steven Kaplan's research on the unlicensed workshops of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, where hundreds of "false workers" broke away from the constraints of the guilds "to organize their production and their distribution more rationally, to divide work efficiently, to master the seasonal and cyclical rhythms, to realize various savings in labor and money" (378). In a word, royal prerogatives in Paris as in Edo did not entirely strangle flexibility and innovation; in contrast to their frustrated contemporaries in St. Petersburg or Madrid, non-licensed merchants in Edo and Paris seem to have found ways to break into the charmed circle of profit. Why this historical variation occurred—and what its implications were for subsequent industrial or political development—would seem to be important questions for future research.

It is questions like these that lie at the core of comparative history—a genre whose goal is "not merely to find analogies or generalities in historical experience [but] to find causal explanations of historical events." On the whole, Edo and Paris eschews such causal explanations. In the clearest formulation of their goals, the editors of this collection frame it rather as a preliminary exercise, designed "to develop a set of empirical findings, questions, and conceptual approaches that could more clearly define the similarities, as well as the disjunctions, in regard to political power and urban developments in Japan and France" (xvi). In this preliminary task, they have admirably succeeded. Moreover, by bringing together leading scholars on Edo and Paris, James McClain and his colleagues have taken a major step toward breaking the parochialism of Tokugawa and Bourbon history. But if the full potential of the Edo-Paris comparison is to be realized, the analytical tools used in this initial exploration must be refined. Those who would push our understanding of early modernity further will need to sharpen the terms, broaden the context, and tackle more provocative questions about historical process.

Edward Fox, History in Geographic Perspective: The Other France (New York: W.W. Norton, 1971).

Goldstone, Revolution and Rebellion, 52; emphasis in the original. The rest of this passage reads, "Given that historical variation reveals both continuity and change, comparative history proceeds by asking which elements of the historical record were crucial. Thus to study merely the history of two cities, or of two countries, is to practice parallel, but not comparative, history."
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