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**Volume XII Number 2**  
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**Fall-Winter, 2004**
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Subscribers wishing to review books are encouraged to specify their interests on the subscriber information form at the end of this volume.

The Early Modern Japan Network maintains a web site at [http://emjnet.osu.edu/](http://emjnet.osu.edu/).

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the East Asian Studies Program at the Ohio State University.
From the Editor
編纂者のメッセージ

Changes at EMJ

Several changes are in process at EMJ.

New Faces: First, Lawrence Marceau, our book review editor, has resigned that position to be replaced by Carol Richmond Tsang. Larry will continue to assist with the editing of the journal. It has been a pleasure to work with him over the past five years and we look forward to his continued support.

As a number of readers may know, Carol Tsang is an historian who works on the Ikkō ikki. She takes over primary responsibility for handling receipt of books for review and assignment of reviewers. (Contact information is provided inside the journal cover.)

Second, we greet two new members of the Editorial Board, Cheryl Crowley and Brett Walker. Cheryl has been an active contributor to EMJ and has worked to organize a number of EMJ-sponsored panels at the AAS. She is a literature specialist at Emory University. Brett Walker, an Associate Professor of History at Montana State University – Bozeman, has also authored articles for EMJ in recent years.

Digital Publication: Third, EMJ is going completely digital. This decision comes after considerable thought and discussion. The advantages are simply too great for us not to make the move to web-based publication. 1) We can expand our readership by providing free, open access to the journal at a stable URL, eliminating the need to deal with subscriptions, mailing and the associated time and effort that go into such processes. 2) We now have a stable digital home for the journal. While we have had a web-based presence for some time (www.emjnet.osu.edu) and while we have placed back issues on line in PDF format (searchable), until recently there was no guarantee that our web presence would be permanent. Due to developments at The Ohio State University Library, we are now able to establish a guaranteed, stable URL. 3) The combination of editors’ schedules and the demands for on-site presence in the hard-copy publication process have sometimes resulted in embarrassing errors in publication. Digital publication allows more flexibility in handling editing chores and should permit us to do a better job in publishing EMJ. In addition, online publication will permit us to use full color images, a particular advantage in light of the large number of recent articles that have relied heavily on illustrations for explanation and evidence.

As a result of this decision, we will cease hard copy publication in 2005. This means that we are no longer accepting either renewals or new subscriptions to the journal.

EMJNet AT THE AAS


In addition, EMJ sponsored a panel that was part of the regular AAS meeting was comprised of a panel on “Autobiographical Writings in Early-Modern Japan and Ryukyu,” with papers from Bettina Oka, "Finding a Voice: Tokugawa Women and Autobiography," Gregory Smits, "Autobiography as Allegory: Sai On's Jijoden.” Elizabeth Leicester, “Memoir of a Pimp: The Use of Historical Rhetoric as Political Commentary in the Watatsuya Sei’eimon jikki,” and Glynne Walley. “An Idiosyncrasy of My Ilk’: Takizawa Bakin's Two Accounts of His Journey of 1802.”

In addition, EMJ sponsored a panel that was part of the regular AAS meeting, “Inroads to Unreason: Negotiating the Eccentric and the Irrational in Edo Japan.” Organized by Puck Brecker of USC, the panel consisted of three presentations by Cheryl Crowley (“Kijin, Haikai, and Sex: Bashō School Poet Shiba Sonome”), Jeffrey Newmark (“Resistance for the Individual: Oshio Heihachirō and Ikuta Yorozu’s 1837 Uprisings): and Puck Brecher (“Along the Wayside: The Confucian Legacy in Writings on Eccentrics in Edo and Meiji Japan”).

Two functions underlying the formation of EMJNet were to provide support for AAS panels dealing substantially with Early Modern Japan subjects and, further, to supplement the offerings at the AAS through our own meetings. In the past we have supported up to two panels proposed for the AAS Annual meeting. Our record
of success is very high for that venue.

In addition, we have held a number of EMJNet meetings in conjunction with the AAS. These have held panels (as was the case this year and last) and round table discussions.

**IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN OBTAINING EMJNET SUPPORT FOR AN AAS PANEL PROPOSAL, PLEASE SEND COMPLETE PROPOSALS TO PHILIP BROWN AT BROWN.113@OSU.EDU IN TIME FOR EMJNET TO MAKE A DECISION AND PREPARE A LETTER OF SUPPORT.** Proposals should identify the organizer, the overarching theme of the panel and a description of how the papers address that issue, as well as abstracts of the papers. If there are more than two requests for support, the editorial board will consult to make a decision as to which panels to support. NOTE that we do require two things in exchange for our support: 1) that the formal announcement of the panel in the AAS Program clearly note that the panel is supported by the Early Modern Japan Network, and 2) that *Early Modern Japan: An Interdisciplinary Journal* be given the first opportunity to publish papers on which sessions are based.

If readers have ideas for round tables, panels, or other scholarly or teaching-related activities that might form the core of THE EMJNet MEETING for 2006, please contact Philip Brown at brown.113@osu.edu. We have no formal limit on what we can do or how many rooms/times we can reserve at the AAS, but we need to know what we plan to do by September 15, 2005. (NOTE: any panels we support that are NOT accepted by the AAS program committee will be eligible for consideration by EMJ. Panel chairs should contact Philip Brown as soon as notice of rejection is received.)
Introduction: Pre-Modern Japan Through the Prism of Patronage

©Lee Butler
University of Michigan

Though not unfamiliar to scholarship on pre-modern Japan, the concept of patronage has been treated unevenly and unsystematically. The term is most commonly found in studies by art historians, but even they have frequently dealt with it indirectly or tangentially. The same is true of the study of the history of religion, despite the fact that patronage was fundamental to the establishment and growth of most schools and sects. Works like Martin Collcutt’s *Five Mountains*, with its detailed discussion of Hōjō and imperial patronage of Zen, are rare. Other scholarly approaches are more common. Perhaps this is merely a reflection of a field of study — pre-modern Japan — that is not highly developed outside of Japan. An additional factor may be that patronage is a word of Western origins and thus potentially inappropriate as an interpretive idea in the Japanese context. It is true that no corresponding term exists in Chinese or Japanese, whether as an artistic concept or a more general one. For example, in classical Chinese one could write of a “connoisseur” or “collector” of the arts, but no word denoted the support of art and artists by individuals of wealth and influence. In modern Japan, the concepts of patron and patronage have been adopted along with the English words — thus one sees *patoron* パトロン and *patoroneeji* パトロネージ. One might argue that this lack of corresponding words and concepts is good reason to avoid using the Western terms in our discussions of pre-modern East Asian art and society. And yet practices of patronage are clearly not culture specific. Where art is found, there is patronage, even if the extent and types and meanings of that patronage differ from place to place and culture to culture. The same is undoubtedly true of religion. In the paragraphs that follow I briefly summarize the approach to early modern patronage in Western scholarship and consider patronage’s value as an interpretive concept for Japan, addressing specifically its artistic and political forms.

Scholars of early modern Europe have focused primarily on political and cultural patronage. Political patronage was a system of personal ties and networks that advanced the interests of the system’s participants: patrons and clients. A patron was an individual in a position to assist someone of lesser standing in his (or her) efforts to acquire an office, a title, increased social standing, or some other good. In return, the client offered the patron loyalty, perhaps material favors, and increased social prestige. Patrons generally enjoyed greater wealth, political power, and social influence than their clients, though in some cases a client held one of these in large measure but required a patron’s assistance to move up in another. For example, because wealth and status did not always go hand-in-hand in early modern Europe, a wealthy client could offer financial support to a strapped patron in exchange for assistance in acquiring a coveted political title or religious position. As defined by Sharon Kettering, political patronage was “an unequal vertical alliance between superiors and inferiors or dependents based on an obligatory exchange.”


In contrast to political patronage, cultural or artistic patronage was narrow in scope. It concerned not individuals’ political and social ambitions (at least not outwardly), but the creation of art. Through the assistance of patrons, who were usually wealthy and socially influential, artists were able to produce works that otherwise would have gone unformed, uncreated. Financial support, whether as stipends or commissioned art work, was the common form of artistic patronage. As art historians have discovered, studies of patronage can provide answers to questions such as, “For whom was art produced?”; “Through what means was it produced?”; “For what purposes was it produced?” and “How were artists paid for their work?” In some cases the answers are hard to come by. James Cahill, for example, admitted at a 1980 workshop on patronage in Chinese painting that this was a topic that had received little attention, and none of the workshop participants “could claim more than a fragmentary knowledge of the circumstances of patronage in Chinese painting.” Yet he noted, more sanguinely, that “collectively we knew a great deal more than we had thought.”

For those of us interested in the social meanings and constructions of art, an effort to understand patronage can offer important insights that should not be ignored.

One evidence of how much work remains to be done in Japanese art history (particularly outside of Japan) is seen in the still rather rudimentary discussion of patronage practices surrounding the dōbōshū (“cultural attendants”) and other lower class artists of the late medieval era. Paul Varley’s article — now nearly thirty years old — about the shogunal patronage of Ashikaga Yoshimitsu set a precedent that has been followed only infrequently. Though important work has been done on specific arts and artists, encompassing noh, linked verse, painting, and tea, sustained discussion of patronage has been limited; many scholars mention its conspicuousness, but few pursue its meanings in depth. An important exception is the set of essays, Literary Patronage in Late Medieval Japan, edited by Steven Carter and published in 1993. This volume illuminates some of the significant literary and social ties between the period’s warriors, courtiers, clerics, and commoners. Much more, however, remains to be done.

A relatively recent article in Japanese by Tanaka Yūko, titled “Edo bunka no patoroneeji,” suggests that the topic of artistic patronage is likewise understudied in Japan; yet the article shows at the same time the promise that follows sustained analysis. Since Tanaka’s focus is geinō (a slippery term at best, sometimes rendered as the “performing arts,” and including not just noh, kabuki, tea, and ikebana, but at times painting and calligraphy), we might expect her work to differ somewhat from the papers here. The extent of the differences are in fact profound, evidence I believe of the lack of agreement on fundamental developments in Tokugawa culture, particularly but by no means exclusively as it concerns patronage. For example, Tanaka asserts, 1) that by the Edo period, Kyoto court culture and patronage had ceased to exert influence and, 2) that the financial role of patronage in Edo culture was of minor importance, assertions that do not sit well with me and that clearly are at odds with other scholarship.

On the other hand, Tanaka makes a number of points about patronage that are insightful and worth serious consideration. For example, she argues that patronage in the late medieval and early modern eras was linked by the common

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6 See Cahill’s comments in Chu-Tsing Li, ed., p. 161.
8 Cited in note 2.
10 Ibid., p. 147.
practice of including both patron and client as artists. As is well known, the "cultural attendants" to the Ashikaga Shoguns were in no sense independent artists. Rather than receive from their patrons stipends or payments that allowed them to produce art as they desired or as they were commissioned, the dōbōshū worked alongside their patrons. Their duties were broad, ranging from the dignified (serving as "officiators" and "experts" at cultural gatherings) to the menial (cleaning and running errands), and the artistic products of their work are rightly considered to be jointly owned by the patrons who worked alongside them. In other words, the patrons were participants in the arts, creators of them and not merely interested bystanders. The crucial factor was not so much patronage as it was the bringing together of like-minded men of culture. Tanaka sees in the Edo period a closely related practice, that of artistic collaboration, a prime example being the work of Hon’ami Kōetsu and Tawaraya Sōtatsu. This practice was common among and between merchants and warriors, though rarely was the social gap between collaborators as large as it had been in the fifteenth century.¹¹

Two other intriguing ideas that Tanaka presents, both linked to the importance of collaboration, that of artistic collaboration, a prime example being the work of Hon’ami Kōetsu and Tawaraya Sōtatsu. This practice was common among and between merchants and warriors, though rarely was the social gap between collaborators as large as it had been in the fifteenth century.¹¹


compelling argument. Why it is, however, that these historiographic trends have precluded the study of patronage is unclear, especially when Tokugawa commoners must have been as much in need of patronage, both economic and social, as individuals of earlier eras. At any rate, breaking free from the constraints of this historiographic tradition should naturally lead to new avenues of study and analysis, such as patronage, that have routinely been ignored.

So what about the study of political patronage in pre-modern Japan? Do works on the topic exist? I am unaware of any, at least of any that address political patronage directly and discuss the topic in those terms. Yet much suggests that such an approach could bear fruitful results. I offer two examples below.

One example is the kerai system. Though kerai became a term in Tokugawa times that referred simply to the retainer of a military lord, in earlier centuries it was unrelated to warriors. In the Heian era kerai were highly educated and talented associates of great nobles. In return for protection and assistance, kerai provided information and instruction about government procedures, performing arts, and political and cultural precedents. Kerai were needed not because their superiors were ignorant or incapable but because the Heian elite created a world which highly esteemed the knowledge of precedents — political, social, religious, and cultural. Unable to know all they needed to know, great nobles engaged as advisors certain of their inferiors who were deeply learned in a particular field of study or art. The advisors were known as kerai, meaning someone who “shows respect to the family, or house.” In return for the kerai’s services, noble houses saw to it that their kerai’s needs and wants were met, as appropriate to their stations. The position of kerai tended to be passed on hereditarily, not out of legal obligations or promises but by custom. Either party to the agreement could end the relationship if he so desired and as long as there remained no obligations to fill.14

In later centuries the role of kerai as advisors on ritual and precedent lost significance, but the system continued to be maintained. The reason was that personal connections did so much to shape court politics and privilege. To the great noble families, kerai were a symbol of their influence and prestige; they also filled useful functions as attendants and assistants. To kerai, the great noble families were their entrance into grand court affairs and, more practically, a source of favors, rank advancement, and indirect income. We gain some insight into the kerai system, and the complexities of hierarchy and status issues in late medieval Japan, through examining the Konoe family and one of their kerai, the Hino.15

In the mid-sixteenth century, Hino Harumitsu sought Konoe Sakihsia’s help in finding a child to adopt as heir, since Harumitsu had no son. As part of his request, Harumitsu stated that the Hino would become kerai to the Konoe in return for this favor. Sakihsia agreed, and Harumitsu, who was overjoyed, feasted Sakihsia and offered him the gift of a hawk. An heir was subsequently chosen. Thirty-five years later, at the turn of the seventeenth century, the place of the Hino as Konoe kerai became a source of contention. The origins of the dispute are unclear, but the result was that the Hino refused to “fill their kerai duties” to Konoe Nobutada in New Year’s ceremonies at court. This was a serious affront to Nobutada who, as officiator at one of the day’s ceremonies, occupied a central place in the proceedings. It also angered Emperor Go-Yōzei, whose efforts to revive court ceremony at the time included reactivating the role of kerai in

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15 Hashimoto Masanobu examines the kerai relations of the Konoe and Hino in detail in his article cited above; also see Lee Butler, Emperor and Aristocracy in Japan, 1467-1680: Resilience and Renewal (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002), pp. 110-111.
ceremonies. When the matter came to a head early in the first month of 1602, Hino Terusuke and his son Sukekatsu fled the capital rather than participate in ceremonies they considered demeaning to them. The dispute was patched up only through the good offices of Tokugawa Ieyasu. Even so, Hino Terusuke never became fully reestablished at court. Three months after this incident, Terusuke traveled to Fushimi to offer thanks and gifts to Ieyasu and the following year resigned his court positions. From that point, his ties to the military lord became increasingly close; he frequently visited Sunpu and eventually received a grant of land from Ieyasu. In essence, Hino Terusuke became the client of Tokugawa Ieyasu, having shifted his allegiance from the court hierarchy to a military patron.

Had Hino Terusuke thus moved from a patronage system to a feudal one, which, as early modern French historians have argued, differed in important ways one from another? On the one hand, Terusuke did receive land, a fief, from Ieyasu. On the other, there is no evidence (and it is highly unlikely) that Terusuke made any sort of oath of fealty to Ieyasu or even promised him particular services or favors — common characteristics of the feudal bond. Furthermore, nothing suggests that Terusuke would have been “limited to one master,” as required in a feudal relationship. Had Terusuke chosen to enter into another patronage relationship, perhaps with the next emperor, he could have done so. For that matter, it appears that the reconciliation between the Konoe and Hino that took place following the 1602 altercation once more established the Hino as kerai of the Konoe. Although Terusuke chose to distance himself from that relationship, he remained a Konoe kerai, as did his son, Sukekatsu, who continued as a full-fledged member of court.

Another courtier who found a patron in Tokugawa Ieyasu was Yamashina Tokitsune. The two men became acquainted in the last decade of the sixteenth century. At that time, Tokitsune was an exile from court, residing first in Settsu, Nakajima and then in the Horikawa region of Kyoto. In 1591, Tokitsune called on Ieyasu in the capital, where the two men exchanged pleasantries and Tokitsune offered gifts of a book and poetry. The men apparently got along very well and Tokitsune visited frequently in coming weeks and months. It is unlikely that Ieyasu and Tokitsune reached any formal understanding as to their patron-client relationship, but it was clearly in place within two weeks of their initial meeting. By that time, they had shared conversation and food on several occasions, Tokitsune had agreed to provide Ieyasu with copies of Shūgaishō and Myōmokushō (Kamakura- and Muromachi-era works on court antiquities, ceremonial practices, and so on), and Ieyasu had promised to provide Tokitsune a monthly stipend of rice. The term Tokitsune used for stipend in recording this in his diary was fuchi, the same one warriors used to describe a payment given as substitute for enfeoffed land. No doubt Tokugawa Ieyasu himself had spoken in terms of fuchi, even though the bond formed between the two of them was not feudal in nature.

In the years that followed, Tokitsune filled his duties of clientage by serving as a source of information about court protocol and classical literature, introducing Ieyasu to important associates at court, and, as the head of the bureau in charge of making and regulating ceremonial court clothing, acting as personal tailor and clothier to the Tokugawa lord. For his part, Ieyasu provided not only a monthly stipend, but also the backing Tokitsune needed to be readmitted to court.

17 See Butler, pp. 121-122 for the general outlines of the relationship.
Another form of political patronage, this with broader social and economic implications than the keraï system, was the kugonin system. 20 Kugonin were imperial purveyors who enjoyed a patronage relationship with the emperor (or others of the imperial household). They were, at least nominally, direct clients of the emperor, though none of course ever met him or had direct dealings with him (or her). Nonetheless, the economic patronage they received from, and gave to, the imperial household was real. The origins of the kugonin are hazy, but they begin to appear in documents in the late Heian era. As imperial purveyors, the kugonin generally resided on public land and, as the term implies, they produced and provided food (kugo) for the emperor. In reality, not all kugonin produced food items, so the offerings they made to the emperor varied, ranging from food to specialty goods to currency. Among the kugonin were those who dealt with the following products: raw fish, chickens, fruit, steel (pots, kettles, spades, hoes), charcoal, pine torches, and to a lesser degree, sake and rice. 21

Kugonin have been examined both in relation to medieval economic development (by scholars such as Toyoda Takeshi, [Zōtei] Chusei Nihon shōgyōshi no kenkyū (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1952) and Wakita Haruko, Nihon chūsei shōgyō hattatsushi no kenkyū (Tokyo: Ochanomizu Shobō, 1969) and as part of a significant social phenomenon (in particular by Amino Yoshihiko, Nihon chūsei no hinōgyōin to tennō (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1984). See the very useful description and overview of kugonin in Kokushi daijiten, vol. 4, p. 741.

Kugonin are best understood as commercial dealers who, like other artisans and merchants in the medieval era, sought to protect themselves by forming guilds (za) and acquiring the protection of powerful patrons. 22 Their position was disencumbering yet precarious, for they were not farmers or warriors, nor were they priests or land holders. They dealt in physical “things” and were unattached to, and uncircumscribed by, the medieval village (and to a degree the shōen). 23 The benefits kugonin gained as clients of the emperor were several. First, in exchange for their offerings, they were exempted from taxes they would normally have paid (a simple substitution). Second, they were granted a monopoly on the sale of their goods — usually in the capital. Third, their economic activities were backed by the court, a useful connection when disputes arose. During the early medieval era, the kugonin’s economic importance to the court was slight—the reason being that imperial income-producing land remained relatively plentiful — but by the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the goods and currency provided by kugonin, though small in absolute terms, had become a meaningful component of imperial income. It was the kugonin, however, who gained the most from this patronage arrangement, for the court’s backing and protection allowed them to survive the strife and turmoil of Sengoku. With its control of the capital’s toll gates and its authority to regulate (with warrior support) the city’s commerce, the court’s influence upon economics in Kyoto was not insignificant. The kugonin, as the emperor’s clients, benefited significantly from the arrangement.

As outlined above, the patron-client relationship between emperor and kugonin seems to have greatly profited the kugonin while offering only limited benefits to emperor and court. But the situation was not that simple. On the one hand, like any patron, the emperor realized political advantages by having clients, individuals who


22 Okuno, pp. 117-118; Ōyama, p. 251.

23 Ōyama, p. 250.
recognized his authority and offered him loyalty. Ties of this sort, which linked not just kugonin but also priests and warriors to the imperial court, were a critical resource for the court as it struggled to survive the upheaval of Sengoku. Without them, the court may have met its demise during the sixteenth century. With them, the court continued to enjoy remarkable support. On the other hand, there is evidence that the court had been the primary impetus behind the establishment and maintenance of kugonin as clients, suggesting that the imperial household had expectations of profiting through its acts of patronage. In a seminal article on the subject, Ōyama Kyōhei argues that the kugonin system was developed in the late Heian era in response to crises facing the imperial court at the time. With military families on the rise and powerful temples (in collaboration with “evil priests” akusō 悪僧 and “shrine associates” jinin 神人) encroaching on public and private lands, the imperial state system was being undermined in fundamental ways. Having emerged victorious in the Hōgen affair of 1156, Retired Emperor Go-Shirakawa took steps to shore up the system. In an edict of seven articles he laid out policy that restricted the development of new shōen by temples, shrines, and noble houses, prohibited ill behavior on shōen, attempted to limit the activities of akusō and jinin, and ordered temples and shrines to contribute land and labor for the good of the state. In other words, Go-Shirakawa took steps to control the religious organizations and those to whom they offered patronage, known by the generic title of “shrine associates.” A corollary to these restrictions was the court’s effort to acquire its own clients, kugonin, among the rudimentary commercial class. Edicts and documents from the centuries that follow reveal competition between the court, temples, and warriors for commercial clients who could bolster their positions as overlords and political authorities. Patronage, it appears, was a fundamental thread in the fabric of medieval Japanese society. Though the political structures of the early modern era would take different forms, I strongly suspect that new threads of political patronage, like those that developed between Tokugawa Ieyasu and the courtiers Hino Terusuke and Yamashina Tokitsune, soon came to replace the previous ones.

Although the basic concept of patronage — a system of reciprocal favors by two parties of unequal status or means and beneficial to both — is simple and straightforward, the meanings and manifestations of it are usually complex. One can thus examine artistic patronage, for example, to understand any number of issues: the influences upon a piece of art, the ambitions of artists or patrons, the economic livelihood of artists, the political or social meanings of art, and so on. The papers presented here provide a good example of this diversity of approach. Though they deal broadly with cultural patronage of the Tokugawa period, and more specifically with physical goods or art produced as a result of patronage, what each paper attempts to shed light on varies considerably.

In her piece on Shinshōji, Patricia Graham examines commoners’ patronage of the Buddhist temple known widely as Naritasan. In doing so she shows that patrons of Buddhism no longer came solely from the elite classes, and that the extensive donations of common people funded the construction of some of the finest temple architecture of the era. Graham’s interests thus are ultimately in both the financial sources and the artistic results of patronage. Morgan Pitelka’s approach is very different. He looks at the world of tea masters and potters and concludes that patronage in those circles could be extremely complex indeed. For example, he sees patronage in the practices whereby Sen tea masters and Raku potters legitimated each other’s work and the history of their families. He also finds artistic innovation and independence in these practices, things not usually associated with the workings of patronage. In the third paper I focus on the role of patronage in the building arts over the course of the Tokugawa era. One issue that I address that is absent from the other papers is the effects of declining patronage on the artisans involved. Like Graham and Pitelka, I too am interested in the artistic products of patronage, but I diverge from them in considering the effects of lost and changing patronage. In examining the patronage of Buddhist temples by Tokugawa-era daimyo, Alexander Vesey takes yet a different

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24 See note 20, above.
approach to the topic. More so than any of the rest of us, Vesey focuses on the way that individuals (in this case powerful warriors) attempted to bolster their positions through acts of largesse. Their clients were Buddhist temples, which of course were well situated to offer religious confirmation of the daimyo house, a primary object of warrior patronage. The last paper is Frank Chance’s on the relationship of Matsudaira Sadanobu and Tani Bunchō. On the surface this is a straightforward examination of artistic patronage involving a powerful political figure and a highly regarded painter. Yet as Chance shows, Bunchō’s relationship to Sadanobu can also be interpreted as that of lord and vassal, raising questions about the patronage relationship between the two men and the artistic pieces that resulted. In sum, though our papers begin with the premise of cultural patronage, they end up in quite different places, raising issues that we hope will elicit increased interest in patronage among a wide range of scholars.
Naritasan Shinshōji and Commoner Patronage During the Edo Period

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University of Kansas

The Shingon temple of Naritasan Shinshōji 成田山新勝寺 (popularly known as "Naritasan") is a sprawling religious complex located close to Narita Airport outside Tokyo. Along with the Meiji Shrine 明治神宮 and Kawasaki Daishi 川崎大師, it is one of Japan's three most visited religious sites during the New Year's season. Not coincidentally, all three are located in and around Tokyo, Japan's most populous urban center. Naritasan's main object of worship is Fudō Myōō (Skt: Acalanātha) 不動明王, one of the five Buddhist Wisdom Kings (Godai Myōō 五大明王). In recent decades, this statue of Fudō has become so associated with its ability to ensure devotees' travel safety, especially for auto travel, that Naritasan now ranks first among temples nationwide where people go to purchase car amulets and to request ritual blessing of their cars by temple priests. This fame has engendered the establishment of numerous branch temples throughout Japan, where worshippers offer their prayers to Fudō Myōō's empowered replicas. Today, getting to Naritasan is an easy train ride of an hour or so from the city, but during the Edo period, the forty-three mile (seventy kilometer) distance took two days and one night of travel by foot and boat. Nevertheless, even then it attracted large numbers of visitors, mostly commoners from the city of Edo, who sought practical benefits from the temple's illustrious main deity and an opportunity for a short vacation in the countryside away from the congested urban environs.

My focus here is to illuminate the strength of motivations for, and manifestations of Buddhist patronage at Naritasan by commoners from the nearby metropolis of Edo, throughout the Edo period. The tangible results of commoner devotion primarily take the form of a fine group of well preserved buildings and numerous artifacts donated to the temple, both by Edo luminaries and anonymous Edo era townspeople. These artifacts include a large number of votive tablets (ema 絵馬), some painted by famous Edo period artists, and many others, made and donated by unknown commoners. Devotion to Buddhism on the part of Edo commoners has recently been addressed in English in a study of Sensōji 浅草寺, another important temple in the Tokyo area during the Edo period, but because most of the buildings there were destroyed during World War II, the author, not a historian of art or architecture, discussed the nature and significance of the religious practice at the site rather than the material remains their devotion wrought.

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1 The five Buddhist wisdom kings are wrathful manifestations of the five most important Buddhas in the esoteric Buddhist pantheon. Among these kings, Fudo Myōō occupies the central position as manifestation of the supreme, cosmic Buddha, Dainichi (Skt: Mahāvairocana). He either stands or sits on a rock with his body framed by a aura of fire. His facial expression is fierce, with one eye peering up and the other down and two fangs, also pointing in opposite directions. He usually holds a sword in his right hand to slash demons and a cord in his left to bind them and also to capture devotees and lead them into Paradise. Iconographic information from: Carmen Blacker, *The Catalpa Bow: A Study of Shamanistic Practices in Japan* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1975), p. 175 and Louis Frédéric, *Buddhism: Flammarion Iconographic Guides* (Paris and New York: Flammarion, 1995), pp. 204-205.


3 For a discussion of one of these branches, see Ian Reader, *Religion in Contemporary Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1991), pp. 144-145.


This article is part of a larger book project in which I am engaged that assesses Buddhist faith and power as manifested in devotional pictures, sculpted icons, and sites of worship associated with mainstream sects of Buddhism in Japan from the seventeenth century to the present. I have chosen to focus here on patronage at Naritasan as a means of emphasizing a significant new group of influential patrons of Buddhism that first emerged during the Edo period: urban commoners. Commoner support of Buddhism did not replace that of the elites, the high ranking samurai and courtiers who were from Buddhism's earliest days in Japan the religion's most ardent supporters, and who continued to patronize nationally renowned head temple complexes and familial sites of worship. Rather, it created a new and powerful core group of supporters for Buddhism, whose enduring patronage has enabled certain institutions to thrive to the present. Understanding modern Japanese Buddhism's prosperity, and the religion's continued stimulation of artistic production, requires a solid grasp of urban commoner patronage networks that emerged first during the Edo period at places such as Naritasan.

Surprisingly, this temple and its treasures have received remarkably little attention from scholars of early modern Japanese art and architecture. Not until 1981 did all the major Edo period buildings at Shinshōji become designated as Important Cultural Properties (jūyō bunkazai). Many scholars with whom I informally discussed my research on this site have never visited the temple, or have only heard of it because of its proximity to the Tokyo airport. I assert that this omission is due to three significant misconceptions about Edo period Buddhism and its influence on the arts and architecture of the time, which some scholars have recently begun to question.

The first misconception is the widely held conviction that Buddhism had declined in cultural importance by the Edo period and, institutionally, had become so degenerate that it could not encourage devout belief. This accounts in part for misconception number two: a dearth of scholarship on late premodern (post-Muromachi period) Japanese Buddhist art and architecture, except for study of a limited corpus of materials, because of the belief in its aesthetic inferiority, especially as associated with materials produced by and for commoners. Scholars have been preconditioned to regard only those Japanese Buddhist arts and architecture, created during Japan's ancient and medieval eras (roughly the seventh through mid-sixteenth centuries), for temples in and around the Buddhist Reform." in Confucianism and Tokugawa Culture, edited by Peter Nosco (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 188-191; and more fully in Janine Tasca Sawada, "Tokugawa Religious History: Studies in Western Languages," in Early Modern Japan: An Interdisciplinary Journal 10, no. 1 (Spring 2002): 39-64, see especially pp. 51-56 (section on Buddhist Studies). Nam-lin Hur's study of Sensōji, cited in note 1 above, is an important contribution to the understanding of Edo period Buddhism as practiced by urban commoners.

6 On the acceptance of the inferiority of Edo period Buddhist art and architecture, see Neil McMullin, Buddhism and the State in Sixteenth-Century Japan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 266-267. Among the limited corpus of Edo period Buddhist arts for commoners that have long been appreciated in both Japan and the West are Zen painting and calligraphies and selected self-taught Buddhist sculptors admired as mingei (folk art). On these standard canonical materials defined as Edo period Buddhist, see Tsuji Nobuo, ed., Edo no shakyyō bijutsu: Enkū, Mokuji, Hakuin, Sengai, Ryōkan (Religious Art of the Edo Period: Enkū, Mokuji, Hakuin, Sengai, Ryōkan) (Tokyo: Gakushū Kenkyūsha, 1979). For a historiographic study of Western language writings on religious architecture and arts in relation to that of other arts of the early modern era, see Patricia J. Graham, "Early Modern Japanese Art History: An Overview of the State of the Field," Early Modern Japan: An Interdisciplinary Journal 10, no. 2 (Fall 2002): 2-21. For discussion of religious art see pp. 19-20 and for an extensive bibliography of writings in English on religious sites, icons, and other devotional arts, see pp. 99-100.
great early imperial and political capitals of Nara, Kyoto, and Kamakura, as among the supreme monuments of Japan's cultural heritage. This preeminence of early Buddhist material developed in the late nineteenth century, when the political and economic leaders of Japan created the chronological parameters of the nation's aesthetic canon which remains largely unchanged today.8

These first two issues lead to a third widely held misunderstanding: that because Buddhism was not important in the Edo period, the best building designers, artists and craftspeople of the era devoted themselves to the production of secular rather than religious arts and architecture. Recent studies in Japanese, especially catalogues of highly popular exhibitions by the eminent Japanese art historian


Tsuji Nobuo and some younger scholars, many of them his former students, have begun to reassess this contention.9 As for revisionist scholarship in Western languages, except for copious writings about Zen painting and calligraphy, a few studies of important sites associated with the highest echelon samurai,10 unusual images (by imperial nuns),11 and some materials categorized as folk arts,12 much of this later Buddhist art, and espe-


10 Particularly, Andrew Watsky's study of Chikubushima, cited in note 8 above.


12 These include sculptures by illustrious monks such as Enkū 円空 (1628-1695) or Mukujiki Gyōdō 木槻行道 (1718-1810) and studies on Ōtsue 大津絵 (folk paintings made at Ōtsu). For recent Western language studies of these materials, see for example Jan van Alphen, *Enkū
cially its architecture, remains overlooked. The still widely accepted canon of premodern Japanese art seeks to demonstrate both that the Japanese possessed a cultural heritage equal to that of European nations, and that Japan belongs to the modern world of academic scholarship. As with the European art historical canon, the Japanese one highlights objects dignified by their great age, by the elite status and wealth of their patrons, and by their association with identifiable artists or artistic lineages. More recent Buddhist arts and architecture, especially those found at temples largely patronized by commoners, such as Naritasan Shinshōji, are still generally omitted from this canon.

Temple records indicate Naritasan Shinshōji’s founding took place in the year 940 by imperial order in response to a miraculous occurrence. A rebellion by a local warrior required the then reigning emperor Suzaku to dispatch troops to eastern Japan. He also ordered the priest Kanchō to travel to the area together with a sacred icon of Fudō Myōō, borrowed from the Fire Offering Hall (Gomado) at the Kyoto temple of Jingōji 神護寺. This statue was believed to have miraculous powers because the founder of Shingon Buddhism, Gōmā Ōō Gomadō, had carved it himself for Jingōji on the occasion of a rebellion in the year 810. Kanchō used the statue as a focus for his prayers, and religious ritual, to successfully stop the rebellion. The priest Kanchō’s duty was to perform this same goma or fire ritual, to successfully stop the rebellion. The priest Kanchō’s duty was to perform this same goma ritual, again imploring Fudō to render his divine intervention and restore peace. On the last day of the three-week ritual, troops quelled the rebellion.


15 The Japanese government has designated this statue as a Jūyō bunkazai (Important Cultural Property); for an illustration, see Jūyō bunkazai III (chōkoku) (Important Cultural Properties, vol. 3, Sculpture Part 3) (Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbun, 1973), p. 103 (plate 483). The original statue now resides at Nan’in at the Shingon sect headquarters site of Mount Kōya. I thank Karen Mack for this reference.

16 For an illustration of this maedachi statue, see Naritasan Shinshōji, ed., Sōran Fudō Myōō (General Survey of Fudō Myōō) (Narita: Daihonzan Naritasan Shinshōji, 1984), p. 36 (plate 32).
records, Ieyasu supported Naritasan because the temple's abbot (Yūban Shōnin 有鍾上人) had converted him to Buddhism. In a show of support for Ieyasu, his closest supporters, the Tokugawa collateral families, followed his example and patronized the temple as well. Concurrently, Ieyasu required the Sakura daimyo, within whose domain the temple lay, to oversee the temple's upkeep. Ieyasu may have sought the divine protection of Shinshōji's main deity for several practical reasons. First, because Naritasan was situated northeast of Edo, he may have likened the site to the Tendai sect headquarters of Enryakuji 延暦寺 atop Mount Hiei, northeast of Kyoto. Enryakuji had been founded to protect Kyoto from the unlucky northeast direction, and Ieyasu may have hoped Naritasan could protect Edo in the same way. Also, military and political success accounted for Naritasan Shinshōji's founding, an auspicious association for his aspiring hegemony.

Although Ieyasu was said to patronize the temple, it was not until the reign of the fourth Shogun, Tokugawa Ietsuna 徳川家綱 (ruled 1651-80), that the Shogunate embarked on a major building project there, the reconstruction of the Main Hall in 1655 (PLATE 1). Today, this small, fairly conventional building, now a Yakushidō 薬師堂 and used as a calligraphy school classroom, remains standing along the main road of Narita City leading to the temple. Subsequent building projects sponsored by the military elite never materialized due to increasing financial strain on the Bakufu treasury and waning fortunes of the daimyo during the latter half of the seventeenth century. Consequently, the temple's first age of fluorescence, in the early eighteenth century, was fueled instead by massive funding from ordinary citizens.

Spearheading this new initiative was the wildly popular and, eventually, affluent Kabuki actor, Ichikawa Danjūrō 二世川団十郎 (1660-1704). Danjūrō was born into the Horikoshi 堀越 merchant family of Edo, although the family had once been samurai. Devotion to the valiant traits of this samurai heritage is apparent in his choice of heroic characters and their noble deeds. Danjūrō's success stemmed from his invention of a rough and masculine style of movement (aragoto 荒事), one of the hallmarks of which featured his imitation of the ferocious stances of the virtuous and powerful Buddhist deities he revered. Sometimes he played the role of Fudō Myōō 猿猴 so forcefully that viewers imagined the deity had come to life before their eyes. Danjūrō I kept a diary in which he recorded his deep feelings for Buddhism. In it, he claimed that he owed this talent to Fudō himself, who had taught him in a dream the secret of his penetrating glare.

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17 For information on Ieyasu and daimyo support for Naritasan, see Shinshū Naritasan-shi, pp. 494-495.
18 Shinshū Naritasan-shi, p. 494.
Danjūrō became associated with Shinshōji because of ancestral ties to the area. His devotion to the temple grew stronger after his prayers to the temple's Fudō Myōō resulted in the safe birth of his first child in 1688. As thanks to Shinshōji's Fudō, he began writing and starring in Kabuki plays with themes featuring the god's miraculous powers. He also had his son, Kuzō (Ichikawa Danjūrō II; 1688-1758), whom he considered as "Fudō's gift," play the part of the deity Fudō Myōō in the fifth month of 1697 in the play in which he made his stage debut, "The Origin of the Soga Warrior" (Tsuwamono Kongen Soga 兵根源曽我). During the run of the play, audience members responded to the presence of Fudō onstage in an unprecedented manner, with prayers and offerings as if the theater was a temple hall. That same year, an unidentified artist of the Torii school of Ukiyoe printmakers (possibly Torii Kiyonobu 鳥居清信; 1664-1729) created a scene-by-scene illustrated record of this production (PLATE 2). Illustrated here is a critical scene in which, little Kuzō, as Fudō, stops a fight between two twelfth century warriors of whom one, Gorō (played by Ichikawa Danjūrō I), is also pictured.

Several years later, in 1703, Danjūrō authored and starred in another play about Shinshōji's Fudō, The Avatars of the Fudō of Narita Temple (Naritasan Bunjin Fudō 成田山分身不動). This play opened around the same time the sacred image was having its Edo debut at a degaichō (temporary displays of sacred images; literally: "external parting of the curtains") in Edo at Eitaiji 永代寺, a Shingon sect affiliate located in the Fukagawa 深川 district, the largest concentration of religious institutions east of the Sumida River. Danjūrō and the temple's new and energetic abbot Shōhan Shōnin 照範上人 (died 1724), who took over temple administration in 1700, probably hatched a scheme together to raise money for the temple by holding this Edo degaichō around the same time as the play's opening, so as to give the deity and its temple great publicity. Keishōin 桂昌院 (1627-1705), mother of Shinshō Naritasan-shi, pp. 208-209.

Kominz, pp. 92-93. The degaichō took place from the 17th day of the fourth month through the 27th day of the sixth month; the play ran from the 21st day of the fourth month through the 13th day of the seventh month. See Hiruma, p. 152.

Keishōin was a fervent, lifelong devotee of Shingon, who exerted considerable influence over her son throughout his life, and encouraged popular faith in Buddhism by funding numerous temples that commoners frequented. On Keishōin and Tsunayoshi's patronage of Buddhism, see Donald H. Shivley, "Tokugawa Tsunayoshi, the Genroku Shogun," in Personality in Japanese

the Katsukawa School (Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago in association with Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 162. For Kominz's discussion of Danjūrō's writings on his belief in Buddhism, see Kominz, pp. 61-64.

Kominz, p. 69.

On the dates of Naritasan's degaichō in Edo see Hiruma Hisashi, Edo no kaichō (Temporary Viewings of Sacred Images During the Edo Period) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa, 1980), pp. 150-151; and
the fifth Shogun Tokugawa Tsunayoshi 徳川綱吉, contributed to the financial success of this event through large donations she made to the temple as thanks for having the statue and other temple treasures that were displayed at the degaichō 増上寺 brought to Edo Castle for her own personal viewing, after the degaichō ended and before it was returned to the temple. (Because of her high status, she could not freely go to places of worship frequented by commoners.) A devotee of Shingon Buddhism since childhood, she lavishly donated money to temples as a means of praying for her son's success as Shogun.

This sort of celebrity promotion of degaichō became a common occurrence at Eitaiji and elsewhere. Degaiichō of Naritasan's Fudō at this temple occurred fifteen times until Eitaiji's destruction in 1898 (the Fudōdō still stands, though the present building dates to 1881), testifying to the continued popular appeal of Shinshōji's Fudō Myōō even in the Meiji era, a time of great Buddhist persecution (PLATE 3). The Ukiyo printmaker Utagawa Hiroshige III (1842-1894) has depicted one of these degaichō at Eitaiji in his print, Fukagawa Fudōson, dated 1885, which shows a genteel crowd of worshippers approaching the temple. Realizing the strength of Shinshōji's devotees then, authorities placated them by allowing worship of the deity with a new Shinto name of "Ugokazu no mikoto" 動かずの尊 or the "Unmoving Kami."

In spite of his public acclaim, Danjūrō remained humble, devout Buddhist throughout his life, who openly proclaimed that he owed his success to his prayers and devotion to specific deities with whom he felt personal attachment, especially Fudō Myōō, but also the esoteric cosmic Buddha Dainichi, the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, and others. Such pronouncements inspired his admirers to become fervent devotees of Buddhism in general, and Shinshōji's Fudō in particular. Because so many of them embarked on pilgrimages to Naritasan Shinshōji, sometimes under his leadership, and supported the temple by attending its degaichō in Edo, the temple became quite wealthy. Danjūrō's descendants helped this effort by promoting the temple and its deity among their fans throughout the Edo period.


Shinshū Naritasan-shi, p. 495.


26 Kominz, p. 61.
Owing to the consistency of its popular patronage, this temple constructed some of the finest quality early modern temple architecture in Japan, which fortunately remains standing today. The first phase of the grand refurbishing of the temple began with completion of a new Main Hall (Plate 4) and Bell Tower in 1701, a Three Story Pagoda in 1712 (Plate 5), and a Sutra Hall in 1722. The Pagoda, Bell Tower and Sutra Hall have undergone major renovations in recent years to restore a sense of their original appearance, with brightly colored exterior surfaces and elaborate relief carving similar to that on the buildings at the Nikkō Tōshōgū Shrine.

The Pagoda's relief carving features a variety of auspicious imagery, much of it brightly colored (Plate 6). This includes images of illustrious and virtuous Indian Buddhist and Chinese Confucian and Daoist heroes in deep relief carving above the doorways (pictured here is the Chinese Daoist recluse Qin Gao [J: Kinkō 琴高], shown riding a carp and reading a scroll) and unpainted, carved wood relief panels inset into the walls adjacent to the doors on all four sides, depicting a Zen subject, the Sixteen Rakan. Neither of these themes is normally associated with Shingon temples; they reflect the penetration into the Shingon Buddhist pantheon of broadly popular Chinese subjects during the eighteenth century. Such Confucian and Daoist mythology first grew popular on religious monuments — both Buddhist and Shinto — in pictorial art for military leaders in the Momoyama period. These were politically approved Chinese themes that reflected rulers' desires for longevity of their reign and progeny, the wisdom of their methods of governance, and that offered examples of meritorious deeds by ancient Chinese sages that were worthy of emulation and adoration. Not surprising then is the fact that the model for Qin Gao here is found on the north or interior side of the famous Yōmeimon middle gate at Nikkō’s Tōshōgū Shrine.30 Sophisticated urban commoners of the sort who patronized Naritasan also appreciated the steadfast virtuousness of

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month later, Kinkō returned astride a giant carp and implored his followers not to kill fish. Then, after a month, he vanished into the waters again, presumably having been transformed into an immortal of the sea. His popularity is attested to in his frequent depiction in popular arts associated with these commoners, particularly surimono (fine quality limited edition woodblock prints) and netsuke (decorative, finely carved toggles used to attach an inro, tobacco or medicine pouch, to the sash of a man's robe in the Edo period).31

The Sutra Hall was designed with a feature especially popular among Edo period devotees, a central chamber containing the complete collection of Buddhist scriptures, known as the tripitaka,32 housed in a revolving bookcase, in the belief that when turned by a worshipper, it could transfer all the wisdom contained in its myriad volumes to him or her. Although the brightly-colored, high-relief style of relief carving on the exteriors of these buildings had first been applied to buildings for the military elite, by the eighteenth century, it had become standard on a wide array of shrines and temples, especially those in closest proximity to Edo, which were patronized by people from all walks of life.33

By the early nineteenth century, hoards of commoners were regularly visiting Naritasan to pray to Fudō Myōō for protection against fires and epidemics and also because its relative proximity to the city made for an enjoyable excursion. These admirers often banded together in groups of confraternities, lay religious organizations (ko 講) that were composed of merchants or trades people of Edo, including geisha, fishmongers, woodworkers, firemen and Kabuki actors.34 The temple was most crowded, as expected, on the designated kaichō viewing dates, twenty-three in total during the early modern era, when the temple displayed its sacred image of Fudō (PLATE 7). The throngs of spectators jostling with one another at these openings have been represented by Ukiyoe printmakers including Utagawa Toyokuni 歌川豊国 (1769-1825), whose print is reproduced here. 35 When they visited, they donated numerous offerings to the temple, including votive tablets on a wide range of themes, from historical figures, deities, narrative tales, portraits of Kabuki actors, famous places, etc. (PLATE 8). Among these is an ema by the Ukiyoe print designer Utagawa Kuniyoshi 歌川国吉 (1797-1861) of an Edo fire brigade, dedicated by a group of firefighters in

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33 For example, similar-style decoration on eighteenth century buildings are found at Yakuōin atop Mount Takao. For a variety of Kantō and central Honshū religious structures with this type of decoration, see Tabata Minao, et al., Shaji chōkoku: Tachikawa ryō no kenchiku sōshoku (Sculpture for Temples and Shrines: Architectural Decoration of the Tachikawa Lineage) (Kyoto: Tanka-sha, 1994).

34 Shinshū Naritasan-shi, p. 273.

35 See also an illustration by Utagawa Kuniyoshi 歌川国吉 (died 1885) in Shinshū Naritasan-shi, plate 3 (preceding page 199 in text).
1833. 36

The final premodern building phase at Naritasan commenced in the early nineteenth century, in response to the temple's then escalating popularity (PLATE 9). In 1830, its Main Gate (Niomon 仁王門), known today for its giant lantern, was rebuilt with funding from members of the Edo fish market association, whose name the lantern bears, and which remains responsible for its periodic replacement. After first being restored in 1768, the 1701 Main Hall was finally replaced by a new, larger structure in a more up-to-date style, dedicated in 1858 (PLATE 10). Funding for this 1858 project came from donations from over 10,000 worshippers, an effort coordinated by the local Sakuragawa family temple of Zōji 住吉 (1816-1863), which were painted for the Tōkyō kabuki actor Danjūrō VII (1791-1859) paid for this building with an unprecedented donation of 1,000 ryo. Danjūrō VII was famous for his extravagant lifestyle, which annoyed the authorities so much that they banished him from Edo for ten years, beginning in 1842. 38 But during this period, he continued to act, mostly in Osaka, and amassed even more wealth, hence his lavish donation.

Constructing temples on the scale of Naritasan was obviously beyond the means of humble village parishioners. Rather, Naritasan Shinshōji reflects the large sums temples within the orbit of Edo were capable of collecting from ordinary and wealthy townspeople. The temple typifies a particular type of Edo period Buddhist complex patronized by sophisticated urban commoners, whose taste emulated that of the elites. These patrons desired buildings with the lavish, decorative aesthetic found on religious buildings for the elites as well as iconographic programs, particularly Chinese Confucian and Daoist, and Zen related themes, that elites preferred. Yet the wide variety of subjects found on the ema that these patrons donated to the temple testifies to the richness of

When the 1858 hall was built, the older Main Hall was actually moved to a location behind the new one, turning it into a Kōmyōdō 光明堂 (Hall Dedicated to the Buddha Dainichi), and its form was modified (the flooring around its outer chamber and veranda were removed) (PLATE 12). This arrangement is visible in a picture of the main temple compound in the 1858 “Illustrated Guidebook to Narita, Record of a Pilgrimage to Narita” (Narita meisho zue; Narita sankei ki 成田名所図会成田參詣記) illustrated by Hasegawa Settei 長谷川雪揃 (1819-1882). Later, prior to construction of the current Main Hall in 1968, the temple relocated both these buildings to their present sites at the complex. At that time, the 1858 Main Hall became a Shakado 祥伽堂 (Hall for Veneration of the Buddha Shaka).

The final construction of this midnineteenth century building boom was the 1861 Votive Tablet Hall (Gakudo 頥堂), an open-air structure where large-scale votive tablets dedicated to the temple by devotees would be displayed (PLATE 13). The Kabuki actor Danjūrō VII paid for this building with an unprecedented donation of 1,000 ryo. Danjūrō VII was famous for his extravagant lifestyle, which annoyed the authorities so much that they banished him from Edo for ten years, beginning in 1842. 38 But during this period, he continued to act, mostly in Osaka, and amassed even more wealth, hence his lavish donation.

36 For others, see Shinshū Naritasan-shi, pp. 211-225 (chapter 9). Many of the temple's famous votive tablets, by illustrious artists of Edo are illustrated in Ōno Masaharu and Ogura Hiroshi, Naritasan Shinshōji no ema (Votive Tablets of Naritasan Shinshōji), Naritasan Shiryōkan zuroku 2 (Narita: Naritasan Shiryōkan, 1979). These donations have continued to the present; a large group are on display in the temple's museum, located in the basement of its mammoth, tahōō-style, Great Pagoda of Peace (Daitō), completed in 1984.

37 For materials related to the copies made by Ryōzan, see Tōkyō-tō Minatoku Kyoiku linkai, ed., Kano Kazunobu Gohyaku Rakan zu (Paintings of the Five Hundred Rakan by Kano Kazunobu) (Tokyo: Minatoku Kyoiku linkai, 1983), figs. 31-48.

38 Kominz, pp. 105-106.
Plate 9

Plate 10
patrons’ interests, and especially to the highly personal nature of their hopes and prayers. In general, commoners donated money for temple buildings and artifacts, especially votive tablets, in order to receive some kind of personal gain, a way for them to accrue the merit necessary to have their prayers for a better life in this world or the next answered. In contrast, elite samurai patronized the temple because of the deity’s ability to secure political success, or because, as in the case of the Sakura daimyo, they were required to do so by the Shogunate.

Naritasan Shinshōji got its start with official patronage by the Tokugawa clan and their retainers. Yet the temple thrived because of its proximity to Edo and its fortuitous patronage by Ichikawa Danjūrō I, his descendants, and the acting clan’s fans, the working class commoners of the city. Elite patronage never entirely vanished; the temple received the continued support of the Sakura daimyo, who coordinated the efforts to raise money for new buildings in the early nineteenth century. However, commoner support by far surpassed this in scope and enabled the temple to become the major religious center that it is today.

Widespread popular patronage of Naritasan Shinjōji continues into the present, with the post World War II buildings even more grand in scale than their Edo predecessors. This trend is clearly visible when comparing the four extant generations of its main worship hall, three from the Edo period, and the present structure, dating to 1968 and designed by renowned architect Yoshida Isoya (1894-1974). Many of the ema donated to the temple by individuals even today echo the pleas of visitors of centuries earlier for Fudō to help with both other-worldly and material benefits (including, of course, prayers for traffic safety). However, temple officials and the thousands of persons who have donated funds to Naritasan building campaigns of the 1980s and 1990s still call upon the divine powers of Fudō to help achieve a more universal goal that is not unlike the one which inspired the temple’s founding: the achievement of world peace.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Unless otherwise noted, all photos are by the author.
1. 1655 Main Hall at Naritasan Shinshōji, now the temple’s Yakushidō.
2. Unidentified artist of the Torii school (possibly Torii Kiyonobu, 1664-1729), The Origin of the Soga Warrior (Tsuwanmono Kongen Soga), 1697. Woodblock printed book in ink on paper. 22.5 x 15.5 cm. Photo courtesy of The Library of the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music.
3. Utagawa Hiroshige III (1842-1894), De gaichō at Eitaiji, Fukagawa Fudōson, 1885. Woodblock print in ink and colors on paper. Vertical ōban size, ca. 38 x 25 cm. Photo courtesy of Naritasan Shinshōji.
4. 1701 Main Hall at Naritasan Shinshōji, now the temple’s Kömyōdō.
5. 1703 Three-Story Pagoda at Naritasan

39 Other famous buildings by Yoshida include two buildings in Nara, the Museum Yamato Bunkakan (1960) and the Chūgūji Main Hall (1968), published in Japan Architect (Feb. 1969).
40 The taibōtō-style Great Pagoda of Peace (Daitō), dedicated in 1984, contains a time capsule with wishes for world peace donated by various world leaders, and the Shōtoku Taishi Hall, dedicated to the spirit of Prince Shōtoku (Shōtoku Taishi; 574-622), completed in 1992, is also a monument to world peace, inspired by the Buddhist-influenced principle of unity and harmony included in Prince Shōtoku’s famous Seventeen Article Constitution of 604 C.E.
Shinshōji.

6. Detail of the east side of the 1703 Three-Story Pagoda at Naritasan Shinshōji.

7. Utagawa Toyokuni (1769-1825), Naritasan kaichō no zu. Woodblock printed triptych in ink and colors on paper; vertical ōban size, each sheet ca. 38 x 25 cm. Photo courtesy of Naritasan Shinshōji.

8. Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797-1861), Ema of an Edo fire brigade, dedicated by a group of firefighters, 1833. Painted wood. 143 x 250 cm. Photo courtesy of Naritasan Shinshōji.

9. 1830 Main Gate (Niomon) at Naritasan Shinshōji.

10. 1858 Main Hall at Naritasan Shinshōji, now the temple's Shakado.

11. Section of the exterior wall relief panels with designs of Paragons of Filial Piety, at the 1858 Main Hall at Naritasan Shinshōji, by Matsumoto Ryōzan.

12. Nakaji Sadatoshi (1783-1838) and Nakaji Sadanori (1821-1870), authors; Hasegawa Settei (1819-1882), illustrator, Main buildings at Naritasan Shinshōji from the “Guidebook to Narita” (Narita meisho zue; Narita sankei ki), 1858. Woodblock printed book in ink on paper. ca. 27 x 33 cm. Photo courtesy of Naritasan Shinshōji.

13. 1861 Votive Tablet Hall (Gakudō) at Naritasan Shinshōji.
Tea Taste: Patronage and Collaboration among Tea Masters and Potters in Early Modern Japan
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Patron. Commonly a wretch who supports with insolence, and is paid with flattery.

Samuel Johnson (1709-1784), British lexicographer, Dictionary of the English Language, 1775

Introduction

In almost any museum in Japan today, you can encounter objects on display or in storage that were originally made and that have survived to the present because of the patronage of tea practitioners. The institutionalized, ritualized, and performative practice of preparing and serving tea, known in Japanese as chanoyu 茶の湯, has served to both stimulate and preserve varied forms of cultural production, ranging from ceramics, baskets, and calligraphy to cuisine, gardens, and architecture. The early modern tea practitioner was a kind of jack-of-all-trades designer whose creativity was expressed in the selection and arrangement (toriawase 取り合わせ) of objects in the tea room, but whose substantive work as a patron came in the acquisition of art. Tea practitioners acquired antiques from China, Korea, and Southeast Asia, commissioned new works through the offices of local merchants or by directly patronizing artists, and in some cases even crafted objects to suit their own particular social and aesthetic needs. All of these practices enabled the tea practitioner to construct a discourse of taste or suki (すき or 数奇) that publicly represented his or her aesthetic sensibilities.

This essay explores examples of collecting, commissioning, and creating objects from the interactions of the Sen tea schools and the Raku ceramic workshop. I argue that tea practitioners’ attempts to situate themselves aesthetically through the discourse of suki reveal relationships that are more complex than conventional notions of “patronage” allow. Particularly problematic is the rather negative view common in post-Enlightenment Western thought (an example of which can be found in the epigraph) that equates political and artistic patronage with a loss of much vaunted autonomy and independence. ¹ Examples of interactions between tea practitioners and artists in early modern Japan went beyond “patron and client” or “superior and inferior” to include collaborative and in some cases competitive acts of cultural production. ² The varied forms of patronage described here and in other essays in this issue serve as a useful reminder of the instability of even the most innocuous assumptions about cultural context in academic analysis of early modern Japan.

Collecting Rikyū

Collecting – lovingly labeled “an unruly passion” by Werner Muensterberger – is not usually included in definitions of patronage. ³ The Oxford English Dictionary, for example, provides the following definition: “The action of a patron in giving influential support, favour, encourage-

¹ I explore this issue in greater detail in Morgan Pitelka, Handmade Culture: Raku Potters, Patrons, and Tea Practitioners in Japan (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, forthcoming in 2005), particularly in the Introduction and Chapter Six. Also useful is Larry Shiner’s The Invention of Art: A Cultural History (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), in which he argues that the eighteenth century witnessed the unprecedented and radical bifurcation of the artist, as a maker of purely beautiful things, and the craftsman, as a maker of purely useful things. One result of this epistemic shift was the rise of the myth that real art was disconnected from market forces, social networks, and even cultural context.


ment, or countenance, to a person, institution, work, art, etc." In certain cultural climates, however, collecting antiques and certain kinds of imported objects accomplished precisely the goal of lending support, favor, and encouragement. In the case of early modern Japanese tea culture, collecting was one of the primary means of affirming the aesthetic vision or taste of a tea master and his followers. Susan Stewart has argued that objects have the capacity to "serve as traces of authentic experience." The world of tea utensils available in early modern Japan, then, represented a set of choices about aesthetic authenticity. Choosing to collect objects associated with the taste of one tea school or another was not an arbitrary act of consumerism, but a signification of value with complex social, political, and even metaphysical overtones.

The most collected tea luminary was (and continues to be) Sen no Rikyū 千利休 (1522-91). Although he appears to have been one of many well-connected, influential tea masters in the heady cultural climate of the late sixteenth century, the diligent myth-making of his descendants and disciples transformed him into one of the key cultural martyr figures of premodern Japanese history. As competitive struggles began to occur among followers of Rikyū over access to and representation of his legacy, material culture became an important site for the negotiation of meaning and value. Beginning in the mid-seventeenth century, tea practitioners avidly hunted for objects associated with Rikyū, and in many cases seem to have re-identified objects to construct a Rikyū connection where previously none existed. For example, the mid-seventeenth century descendent of Rikyū, Sen Kōshin Sōsa 千江岑宗左 (1619-72), was an avid chronicler of objects that he encountered both in the tea room and as a connoisseur of tea utensils. According to his tea diaries, Rikyū-related objects were used at the majority of tea gatherings he attended over a period of thirty years. Likewise, in one document recording the objects he encountered as a connoisseur, he names forty-two objects as having some sort of Rikyū connection. All were brought to him by Kyoto tea practitioners seeking to validate their collecting practices and to firmly establish their connection to the great tea master of the previous age. By the late seventeenth century, an age that Japanese historians call the "Rikyū revival" (Rikyū kaiki 利休回歸), it is almost impossible to find a tea school lacking Rikyū-related objects in its collection, or a prominent tea gathering minus Rikyū utensils on its roster of objects.

An example of a prominent collector of Rikyū-related objects is Gotō Shōsai 後藤少斎 (d. 1680), the son of the head of the Edo silver mint and a prominent metal worker and Kyoto silver mint official. He was well known in Kyoto as an avid tea practitioner, a disciple of Rikyū's grandson Sen Sōtan 千宗旦 (1578-1658), and the owner of the famous black Raku tea bowl Ōguro (Figure 1), one of the objects most often associated with Rikyū and his distinctive brand of tea in later centuries. Shōsai used this bowl for a tea gathering with Kōshin on 1647/11/16. He displayed calligraphy by Rikyū in the alcove with a cylindrical bamboo flower vase; he served tea in Ōguro, matched with a new lacquer tea caddy, an

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Amida kettle, and a rough Shigaraki water jar. On 1654/11/28, Shōsai again served tea in Ōguro with calligraphy by Rikyū, and used a tea scoop carved by Rikyū. In these and similar acts of acquiring, displaying, and using objects associated with Rikyū, Shōsai sought to align himself with Rikyū's tea practice and sense of aesthetics — in other words, to appropriate Rikyū's taste in the construction of his own artistic identity as a tea practitioner. Shōsai's adoption of Rikyū as an aesthetic model buttressed the hegemony of the prominent Sen tea practitioners of his day, making it a form of patronage.

**Figure 1: Low temperature, lead-glazed tea bowl named “Ōguro 大黒.” Designated Important Cultural Property. Attributed to Chōjirō (active late 16th century). Decorated with black glaze. Private Collection. 8.5 x 11.5 cm.**

Commissioning Taste, Controlling History

The association between the Sen tea schools and the Raku workshop seems to represent a more conventional patronage relationship, with the Sen tea masters acting as patrons and the Raku potters as producers. This relationship ostensibly dates back to the age of the founders of each lineage: the aforementioned Sen no Rikyū, and Chōjirō 長次郎・長二郎 (dates unknown; active late sixteenth century), the potter credited with founding the Raku tradition. According to the shared Sen and Raku mythohistory, Rikyū stumbled upon Chōjirō, a ceramic tile maker in the employ of the warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi 豊臣秀吉 (1536-98), and drafted him to create the definitive rustic tea bowl. For the purposes of the present essay, the historicity of this narrative (which I have examined in detail elsewhere) is not of concern. What matters is that the act of patronage itself was a key component in the imagined history of both the Sen tea schools and the Raku workshop. For Sen tea masters and tea practitioners, patronizing the Raku workshop represented a reproduction of Rikyū's ostensible patronage of Chōjirō. Both parties profited at the material and symbolic levels.

Examples of Sen patronage of the Raku workshop abound throughout the seventeenth century and beyond. Documented patronage begins with the grandson of Rikyū, Sen Sōtan, who commissioned ceramics from Nonkō のんこう (1599-1656), about whom we know little other than that he is today considered the third generation of the official Raku lineage. In one letter addressed to Nonkō, Sōtan explains that he recently saw a Chōjirō tea bowl once owned by Rikyū at a tea gathering; he made a sketch of the work and wants Nonkō to reproduce it. Here the circular legitimation of Sen patronage of the Raku workshop is apparent. Sōtan was eager to cement his own connection to his martyred grandfather, but

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10 Chanoyu mairi sōrō no oboe 茶湯参候覚, transcribed in KSC, p. 258.
11 Mi no jun rokugatsu yori chanoyu no oboe 巳ノ閏六月よい茶之湯之覚, transcribed in KSC; p. 303.
13 Pitelka, *Handmade Culture*.
14 In the collection of the Raku Museum. See Raku Bijutsukan 楽美術館, Sandai Dōnyū/Nonkō 三代道入・ノンコウ (Kyoto: Raku Bijutsukan, 1998), fig. 55, 120.
much of Rikyū's material legacy was scattered. Fortunately, the acceptance of reproductions (うつし写し) in Japanese tea culture gave Sōtan the opportunity to commission a "new" version of the Chōjirō tea bowl associated with his grandfather. This commission would in turn help Nonkō to affirm his credentials as the descendent of Chōjirō, and reify the patronal relationship with the Sen house. Everybody wins.

Sōtan inculcated the importance of Raku ceramics in his three sons, who then went on to found their own major tea schools. Each was a regular collector, commissioner, and user of Raku ceramics, which set a precedent both for their followers and for subsequent generations of tea masters. Sōtan's son Kōshin Sōsa, for example, commissioned from Nonkō a white tea bowl decorated with the crest of the Tokugawa house, which he then used to serve tea to his employer, Tokugawa Yorinobu 徳川頼宣 (1602-71). 15 With the gradual growth in popularity of tea among urban commoners and the institutionalization of tea practice in the form of the iemoto system 家元制度 in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the form and scale of Sen patronage of the Raku workshop shifted from small-scale, personal support, to large-scale support that affected tea practice in the school as a whole.

Of particular interest here is one peculiar form of this patronage: the series. Beginning in the early eighteenth century, Sen tea masters commissioned large groups of tea bowls from Raku potters to mark various kinds of historical and personal anniversaries. An example of this serial patronage and production occurs in 1713, when the head of the Omotesenke school, Sen Sōsa VI, Kakukakusai Gensō 觉々斎原叟 (1678-1730), commissioned 200 black tea bowls from the Raku workshop to mark the fiftieth birthday of its head potter, Raku Sōnyū 楽宗入 (1664-1716).16 This means of exercising control over the value of tea utensils and additionally may have served as a source of revenue, but the practice of serializing this practice was without precedent. It is likely

15 See the box inscription for the bowl, which is the collection of Omotesenke. Rakujutsukan, Sandai Dōnyū/Nonkō, fig. 38, 100.
that the tea bowls were distributed to school disciples. Many similar examples are mentioned in documents from the eighteenth century. In 1733, to mark the 50th birthday of Raku Sanyū楽左入 (1685-1739), Omotesenke iemoto Sen Sōsa VII, Joshinsai Tennen如心斎天然 (1705-1751), commissioned 200 tea bowls (Figure 2) and wrote a box inscription for each piece. Each tea bowl in the series was different, displaying an impressive variety of shapes and styles. Again, in 1789, Joshinsai’s successor, Sen Sōsa VIII, Sottakusai啐啄斎 (1744-1808) commissioned Raku Rōnyū楽了入 (1756-1834) to make 200 tea bowls, and wrote the box inscriptions. A more complexly nuanced example occurred in 1738, when Joshinsai commissioned Raku Chōjirō楽長入 (1714-70) to make 150 red tea bowls to mark the 150th memorial anniversary of Chōjirō’s death. Here the date and the number of commissioned bowls create a parallel set of relationships: the 150 bowls signify the 150th anniversary much as the collaborative, patronal relationship between Joshinsai and Chōjirō signifies the foundational bond between Rikyū and Chōjirō. The series of commissioned bowls acts as a synecdoche, with the bowls standing in for the whole edifice of the Sen and Raku originatory mythohistory. As the literary scholar Philip Fisher has noted in the context of modern art, the series gives the power of sequencing and historicization to the maker, or in this case, the patron. A tea bowl produced as part of a series can only be fully understood in the context of that series. This seems to imply that the work of the Sen tea master and Raku potter must be considered in the context of the histories of their lineages. The artistic production of each is dependent upon constant referral to the past in order to legitimate practices in the present.

A letter to Sanyū from a tea master in the Mushanokōji Senke lineage, Sen Sōshu III, Seiseisai Shimpaku静々斎真伯 (1693-1745) illustrates a more familiar variant of this kind of patronage. In the letter, Shimpaku draws a sketch of a tea bowl and a tea caddy that he wants Sanyū to reproduce, including exact measurements for the finished, fired vessels. He asks for two reproductions of the tea caddy in red, and two reproductions in black, “as before,” an indication that this is not the first time he has placed such an order. He also asks for the tea bowl to be on the large side, in red with green markings. Here the taste of an iemoto leader, inscribed as a sketch of his own vision of two ideal tea utensils, becomes the model for a professional potter’s ceramic production, ostensibly a reenactment of Rikyū’s original patronage of Chōjirō.

Crafting an Aesthetic Self

In addition to collecting and commissioning objects, some elite tea practitioners engaged in the creation of original (and unoriginal) objects in certain accessible fields of craft production. Carving tea scoops (chashaku茶杓) and creating flower containers (hanaire花入) from bamboo, for example, became a particularly popular practice among tea practitioners beginning in the late sixteenth century. Making tea scoops and flower containers provided tea practitioners with a rare opportunity to make tangible objects to suit their own tastes and to then circulate these objects within the tea community. Bamboo was a logical medium because it was widely available, relatively easy to work with, and correlated well with the aesthetic principles popular at the time.

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18 See, for example, four tea bowls attributed to Raku Sanyū with box inscriptions by Joshinsai: in Raku Kichizaemon楽吉左衛門, Raku chawan楽茶碗 (Kyoto: Tankōsha, 2000), 82-9.


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Ceramics, by contrast, were largely beyond the reach of tea practitioners desiring to make their own utensils. The technical expertise necessary to make high temperature glazed ceramics required extensive training and access to specialized facilities. Using a potters’ wheel required considerable experience and a well-equipped workshop. High temperature kilns were quite large and needed to be filled with quantities of ceramics before they could be profitably fired. Instead, late sixteenth and early seventeenth century tea practitioners placed orders for new designs with local merchants who dealt in ceramics. These merchants then commissioned large orders of ceramics from kilns located outside of Kyoto. Raku ceramics, however, were an exception because they were relatively simple to make. The aspiring Raku potter needed only clay, a metal carving tool, and some basic instruction. Finished pots could be brought to a workshop in Kyoto to be glazed and fired in the indoor kiln.

The most influential amateur maker of Raku ceramics was Hon’ami Kōetsu 本阿弥光悦 (1558-1637), who today is considered one of the most important artists of early modern Japan. He was from an elite Kyoto family of artisans who had extensive contact with the military elite through their business as sword polishers and connoisseurs. Kōetsu made ample use of his education, background, and connections in his diverse artistic activities, which included not only a historicist interest in canonical tales and calligraphy, but a decidedly contemporary interest in lacquer design and ceramic dilettantism. Many of Kōetsu’s letters contain references to making low temperature, lead-glazed ceramics in collaboration with the Raku workshop, run at the time by a certain Kichiazaemon 吉左衛門 (also Jōkei 常慶; d. 1635?). In one letter, for example, Kōetsu writes: “Please send me enough white and red clay for four tea bowls. Come quickly! Sincerely, Kōetsu, 1/26. To the tea bowl maker Kichiza.” This request shows that Kōetsu hand-carved tea bowls on his own. In another letter, Kōetsu writes: “Please apply glaze to the tea bowl. Kōsa’s tea bowl should also be done. Kōetsu. To Kichiza,” indicating that he left the difficult work of glazing to the professionals.

23 In the collection of the Raku Museum. See also Fischer, The Arts of Hon’ami Kōetsu, fig. 100; Osaka Shiritsu Bijutsukan 大阪市立美術館, Kōetsu no sho 光悦の書 (Osaka: Osaka Shiritsu Bijutsukan, 1990), fig. 64.

24 Collection of the Raku Museum. Fischer, The Arts of Hon’ami Kōetsu, fig. 102. Osaka Shiritsu Bijutsukan, Kōetsu no sho, fig. 92. In another letter, Kōetsu simply writes that the tea bowls are finished, implying that someone from Jōkei’s workshop should come and pick them up for glazing and firing. Collection of the Kyoto National Museum. Fischer, The Arts of Hon’ami Kōetsu, fig. 104.

In another letter, he demonstrates his impatient desire to see the fruits of his labor: “Are the tea bowls finished? I’m waiting at Kōsa’s place ordering a tea caddy lid. Sincerely, Kōetsu. 6/16. To the tea bowl maker Kichizaemon.”26 Many of these letters demonstrate a degree of friendly intimacy, such as Kōetsu’s comment that a recent visit by Kichizaemon was “most satisfying.”27 Why would Kōetsu, an accomplished sword-connoisseur, calligrapher, lacquer designer, and tea practitioner, go to the trouble to make his own Raku ceramics (Figure 3)? One motivation, perhaps, was to produce objects to his own taste for his own use, though this is not well documented; at the very least his prodigious artistic activities indicate his passion for creative experimentation. Another possible motivation was the potential value of hand-made ceramics in gift exchanges. His letters show that he did make ceramics at the request of acquaintances and accordingly gave away pieces as gifts. In a letter to a certain Katō Akinari, for example, he writes that the commissioned bowl is almost finished, and that another of his bowls would soon be sent to Edo.28 In another example, a letter to a senior retainer of the Maeda daimyo, Kōetsu writes that he would send the warrior leader a ceramic water container he had made.29 The objects were surely valued by the recipients for their quirky aesthetic qualities and as mementos of an influential figure in Kyoto culture. Perhaps more importantly, the act of using hand-made ceramics in gift exchanges established an important precedent in the tea community.

Above and beyond their formal aesthetic properties, ceramics made by amateur potters such as Kōetsu became precious because they amalgamated two different notions of value in tea culture. Tea practitioners judged tea utensils both in terms of when and where they were made and in terms of the pedigree of ownership. A tea caddy might be valuable both because it was made in the Seto kilns and because it was once owned by the tea master Kobori Enshū 小堀遠州 (1579-1647). Kōetsu’s hand-made ceramics were both made and owned by the same person, at least until they were passed on to another owner. This conflation of maker and owner lent a singular layer of personality to a tea utensil. It also invested the object with the aura of the person, so that tea ceramics made by famous tea practitioners took on totemic significance as embodiments of taste among later generations. Kōetsu’s experiments with clay also represent a ceramic patron reinventing himself as a ceramic producer, a switch that was only possible through collaboration with a professional studio such as the Raku workshop.

Practice as Patronage

The leaders of the large iemoto tea schools in early modern Japan were enthusiastic patrons of the Raku workshop. They also followed the lead of Hon’ami Kōetsu by engaging in their own amateur production of Raku ceramics beginning in the late seventeenth century. Kakukakusai of Omotesenke was one of the first to realize the social and symbolic value of hand-making his own Raku ceramics, and he utilized his ceramics as gifts and rewards for his disciples. He also created ceramics to commemorate important anniversaries in the Sen tea tradition, which served to anchor the history of the Sen lineage in new objects. This precedent was followed by numerous succeeding iemoto, as we will see below.

One of the best known tea bowls attributed to Kakukakusai is named Dontarō (Figure 4).30 This tea bowl consists of a roughly carved body

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26 Hayashiya Seizō 林屋晴三, Kōetsu / Tamamizu / Ōhi 光悦・玉水・大樋, Nihon tōji zenshū 日本陶磁全集, vol. 22 (Tokyo: Chūōkōronsha, 1977), 53.
28 See Fischer, The Arts of Hon’ami Kōetsu, fig. 90.
30 The name of the bowl comes from a Kyōgen play of the same title.
with a rounded hip and impacted foot. The piece is covered with the standard thick, glossy black glaze of the Raku workshop. The large chip in the side appears to be a result of the firing or post-firing cooling process. This flaw has become a point of great attraction for tea practitioners. Though we have no record of the details of the production of this piece, presumably it was carved by Kakukakusai and glazed and fired by one of the Raku workshop potters. Such flaws are not found among extant ceramics attributed to Raku potters, which implies that professional potters either constructed their pieces so as to avoid trapped pockets of air or water, or that flawed pieces were discarded. It seems safe to assume that the flaw in “Don’tarō” appealed to Kakukakusai, and that he insisted that it not be discarded.

The manner in which Kakukakusai dispensed with this bowl demonstrates his particular interest in Raku ceramics as gifts. The year 1716 marked the 50th anniversary of the death of the founder of Omotesenke, Kōshin Sōsa, and the school sponsored several events to commemorate the occasion. On 10/27, for example, Kakukakusai held a tea gathering for his highest disciples with the explicit intent of honoring Kōshin. Kakukakusai selected objects associated with Kōshin from the family collection, such as a calligraphy scroll bearing the characters of Kōshin’s name written by his father Sōtan. Kakukakusai also chose several of his own hand-made tea utensils. One of these was the tea bowl Don’tarō, which was so admired by those present that lots were drawn to determine who would receive the bowl as a gift. The winner was a townsman from Nagoya, Owayi (present-day Aichi prefecture) named Takada Saburōzaemon 高田三郎左衛門 (1683-1763). After receiving this gift from Kakukakusai, Saburōzaemon took the tea name Tarōan 太郎庵 from the last two characters of the tea bowl name of Don’taro 鍾太郎, and constructed a Tarōan tea room at his residence. The taste of the iemoto, in this case, became programmatic in the construction of his disciple’s identity as a tea practitioner, on the one hand, and in the physical construction of the site of his performance as a tea disciple on the other.

The iemoto engaged in this type of amateur Raku production on many occasions, and the spread of his tea bowls represents the dissemination of a kind of aesthetic curriculum embedded in objects. Don’tarō was only one of 50 bowls

31 Image source: Aichiken Tōji Shirıyōkan 愛知県陶磁資料館, Chanoyu to yakimono: Owari, Mikawa no chajintachi o megutte 茶の湯とやきもの：尾張・三河の茶人たちをめぐって (Seto: Aichiken Tōji Shirıyōkan, 1999), fig. 40.

32 This event is recorded in an unpublished tea diary in the Omotesenke collection. A partial transcription can be found in Senke Dōmonkai 千家同門会, Kakukakusai 覚々斎 (Kyoto: Omotesenke, 1978), 14-5.

33 Aichiken Tōji Shirıyōkan 愛知県陶磁資料館, Chanoyu to yakimono: Owari, Mikawa no chajintachi o megutte 茶の湯とやきもの：尾張・三河の茶人たちをめぐって (Seto: Aichiken Tōji Shirıyōkan, 1999), 50-1.

34 This interpretation is based on the comments of Kumakura Isao 熊倉功夫 in “Iemoto seika ni okeru geidō no tokushitsu: 18 seiki ni okeru chanoyu o chūshin ni 家元制下における芸道の特質 - 十八世紀における茶の
Kakukakusai carved to commemorate Kōshin’s 50th memorial in 1716. Twelve years later in 1728, Kakukakusai is said to have carved another 50 tea bowls to mark his own 50th birthday, and had them fired by Sanyū.35 Joshinsai followed this example in the 1730s when he carved a small series of seven tea bowls, and again in 1746 when he carved a larger series of 50 tea bowls that were fired by Sanyū’s successor Chōnyū. Both men also carved single bowls with some regularity. Through this particular form of participatory and collaborative patronage, Raku ceramic production became an integral part of tea practice for the heads of the Sen tea schools. Because the pedagogy of the tea schools was based on the taste of the iemoto, Raku collecting and production became model practices for school members as well, creating an unprecedented demand for Raku with the spread of the iemoto system.

Patronage and Appropriation

The publishing boom of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries resulted in the widespread dissemination of information about tea and ceramics (among many other “arts of play”) outside of traditional centers of practice such as Kyoto and Edo.36 With the publication and diffusion of books such as Complete Writings on the Way of Tea [Chadō zensho 茶道全書] in 1693, Diverse Domestic and Foreign Utensils [Wakan shodōgu 和漢諸道具] in 1694, and A Collection of Tea Commentary [Chanoyu hyōrin taisei 茶之湯評林大成] in 1697, information about tea history and practice was widely available for the first time in Japanese history. As a result, the suki or taste of tea luminaries such as Rikyū and Kōetsu became well known among a broad and diverse population of tea practitioners.

Technical manuals of every sort, too, spread across the archipelago, including a remarkably specialized text on Raku ceramic production: a two volume, blockprinted book known as Collected Raku Ceramic Secrets [Rakuyaki hinō 楽焼秘囊]. Numerous editions of this book survive in libraries across Japan as well as at least two editions in Europe.37 The original book, printed in 1736 by Kashiwaraya Sahei 柏原屋佐兵衛 of Osaka, and subsequent editions were published for more than 150 years. According to the printed colophon (Figure 5), the author was “Nakata Senryūshi of Naniwa [Osaka] 浪速田中潜龍子.” Because this name does not appear in other extant eighteenth century sources, it may have been a pen name, implying that the publication of Raku technical secrets was controversial enough to merit some caution. After the first successful run, the blocks were sold to Kawachiya Kihei 河内屋, a well known publisher, who reprinted the book using the original blocks.38 Eventually, at an unknown date, the

37 One copy is in the collection of the British Library, London. The second is in the collection of the Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium, 21.A.1. The latter is marked with the ownership stamp “Watanabe of Shimotsuke province” (Tochigi prefecture). I am grateful to Peter Kornicki of Cambridge University for this reference.
38 This second printing is born out by the existence of several editions that are identical to those of the first run, but that have small breaks in the border lines and text. See the editions in the collections of the Kokuritsu Komonjokan Naikaku Bunkō and the Kanazawa City Library. On the Kawachiya, see Sakai Hajime 酒井一, “Osaka Shorin Kawachiya no koto nado 大阪書林河内屋のことなど,” Geinōshi kenkyū 芸能史研究 136 (1998): 1-14.
Figure 5: Colophon, *Collected Raku Ceramic Secrets* [Rakuyaki hinō]. “Authored by Tanaka Senryūshi of Naniwa, Genbun 1 (1736) Osaka Shorin, Kawachiya Kihei.” The breaks in the border line indicate that this is a later edition. (The largest break at the top left of the page is a tear in the paper.) Private collection.
were sold to other publishers, who issued further reprints with altered colophons. In the Meiji period, two Tokyo publishers issued yet another reprint, indicating enough demand for the book in the late nineteenth century to warrant using the now significantly worn original blocks.39

Though printed in multiple editions, Collected Raku Ceramic Secrets stayed in the same form for its entire history: two bound volumes, each with its own title slip. The calligraphy of the title slip consisted of clear, cursive characters on volume one, and a decorative seal script on volume two. The text is divided into several sections. First is a prologue dated 1733 that explains that the person listed as the author (sakusha 作者) in the colophon, Nakata Senrūshi, compiled (henzuru 編る) the book, a process that is described as “fishing for the secrets of the way of pottery” (tōdō no hyō o tsuri 陶道の秘用を釣).40 A detailed table of contents lists thirty-eight subheadings, including “Constructing and firing the kiln,” “Making red Raku,” “Making the clay,” and “Making black Raku glaze.”41 The main text is speckled with drawings of tools and kiln components. The second volume includes a discussion of tea bowl shapes supplemented by several diagrams. The next section is a genealogy of Raku potters, written in classical Chinese, that begins with Chōjirō and ends with Sanyū’s son, Kichizaemon (1714-70; Chōnyū).42

Figure 6: Low temperature, lead-glazed tea bowl. Isshi ware, early 19th c. Decorated with translucent glaze over red slip.43

The publication of Collected Raku Ceramic Secrets indicates the continuous demand in early modern Japan for a technical manual on Raku ceramic production. Publishers such as Kawachiya Kihei would not have invested in publication and republication if there was not significant profit to be made. The use of furigana to indicate the pronunciation of difficult Chinese characters, though relatively standard in eighteenth-century publications, speaks to the diverse potential readership of Collected Raku Ceramic Secrets, including not only elite warriors, professional tea practitioners, and wealthy merchants, but potters and other artisans as well. When we consider the rapid expansion of the tea schools throughout the archipelago, particularly the primacy of Raku ceramics as model tea utensils in the Sen schools, we can assume that the demand for Raku ceramics had expanded well beyond Kyoto and its environs by the early eighteenth century.44 And in the details are accurate, however, such as the notes that Sōnyū and Sanyū were both adopted.


44 The Kaitokudō merchant academy in Osaka had a total of six ceramic-related books in the holdings of its library, one of which was Collected Raku Ceramic Secrets. It was also the oldest book on Japanese ceramics of the group,
heterogeneous ceramic production of provincial and urban Raku kilns such as the Akahada kiln in Nara, the Fūya kiln in the Matsumoto domain, the Isshi kiln in Ueno city (Figure 6), the Sasashima kiln in Nagoya, the Takahara kiln in Osaka, and more than thirty others, we see the appropriation of the practices of collecting, commissioning, and creating Raku ceramics by tea practitioners not privileged enough to enjoy direct contact with the Raku kiln and the Sen tea masters in Kyoto.

The collaborative patronal relationship between the Sen tea schools and the Raku workshop came to function in the seventeenth century as an iconic marker of Rikyū’s taste. It seems logical to assume that the singular authenticity of this relationship was key to the authority of both the Sen iemoto and the Raku workshop. However, the Raku and Sen leaders seem neither to have responded with hostility to the spread of a technical manual explaining the “secrets” of Raku ceramic production nor to the resulting emergence of amateur and professional Raku kilns across the archipelago. Rather, the appropriation of the Sen-Raku patronal relationship was not understood as an attempt to usurp iemoto authority but rather a reverential effort to reproduce Rikyū’s taste. Because Rikyū’s imagined aesthetic vision determined not only the form but the social relations of Raku manufacture, provincial and amateur reproduction of Raku ceramics did not diminish the “aura” of the work of art, but increased it by reifying its connection to the source of legitimacy, Rikyū. Not until the irruption of modernity and the importation of Hegelian notions of cultural value would the early modern culture of reproductions and the transferability of the Raku-Sen patronal relationship be obfuscated behind nationalistic narratives of individualistic genius and Momoyama avant gardism.

which included two Chinese texts, and three Meiji period reprints of bakumatsu ceramic connoisseurship guides, Osaka Daigaku Bungaku buku 大阪大学文学部, Kaitokudō bunkō tosho mokuroku 懐徳堂文庫図書目録 (Osaka: Osaka Daigaku Bungakubu, 1976), 49.

Conclusion: Nebulous Boundaries

These and other examples of collaborative patronage point to the flexibility built into seemingly rigid social and cultural structures in early modern Japan. In general, tea practices were carefully positioned in the normative context of school orthodoxy. However, room was available for innovation within highly planned and limited settings such as tea gatherings. Reproducing the taste (suki) of apotheosized cultural luminaries such as Rikyū enabled tea practitioners to situate their aesthetic identities in a lineage stretching back to the sixteenth century. (Recent ethnographies of tea practice in Japan, such as James-Henry Holland’s 2003 essay and Etsuko Kato’s 2004 monograph, indicate that opportunities to appropriate iemoto norms continue to sustain and entertain tea practitioners.)

Patronage and collaboration were two ways for actors in a conservative system that resisted open innovation to create new works under the guise of historical precedent.

Amateur involvement in ceramic production was one of the defining characteristics of both Raku ceramic and Sen tea culture from at least the seventeenth century. The innovative ceramics of Hon’ami Kōetsu opened the door to radical ceramic experimentation not only by potters operating outside of the tea school system, but by the leaders of the tea schools themselves. The sculptural ceramics of tea masters such as Ryōōsai (Figure 7) and potters such as Ryōnyū (Figure 8), for example, definitively reveal the danger of assuming that the discourse of the reproduction of tradition in premodern Japanese culture actually equated to stagnation or sedimentation in cultural production. The nebulous boundaries between patron and client, or in this

case between potter and customer, allowed tea practitioners to transgress rigid institutional barriers in the process of constructing distinct identities as men of taste.

Figure 7: Low temperature, lead-glazed tea bowl named “Nagahakama,” attributed to Sen Sōsa IX, Ryōrōsai (1775-1825). Decorated with black glaze. 46

Figure 8: Low temperature, lead-glazed tea bowl. Attributed to Raku Ryōnyū (1756-1834). Decorated with translucent glaze over red slip, and deep diagonally carved grooves. Raku Museum. 7.8 x 9.5 cm. 47

46 Image source: Kyoto Bunka Hakubutsukan, eds., Chanoyu: Nihon no kokoro (Kyoto: Kyoto Shimbunsha, 1999), fig. 40.

47 Image source: Raku Kichizaemon, Raku chawan, 94.
Patronage and the Building Arts in Tokugawa Japan
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University of Michigan

In modern parlance, the term daiku 大工, like its English counterpart, “carpenter,” refers to one who builds houses. It is a generic term, suggesting most commonly, however, someone who is involved in the basic construction, as opposed to a specialist who is called in to lay the floor, install the roof, or complete a similarly narrow task. Neither term, daiku or carpenter, connotes a level of ability or quality of work; daiku can be skilled or unskilled. However, both daiku and carpenters deal primarily with rough work, where tolerances of as much as a centimeter can be acceptable and where structural integrity means more than appearance. Finish carpenters, as the name implies, deal with façade rather than structure, something that is reflected in their greater concern with detail. Nonetheless, they still work at a level that is less precise and less refined than that of a furniture maker or shōji 障子 maker.¹

This present usage of daiku differs significantly from that of the late sixteenth century, at the beginning of the building boom of the early modern era. In fact, the terminology for many craftsmen in the building arts developed and changed considerably between the sixteenth and late-nineteenth centuries. An examination of those changes reveals much about the building arts, the lives of the individuals engaged in them, and the role of patronage in architecture and its construction, the subject of this paper. To some degree, we can trace the fate of Tokugawa period (1600-1868) daiku through analyzing the changes in the titles by which they were referred.

In the ancient and medieval eras, daiku referred to the leaders of groups of craftsmen. The term, meaning “principal craftsman,” was not limited to those who worked in wood, but included thatchers, plasterers, shinglers, and so on. Individuals of lesser ability or status, or who were subordinate to the daiku, were shōku 少工, 小工 or “minor craftsmen.”² In the warring states era (1467-1568), daiku came to refer only to carpenters — those who worked with wood — apparently because of the fundamental nature of their work, and because they generally oversaw the whole construction process; their head usually functioned as a “general contractor.” By the late sixteenth century, the head daiku of a project was distinguished from his woodworking subordinates by the term tōryō 柱梁 (master builder), or literally the “beams and girders” or “ridgepole” of the group.³

The following three-quarters of a century was a period of remarkable prosperity for those in the building arts, and by the end of it changes in terminology had begun to appear. The feudal lords of the reunification and early Tokugawa eras were rich and powerful, and they desired to express those attributes through physical symbols.⁴ This meant that master builders enjoyed nearly unequivocal support for the projects they directed. This was patronage as traditionally practiced, though its breadth and intensity — as witnessed in the dizzying pace of construction throughout the land — was new. For common daiku, this was a time of profitable and steady work; indeed the large undertakings required vast numbers of workers, more than had been trained in the relevant crafts. A few of the many craftsmen were fortunate enough to be patronized by powerful lords and they saw their


² Nishi Kazuo, Edo jidai no daikutachi (Kyoto: Gakugei Shuppansha, 1980), pp. 191-93.


⁴ In English, the political uses of monumental architecture are examined in William Coaldrake, Architecture and Authority in Japan (London: Routledge, 1996). See particularly the chapters on “Castles,” “Tokugawa Mausolea,” and “Shogunal and Daimyo Gateways.”
stars rise dramatically. The privileged and personal ties they enjoyed assured their descendants of continued patronage throughout the Tokugawa era. That patronage came, however, with reduced levels of support and in the form of bureaucratic offices and titles rather than as mandates to create impressive edifices.

A document dated to 1859, Osakujikata yakuyaku tsutomekata 御作事方役々勤方, reveals that much had changed for craftsmen working in the Tokugawa Bakufu. No longer was the master builder the tōryō; instead he was the daikugashira 大工頭. Working with him was the shimobugyō 下奉行, an official who oversaw finances and dealt with officials from other branches of government. Beneath these two were officials who worked, respectively, on physically constructing buildings or managing funds and keeping records. In all, there were eleven such lesser officers subordinate to the daikugashira and shimobugyō. Among the carpentry officers were the daitōryō 大棟梁 or “great ridgepole,” the daiku tōryō 大工棟梁 or “head carpenter,” and the ōnokogiri daiku 大鍬大工 or “head sawyer.” All three titles were new. A “great ridgepole” (daitōryō) was necessary because subordinate to him were lesser “ridgepoles” who headed their respective crafts of carpentry, lumber sawing, shingling, and plastering. The reality was that these distinguished titles came with limited authority. Whereas prior to the seventeenth century the term tōryō had reflected the influence and abilities of a handful of master builders who personally associated with powerful lords, after 1650 it was a middling bureaucratic post. The loftier titles of daitōryō and daikugashira were only incrementally better; none offered its holder the opportunities or influence enjoyed by tōryō predecessors of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

With the ending of the era of monumental construction by 1650, most carpenters and related craftsmen had no choice but to look beyond the warrior lords for their livelihood. Even some close associates of master builders found themselves outside the reach of patronage. And so they sought work elsewhere and found it in the economic marketplace. They benefited greatly from an expanding economy that put surplus funds into the hands of those who previously had none, including newly affluent warriors and commoners. Having acquired a modicum (or more) of riches, these individuals sought to better their lives as the upper reaches of society did. The benefit of craftsmen, well-crafted homes appeared early on the list of necessities for this group. In the process, architectural styles and details that had been produced for and restricted to the elite came to be adopted by lower classes. Thus, even though the rate of new construction commissioned by the Tokugawa and other lords slowed significantly by the mid-seventeenth century, the building boom continued. This was reflected in a new set of titles for carpenters and related craftsmen who, in order to meet the demands for well-crafted homes and other structures, became increasingly specialized in their work. The first to appear were “temple carpenters” (miya daiku 宮大工), whose primary work was in constructing temples and shrines, many of them in villages that previously had none. They were thus distinguished from “residential carpenters” (ie daiku 家大工) and loom carpenters (hata daiku 機大工). Finally, to distinguish carpenters who worked for commoners from those patronized by military lords, the terms machi daiku 町大工 and goyō daiku 御用大工 were used. Clearly much had changed in the world of carpentry between 1600 and 1850. Not only had carpenters and their associates become more specialized in their work, but the narrow bounds of patronage had been

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5 Nishi Kazuo discusses several of these important individuals in Nishi, pp. 29-56.
6 This document is quoted and analyzed in Nishi, pp. 73-82.
eclipsed, or at least breached, well before the end of the Tokugawa era.

Master Builders: Feast and Famine

In Japan’s medieval era (12th-16th centuries), most skilled carpenters produced structures and carried out repairs for temples and shrines. Nearly all such individuals acquired their positions hereditarily, as of course did those who served the imperial court generation after generation. The upheaval of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries left many daiku in difficult straits, as patrons were unable to afford the expenses of rebuilding structures destroyed by war or fire. But with the move toward stability late in the sixteenth century, powerful warriors emerged as new patrons, and within several decades the old patrons of the Kyoto court and priesthood once again had the means to fund extensive building projects. The demand for daiku, from master builders to moderately skilled workers, rose dramatically, offering opportunities to men of varying backgrounds. Indeed, it was during the six decades from 1560 to 1620 that all important hereditary daiku families of the early modern era were established. Though some could trace a family head back to medieval times, all flourished, most under new patrons, during the reunification era at the beginning of the early modern period.

The daiku of influence were craftsmen of the highest order, who served both as architects and construction managers and worked within the traditional bounds of patronage. Their patrons were men who understood that system and expected to see building projects begun at their pleasure and on their time schedules. In exchange, the daiku received employment, protection against competition, and benefits such as tax exemptions. In many respects the ties between powerful warriors and the master builders they employed were feudal ties; in several cases, the daiku even served their warrior lords as fighting men in addition to working as builders. For example, Okabe Mochitoki, the master builder for Azuchi Castle (completed in 1579), served Oda Nobunaga as a warrior more than two decades previous to that time. He distinguished himself at the Battle of Okehazama 1560, probably one reason he became Nobunaga’s chief architect and builder. Mochitoki’s close relationship to Nobunaga kept him frequently at the lord’s side, resulting ultimately in his death, along with Nobunaga’s, at Honnōji Temple 1582.

Another daiku who combined military arts and building arts was Nakai Masakiyo (1565-1619), the most significant master builder of the era. Masakiyo appears as a vassal of Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1588, age twenty-four, a recipient of a 200-koku stipend of rice, but his first building activities were not recorded until 1602 when he was put in charge of erecting a small outbuilding, possibly a tea house, at Fushimi Castle. The important position Masakiyo held under Ieyasu is seen in the events surrounding the 1614 “Bell Controversy” of the Great Buddha Hall of Hōkōji (which some say led to the attack on Toyotomi Hideyori in Osaka Castle). Besides condemning the Toyotomi for including phrases in the bell inscription that were disrespectful of the Tokugawa, Ieyasu also denounced them for failing to include the name of the master builder, Nakai Masakiyo, on the ridgepole register. Masakiyo was hardly an innocent bystander in this affair: that same year Ieyasu sent him to call at Osaka Castle, with instructions that he prepare drawings of the interior after his return. In addition, Masakiyo himself joined the winter campaign against Osaka Castle, providing muskets and thirty men on horseback. As the fighting progressed, Masakiyo led carpenters in the construction of barracks and other temporary buildings and had blacksmiths forge spears for the Bakufu armies. Another influential daiku of this era was Kōra Munehiro. Originally from Ōmi, Munehiro formed ties with Tokugawa

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8 Nishi, p. 32.
11 Ibid., p. 4.
Ieyasu and from 1596 resided in Fushimi. There he fulfilled Ieyasu’s local building needs. Later he built a large gate at the Konoe chancellor’s residence in Kyoto, carving one of the two doors himself, for which he was rewarded with the lower sixth rank at the imperial court. Munehiro also contributed work on Toshōgū Shrine 東照宮 at Nikkō.¹²

Leading builders like Okabe Mochitoki, Nakai Masakiyo, and Kōra Munehiro were relatively few in number, primarily because their power and influence was a result of the close personal ties they enjoyed with the greatest military lords. The title by which they were known, tōryō 柘梁, was an appropriate one, drawn from their work: tō or mune is a building’s ridgepole, and ryō or harī are its beams or girders. Together they represented the structure that supported the roof and sheltered the building’s inhabitants. In terms of the practical work they did, these master builders were known for their breadth of ability and skill. They were not only master builders, but also architects. Writing in 1610, the daiku Heinouchi Yoshimasa 平内吉政 noted that a skilled builder expected to be proficient in five areas: laying out plan lines with a square, making computations based upon plans, doing hand work (sawing, chiseling, jointing), drawing up designs to be carved, and doing the carving.¹³ For daiku, these were the skills that offered one the possibility of establishing ties of patronage, the only means to exert significant influence within one’s craft.

An examination of the Nakai family reveals the importance of the personal ties of patronage they forged with the Tokugawa, ties that allowed them to maintain positions of influence and prosperity for the whole of the period. As noted, the tie between the Tokugawa and the Nakai was in some ways a feudal one between lord and vassal. Masakiyo, who served Tokugawa Ieyasu, was descended from low-level officials associated with a Shinto shrine in Yamato province. Masakiyo’s father had been adopted into a family of artisans, where he learned carpentry, though he had also fought occasionally for a local military house. Masakiyo learned the same arts of war and architecture as his father, and in 1588 became a vassal of Ieyasu. Though the feudal tie between the two men was significant, there is little question that Masakiyo became Ieyasu’s head of construction because of his skill. Considering the numerous construction projects undertaken by the Bakufu in its first decades, Masakiyo was a busy man. As head of construction, he was responsible for surveying land, drawing plans, overseeing construction expenses, dispersing payments, and directing each project in a broad sense. Among the projects he directed either in whole or in part were Nijō castle, Fushimi castle, Chion’in 知恩院, Edo Castle, Zōjōji 増上寺, Sunpu castle, Nagoya castle, the imperial palace, the retired emperor’s palace, the empress’s palace, and mausoleums for Ieyasu at Kunōzan and Nikkō.¹⁴

The exceptional stature that Masakiyo acquired is reflected in the court rank he attained through Ieyasu’s efforts: in 1606 he received the Junior Fifth Rank, Lower Grade, and in 1609 the exceptional rank for one of his occupation of Junior Fourth Rank, Lower Grade. In addition his stipend was raised, first to 500 koku and then to 1000 koku.¹⁵ Wealthy and powerful as the Tokugawa were, Masakiyo had virtually unlimited resources at his disposal as well as a patron who desired that those resources be put to use in expressing Tokugawa power and munificence. Furthermore, because of his close ties to Ieyasu, Masakiyo enjoyed personal authority and income that other carpenters could only dream about; and this accrued to his descendants as well. Thus, whereas Nakai family heads who succeeded Masakiyo received stipends of 500 koku, an office allowance for 40 workers, and continued authority for all building projects in the Home Provinces (Kinai), the head of construction in Edo received only an 80-koku stipend and a 20-worker office allowance.¹⁶

¹² Nishi, pp. 49-51.
¹⁵ Nakai-ke monjo no kenkyū, vol. 1, p. 6.
¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 7-8.
Masakiyo was not the only carpenter based in the Kinai who benefited from the flood of Tokugawa building activities. Masakiyo had a number of assistants and their duties were divided among the following: coordinating building plans, acquiring timber, directing sawyers, inspecting raw materials, inspecting finished materials and workmanship, directing workers, overseeing finances (including paying for materials and issuing wages) and keeping account books. With many of the early projects requiring hundreds of thousands of man-hours of labor, it is not surprising that a considerable number of managers was required. All of these managers were beneficiaries of Tokugawa patronage, and many of their descendants occupied hereditary positions within one of the Bakufu’s bureaus of construction.\(^\text{17}\)

Despite what appears to have been an ideal situation for the Nakai family and its assistants, by the end of the seventeenth century decline had begun. This is seen in a petition of 1692 written by the Kyoto city magistrates on behalf of the Nakai. It reads as follows.

In recent years [all building contracts have been decided] by bid. Until the bids are accepted and the work is begun, expenses for initial services, preliminary sketches and other renderings, wooden models, wages for administrative officials [other than the Nakai], rent, copying, and all other manner of costs must be paid beforehand [by the Nakai], and this has added up year after year. . . . Last year it amounted to the sum of approximately 200 ryō.\(^\text{18}\)

The first problem, which struck at the very heart of Tokugawa patronage of the Nakai, was the practice of putting up jobs for bid. In other words, although the Nakai head would still oversee a given project, acting in essence as “general contractor,” the various jobs would be distributed to “sub-contractors” according to low bids. This practice of opening public construction to private craftsmen and private capital was rarely seen in the first half of the seventeenth century, but it became increasingly common thereafter. A representative call for bids, posted in the capital by the Kyoto city magistrates in 1669, reads:

Announcement: To Those Desiring to Bid on the Construction of the Sanjō Large Bridge 三條大橋

Carpenters, Lumber Suppliers, Blacksmiths, Rock Wholesalers, Day Laborers

A Temporary Bridge; Temporary Huts and Transportation for Them (for Rent); Various and Sundry Tools (for Rent); Demolition of the Existing Bridge; Buyers of Scrap Metal; Small Tools

Any and all of the above.

Concerning the above listed [items and services]: Those who desire to provide some or any should proceed to the Third Street Bridge office within the Danō 王 temple grounds on the upcoming 4th, 5th, or 6th [days of the month], and enter a bid in the register book there.

Announced to the Citizens of Kyoto

1669   The City Magistrates\(^\text{19}\)

This practice of soliciting bids was a dramatic shift from the earlier custom in which the Nakai hired carpenters, artisans, and other workers that they saw fit to hire, and then directed their work and paid them a wage and daily food stipend.\(^\text{20}\) As it turned out, the workers’ food stipend — a portion of which the Bakufu provided to the Nakai before any work was undertaken — was a source of “soft money” which the Nakai were able to draw upon to cover initial (and extra) expenses. But with the change to the bid system, the Nakai no longer had food stipends to draw upon, and as the petition of 1692 noted, the Nakai

\(^{17}\) Tani, p. 163; Nishi, pp. 58-62, 73-82.

\(^{18}\) Quoted in ibid., p. 178.

\(^{19}\) Quoted in ibid., p. 192.

\(^{20}\) Ibid., pp. 178-188.
were forced to use their own income (to the extent of 200 ryō in 1691!) to make up the difference. At the recommendation of the Kyoto city magistrates, the Tokugawa government agreed to change the system, making it more stable than before. Though funding for building projects would never again be as copious as in the first half-century of Tokugawa rule, there was now greater regulation, and unexpected expenses did not fall on the shoulders of the Nakai, who were to be reimbursed promptly for expenditures. In addition, the Nakai were to work closely with the city magistrates on all aspects of their work, both on matters that directly affected them and on others such as payments to suppliers of goods and services by bid. Under this new system, the ties of personal patronage that had marked the Nakai’s relationship with the early Tokugawa shōguns was replaced with a less personal, more bureaucratic structure.

The real threat to the Nakai’s position as the favored architects and builders of the Tokugawa was not financial. By granting contracts for public works from bridges to buildings according to bids, the Bakufu threatened to make the Nakai irrelevant. Rather than acting as architects, overseers, and master craftsmen who designed, directed, and participated in all aspects of a building project, the Nakai were to become mere managers, whose control over the selection of building materials, workers, and the work itself was slight. This happened, but not completely. The reason was that although the Bakufu now granted contracts for public works such as bridges and canals based on bids, the reconstruction and repair of edifices such as Nijō castle, the imperial palace, and temples and shrines supported by the Tokugawa were carried out as before, by laborers, sawyers, blacksmiths, and carpenters whom the Nakai personally hired and directed, and who received daily wages and food stipends. In other words, the Nakai remained fully in charge of constructing important political and religious structures.

Nonetheless, the situation worsened in the eighteenth century and never improved. Neither Nijō nor any other Bakufu castles were rebuilt again and only the most basic repairs were carried out, and so master builders who had become vassals of the Tokugawa soon found themselves with little to do and with limited incomes. Some decided to abandon the building crafts. Two significant cases appear in the early eighteenth century. The first occurred in 1720, when Tsuru Buzaemon 鶴武左衛門, a building administrator under the Nakai, gave up that duty and took a position as a “river barge official” (kawabuneyaku 川船役). The Tsuru family was one of four (including the Kōra, Heinouchi, and Tsujiuchi 辻内) that occupied the weighty position of daityōryō (“great ridgepole”), and the family had an important pedigree: the first Tsuru carpenter had served Date Masamune 伊達政宗 (1567-1636), and was known for the temples and shrines he built and for his skill as a wood carver. Nonetheless his descendant Buzaemon quit because, as he explained, he “couldn’t make a living as a construction official.” Though we might be inclined to attribute this in part to the failings of a hereditary system of employment, which retained mediocre abilities but rewarded them badly (and unlike many positions in the bureaucracy, this was one which truly required talent), such was not the case with Tsuru Buzaemon. Evidence of his abilities is seen in the decision to send him to Edo in response to a request by the shogun, Yoshimune 吉宗 (1684-1751), for a skilled builder to work on the palace interior.

The second case occurred just two years later and involved the Fukui 福井 family, the head of which occupied the position of Nijō Castle Foreman. During the seventeenth century, the Fukui and “Fukui group” of daiku had kept busy in managing the upkeep of Nijō castle, an important duty supported with a large budget. But after several decades with little budget and few duties, the family head in 1722 decided to resign his post for one within the “Office of Kyoto Measurements” 京枡座 — the governmental organization that regulated measuring devices. In his place, two lesser daiku officials were assigned to

21 Ibid., p. 178.
22 Ibid., pp. 192-195.
23 Ibid., p. 204.
inspect Nijō palace annually for damage and conduct repairs if needed.25

Since major reconstruction of Nijō and other castles as well as most “public” edifices all but ended by 1700, one would think the Nakai too maintained only a nominal position as architects and master carpenters. What saved them were the public buildings associated with the imperial court. On the occasions when those burned or needed complete refurbishing (which occurred several times in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries), the old standards were followed, with the Nakai managing the projects and employing artisans and laborers as in the past.26 The reasons behind this Tokugawa attentiveness to the court’s physical needs are complex, but they lie in part in precedents set by Ieyasu, who greatly expanded the imperial palace soon after he came to power.27 Just as significant, such “service” to the court was a mark of prestige for the daiku and other officials involved, as reflected in a detailed record, complete with a sketch of participants, of the ridgepole raising at the imperial palace in 1613. Participants included Nakai Masakiyo (who was in charge of the ceremony) and the Kyoto magistrate, Itakura Katsushige 板倉勝重 (1545-1624), both men in appropriate court attire; Masakiyo’s top assistants, twenty in all; and thirty-six individuals representing the trades of the artisans involved, including blacksmiths, roof tilers, plasterers, lacquerers, sawyers, tatami makers, painters, cabinetmakers, and so on. It was a grand affair and an obvious honor for those invited to participate.28

The Fate of Common Carpenters

As we have seen, one result of the limited reach and personal nature of patronage was that the architects and builders most significantly affected by its permutations were the talented individuals (and their hereditary successors) who began the Tokugawa era linked to patrons with power and influence. Some, like the Nakai, were able to maintain privileged positions throughout the period. Others, like the Tsuru and Fukui, despite being highly favored by Tokugawa Ieyasu, were eventually relegated to meaningless positions that they chose to abandon. A rare example of a group of craftsmen, rather than individual craftsmen, who maintained ties of patronage in the Tokugawa era were those of Hamamatsu, Tōtōmi province. Hamamatsu was a castle town built by Tokugawa Ieyasu while he resided there from 1570 to 1586. Though Ieyasu later moved to Sunpu and then to Edo, Hamamatsu flourished during the early modern era because of its links to the regime’s founder. The privileged crafts and craftsmen of Hamamatsu were known as the “Three Products and Ten Crafts” (sanpin jūshoku), and consisted of those who dealt in fish, salt, and yeast, as well as carpenters, sawyers, tatami makers, tilers, workers in cypress (himonoshi), blacksmiths, plasterers, coopers, and roofers. As such, they served as the domain lord’s personal builders, conducting work as he requested and receiving exemption from the land tax and protection from competition. Though limited in scale, these privileges of patronage persisted where many others did not. And they were an important source of pride to the Hamamatsu daiku, some of whose descendants still possessed in the twentieth century gifts of pottery embossed with the hollyhock motif of the Tokugawa or documents from Ieyasu granting them residential land in Edo.29

If we look beyond the Tokugawa rulers and the individuals they patronized, we see a similar pattern. Patronized daiku were few in number and those like the Teshima 豊島 and Nosaka 野

25 Tani, p. 204.
26 Ibid., pp. 204-205.
27 For more on the ways that the early Tokugawa rulers supported and dealt with the court, see Lee Butler, Emperor and Aristocracy in Japan, 1467-1680: Resilience and Renewal (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002).
28 Nishi, pp. 45-49.
29 Ibid., pp. 148-152.
Sakura, hereditary craftsmen for Itsukushima Shrine from the 1600s to late 1800s, were fortunate indeed. Most families of daiku enjoyed no such luck after the building boom of monumental architecture ceased. As large "public" building projects of the seventeenth century — including castles and palaces, Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines, grand mausoleums, and splendid shoin — came to an end, the thousands of craftsmen and laborers who had worked under the direction of master builders lost a significant source of income and indirect (but very real) patronage. To survive as craftsmen, they had no choice but to turn to the open market, to peddle their wares and talents to anyone willing to pay. For them, the security of patronage was replaced by the vagaries of the commercial market.

Daiku gained some stability through local organizations known as kumi or groups. Like medieval guilds (za), each kumi worked to protect its interests by limiting the group’s numbers (thereby ensuring regular employment and income for all) and regulating the activities of its members for the good of the whole. A representative set of builders’ regulations, set forth by the Furuhashi group 古橋組 in Kawanishi province in 1805, can be summarized as follows. First, group members were enjoined to avoid encroaching on other members’ work. This appears in three articles: one was meant to protect daiku who enjoyed more or less permanent contracts with temples and shrines, a regular and periodically rich source of work and income; another concerned the fair posting of work bulletins, which were to be respected by builders who came late to a potential job; and the third was an exhortation to avoid bothering or interrupting daiku at work on a project, “even if one’s reasons for visiting are valid.”

Second, members were instructed as to where they could work and even the places they could frequent. Because the local building organizations depended above all on stability — in the number of daiku, the skill of the daiku, the size of the market in which they worked, and so on — it was imperative that members work within the group’s guidelines and physical boundaries. Thus if one desired to take a job outside the kumi’s established working region, one needed the group’s permission, and there was no guarantee it would be given. Not only did internal concerns need to be considered but so did external ones, such as the worry that an outside job might result in conflict with a neighboring workers’ group. The restrictions on the personal movement of individuals were of a different nature, but similar in their import, since the group’s image as a whole could be harmed, for example, by one individual’s visits to the pleasure quarters.

The third general injunction contained in the regulations concerns the place of apprentices and their treatment. Because apprentices represented the future membership of the kumi, their selection, training, and treatment was critical. One article thus exhorts members not to make the mistake of treating a temporary or unskilled worker as an apprentice, and another stipulates that apprentices must not be employed by anyone besides their masters. These local regulations reveal how far daiku, who at one time had depended heavily on the patronage of powerful warriors (or temples) for work and support, now sought stability through their group. Yet in at least one respect, the tie between craftsmen and warrior lords was not broken. This is reflected in the first article of these 1805 regulations:

The Furuhashi builders group is to keep foremost in mind the needs of the state (御公用), avoiding negligence and working in earnest on all matters. If we receive a building request from our lord (御公儀様), we are by all means to follow it.

Although this may appear as nothing more than a reminder to curry favor with the domain
lord, it was more than that. Local groups were licensed and regulated by the state, meaning domain governments or, in the case of Bakufu lands, the Nakai or other regional officials. Furthermore, many local kumi were heirs to bonds of patronage established decades before between their ancestors and the domain lord. The wording of the 1805 article suggests that the Furuhashi craftsmen no longer realized much benefit through this arrangement (perhaps the result of a parsimonious or heavily indebted lord), but we can assume that it had earlier been (and might again become, at least for a season), a valued source of work and income. And so the Furuhashi were bound, legally and dutifully, to those in power. In fact, the members of the Furuhashi kumi committed to the Nakai (who headed the bureau of building affairs, the Nakai Yakusho 中井役所, in the Home Provinces) to obey these self-proclaimed regulations; in short, they were sanctioned by the Bakufu.

For their part, the Nakai issued tallies or permits (at a cost), without which daiku were not allowed to conduct work. These, and a yearly “hammer fee” (tsuchidai 槌代) provided the Nakai the funds to administer their bureau. In return, these daiku of lengthy heritage and legitimate standing occasionally received summons to work on “public” projects. They also expected to benefit from governmental regulations that prohibited unlicensed, uncertified builders. The reality, however, was that governmental regulation of crafts and craftsmen became increasingly ineffective in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries — a casualty of the complexity of the marketplace and the limited reach of the Bakufu bureaucracy. Increases in unlicensed craftsmen — which were particularly common after earthquakes, floods, and fires, but also came with less dramatic disasters and simple demographic shifts — inevitably brought petitions from those holding tallies. They complained of “novice builders” (shiro’uto no daiku 素人の大工) and “unskilled builders” (muyaku daiku 無役大工) appearing in large numbers and ignoring regulations. A petition to the Nakai in 1817 contended that one effect of this intrusion was that tallied craftsmen might have difficulty complying with a summons to work on a public project (such as the imperial palace), if the novice builders went unregulated. Despite this warning, Bakufu responses by this time rarely took the form of anything more than injunctions against those working without license.

Architectural Pattern Books and the Marketplace

Clearly the vast majority of individuals engaged in the building arts after 1650 were independent, “non-patronized” daiku of the sort we have examined above. What, then, did they build, and for whom did they work? The answers seem obvious, since they surely built homes for those needing them and able to afford them. But that answer is simplistic and incomplete.

We know little about the types of residences that most Japanese lived in during the seven-

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35 Nishi, pp. 171-172.

36 Ibid., p. 173.
teenth century and earlier. This is particularly true for the homes of commoners but includes also those of warriors of all ranks beneath that of daimyo and their close associates. Archaeological work has provided insights into the size, location, and basic layout of homes in certain areas, but architectural details are known only through written descriptions as found in diaries and in illustrations such as “Folding Screens with Scenes in and around Kyoto” (rakuchū rakugaizu byōbu) and “Folding Screens with Scenes in Edo” (Edo zu byōbu). A cursory look at seventeenth-century screens of Kyoto and Edo gives the impression that commoners’ homes and shops differed from the elites’ homes more in size than in style, but a closer examination makes clear that such impressions are mistaken. In the first place, the screens fail to provide the detail necessary to make such a distinction. Most scholarly discussions about the homes of townspeople in these screens are limited to roof styles and the changes in roofs over time — because that is all that can be gleaned. And though the screens offer a limited view of the front room of shops facing the streets, nothing more of the interior is revealed. As to the size of commoners’ homes, scholars have shown that the shops and homes of towns- men in these screens are inaccurately represented; for example, fewer of them appear on a city block in the screens than actually existed.

What this points to is the extent of our ignorance about the architectural and building practices for most residential structures of the time. It is possible that many homes were more rudimentary and less uniform in style and construction than our impressions of extant structures — all of them built for the elite — would suggest. The best indication that things were changing appears in evidence from the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries in the form of architectural pattern books (hinagatabon 雛形本). These pattern books, which functioned as instruction manuals for builders and artisans, were largely unknown before the sixteenth century. The few in existence were manuscripts, passed on within families or shops as digests of secret transmissions (hidensho 秘伝書). More important were the practices learned on site and passed on by word of mouth. However, with the building boom that accompanied the late sixteenth-century reunification, changes occurred in the way daiku worked and managed themselves. On the one hand, the demand for builders quickly outran the number available, drawing many untrained builders into the field. On the other, powerful warriors patronized those whom they wanted to patronize, ignoring the hierarchies and practices that local guilds had established. The effects of these developments upon residential construction of townsmen’s and common warriors’ homes, which were likewise erected in in-


38 See, for example, the discussion of townsmen’s homes in Suzuki, pp. 74-77.

39 The best known instruction manual for builders and architects, written in 1610, is that of the Heinouchi family, entitled Shōmei. See the reference in note 13 to a recently transcribed and published edition. For further discussion of the widespread use of hidensho, see Nishiyama Matsumosuke, Edo Culture: Daily Life and Diversions in Urban Japan, 1600-1868 (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997), p. 11.
creasing numbers in the new age of peace, are not immediately evident. But it seems likely that many homes reflected the work of untrained builders, whose labor was in high demand in an era of increasing population and, for many, prosperity. The appearance of architectural pattern books after the mid-seventeenth century supports this contention because they point to a demand for careful engineering, thoughtful sizing and proportion, and high quality craftsmanship. The basic construction information contained in some of them were of ready use to untrained builders; and these books, appearing as they did in block-printed (and thus affordable) form, were available to craftsmen of even modest means.

The earliest block-printed pattern books appeared in the latter half of the seventeenth century, but the number increased dramatically in the early eighteenth century. The subjects addressed were Buddhist temples, Shinto shrines, teahouses, gates, and split-level shelves, as well as technical matters such as methods for calculating roof angles. These suggest that the early market for builders’ services, at least for structures requiring technical skill, was dominated by religious organizations and warriors of some means. An important pattern book from this period, *Daiku hinagata* 大工雛形 (1717), is illustrative of these qualities. The book consists of five volumes, each with an individual title and focus: “Shrine Pattern Book” (*Miya hinagata* 宮雛形), “Warrior-house Pattern Book” (*Buke hinagata* 武家雛形), “Teahouse Pattern Book” (*Sukiya hinagata* 数寄屋雛形), “Courtyard Implements Pattern Book” (*Kotsubo kiku* 小坪規矩), and “Courtyard Implements Pattern Book, Supplemented” (*Kotsubo kiku tsuka* 小坪規矩追加). Except for the first volume, this book was directed at warriors and their interests. The bulk of volume 2 consists of designs for gates, the massive and ostentatious symbols of influence that stood at the entrance to important warriors’ residential property, although the broad choice of gates allowed a mid-level warrior to mark his entrance properly as well. The remaining items depicted in this volume are a nō stage, a kickball ground, a grand room, an upper hall, and a horse stable. The nō stage and kickball ground reflected the warriors’ interest in engaging

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40 See, for example, the pattern books for builders and architects reproduced in Aoki Kunio et al., *Edo kagaku koten sōsho*, (Tokyo: Kōwa Shuppan, 1976-83), vols. 23 and 35. The pattern books here are *Daishō hinagata* 大匠雛形 (properly *Daiku hinagata* 大工雛形; the covers of the Naikaku Bunko versions that are reproduced here note the title incorrectly), *Sukiyahōhōshū* 数寄屋工法集, *Daishō tekagami* 大匠手鑑, *Hidensho zukai* 秘伝書図解, and *Daiku kiku shakushū* 大工規矩尺集.

41 In *Edo kagaku koten sōsho*, vol. 23, as *Daishō hinagata*. See ibid.
in refined arts and showing themselves the equals of the Kyoto courtiers. The grand room and upper hall were highly decorated places to entertain and impress one’s visitors; the architectural detailing there was intricate and of the finest quality. Patterns and descriptions of these items would have been indispensable to builders who had limited experience constructing them.

So why the horse stable? It was included because the other side of warrior culture emphasized a military past, dignified and resplendent. Any warrior worth his salt expected to be properly outfitted, and he was just as ready to spend funds on the accoutrements of military service as on refined arts. Indeed, volumes five and six of Daiku hinagata, dealing with “courtyard implements,” include patterns of items that would be of use to a warrior: stirrup stands, arrow stands, display cases for bows and arrows, hawk rests, a hawk house, a helmet stand, a wooden horse (for riding practice), a musket stand, and so forth. Most of the remaining items depicted in these volumes reflect literary and performing arts, including desks; reading stands; linked-verse tables; cases for brushes, inkstones, and paper used in calligraphy; flute cases; and the like. The ideals of the literary (bun 文) and the military (bu 武) were plainly represented here, providing craftsmen a view of warrior interests and the material items that supported those interests. Even though patronized daiku, skilled and knowledgeable as they were, presumably would have pur-


The next significant development in pattern book publishing occurred in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when volumes on residential doors and transoms began to appear. These did not displace the earlier works, but supplemented them, and the large number of styles, many of them of distinctly new design, suggests not only stylistic innovation but also a broader market. It seems likely that by this time both pattern-book publishers and daiku were aware that thoughtful design and fine craftsmanship had a place among an ever-growing percentage of the population, prosperous farmers and middling townsmen included. Furthermore, it is easy to imagine craftsmen showing clients these pattern books with their many styles, suggesting the types of doors, transoms, shelves, and so forth that they were able to construct.


Conclusion

Architecture, like so many other aspects of Japan’s early modern political, social, and economic structure, followed a path that diverged from that laid out by the sixteenth and seventeenth-century unifiers. Perhaps they expected the system to develop largely as it did, stable (at some levels, stale) and bureaucratized. Yet it is difficult to imagine them looking fondly on local lords who allowed castles lost in fires to go un-built, or on a society in which vitality resided more with the commercial classes than the ruling class, or in which the government’s building activities slowed to a trickle after a half-century of rule and remained that way for over two hundred years. In addition, they surely would have been surprised to see the positions of the descendants of architects they patronized reduced to meaningless bureaucratic posts or worse. The remarkable vitality of the patronized building arts during their day makes the contrast to later periods particularly sharp. Architects and related craftsmen had been patronized in ancient and medieval times, but never in such number and never within an era of such dramatic economic growth and social change. Because of these larger social and economic developments, the cessation of much of the architectural patronage after 1650 did not mean that the building arts contracted in any significant way. The demand for new structures—less imposing than the grand “public” edifices yet not simple and rudimentary as in the past—was enormous. And many of those creating that demand had the funds and taste for work of high quality. They expected their homes, gates and tea houses to mimic those erected by the elite of society, in style if not in size. The same was true for local communities desiring or needing a temple or shrine; it was only natural for them to expect their religious halls to resemble the structures raised through a wealth of resources.

As we saw, the way that craftsmen filled the wishes of patrons in the marketplace is found in pattern books, which served as primers for builders and showcases or samplers for potential buyers. Some of the pattern books could in fact have been used as plans, though not all provided the details necessary to plans, and some consisted primarily of prose instructions rather than illustrations. The pattern books were guides, providing sizes, proportions, and possibilities. Much was left to the craftsmen to determine, and the finished structure or piece depended ultimately upon their skill and care with a wide range of hand tools. Although the same qualities of skill

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42 For many of these, see Okamoto Mariko, ed., Kinsei kenchikusho — Zashiki hinagata, in Nihon kenchiku koten sōsho 5 (Kyoto: Tairyūdō Shoten, 1985).
and care determined the strength and appearance of the grand edifices of the Tokugawa era, pattern books for those structures, where they exist, are much different. Most significantly, they appear only in manuscript form, not as wood-block printed books. Thus they remained the possessions of a handful of families, the privileged and patronized daiku who specialized in such work. These pattern books were never published due to their specificity and complexity of design. There was no market for them, and no commercial press had an interest in printing them. Instead the market existed at a lower level, just below the wants of the narrow elite and extending broadly to a significant portion of the population. Architectural patronage was not dead by the late Tokugawa period, but the dynamism of the art was found outside of it, primarily in the homes of commoners, whose tastes and incomes became its driving force.

43 For illustrations of a number of these, see the reproductions in Kawata Katsuhiro, ed., Kinsei kenchikusho — Dōmiya hinagata, in Nihon kenchiku koten sōsho 3 (Kyoto: Tairyūdō Shoten, 1988).
For Faith and Prestige: Daimyo Motivations for Buddhist Patronage

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In an essay on kingship and charisma, Clifford Geertz once likened the use of fêtes, bestowals of gifts, processions, and other public acts associated with royal accession ceremonies to the “spreading of scent” by widely ranging wolves and tigers.1 While perhaps a crude equation of culturally and religiously inspired human rituals with the socio-biology of animals, Geertz drew upon this juxtaposition to note that claimants to royal power have regularly used public displays of authority and munificence to ceremonially “mark” their presence in newly gained lands, and thereby reinforce their claims to legitimacy. Geertz’s analysis centers on the performative aspects of this ritual marking, but he draws implicit attention to the materiality of these processes as well. Whether in England, India or North Africa, his descriptions of such events as Elizabeth I’s procession through London, or Mulay Hasan’s ill-fated tour of Morocco in 1893, illustrate the role of rituals and the physical objects they produced as vehicles for the symbolic imposition of royal marks of domination.2 Furthermore, it is evident that once touched by the ritual context, these material media were transformed into lingering reminders of royal authority and the royal presence that continued to influence local perceptions long after the ruler physically left the scene of enactment.

In this brief essay I will use this notion of ritually-derived physical marks to consider some social implications of patronage in early modern Japanese society. More specifically, I will look at two interrelated set of practices, one of which is concerns warrior reliance upon ceremonies and objects to express authority and prestige. There were a number of venues for such activities within the Tokugawa warrior status community (daimyo–vassal meetings, marriage rites, and processions, for example), but for my present purposes, I will examine instances of daimyo patronage of Buddhist temples. As we are so often reminded by secondary scholarship on this period, early modern warrior–Buddhist relations were influenced by long–standing undercurrents of tension and mistrust. From the very advent of Tokugawa rule, warriors reacted to such unease by coupling extensive regulation of temple communities with the suppression of clerics whose doctrines and policies denied shogunal and daimyo assertions of authority.3 The growing influence of contending systems of thought (Nativism, neo-Confucianism, Shinto) among elite warriors further strained the relationship. As a result,

2 Specifically gifts, clothing that reflected hierarchical relationships, elaborately decorative trappings, food, art, and architecture.
in some domains such as Mitō, Okayama and Aizu, warrior associations with the Buddhist clergy became tenuous, if not hostile.\(^4\)

Such antipathy, however, never fully eradicated a legacy of elite support for Buddhist institutions that dates back to the introduction of Buddhism to Japan.\(^5\) Set against this cultural backdrop, many warriors, from the Shogun to lower order vassals, continued to patronize temples as one means for honoring the origins and continued identity of their respective houses. Daimyo and other warrior elites with sufficient resources, or an interest in the socio-political value of rituals, also relied upon Buddhist auspices for conspicuous expressions of wealth and stature. The political and cultural capital acquired by such patrons (danna 檀那) would then resonate with other members of the broader warrior milieu.

The ritual presence of samurai patronage in Buddhist venues also represented warrior ascendency over the clergy and other status groups. This expressive value could be heightened by a temple’s allure amongst the general populace. In such instances, commoners who came to worship a popular image or enjoy other entertainments on temple grounds might not have full access to warrior graves or donated altar implements, but the “known yet partially unseen” existence of these artifacts added an aura of implicit power to both the temple and its warrior patrons. For these reasons, my focus on symbolic expressions via Buddhist means allows me to consider the role of other social communities in early modern warrior marking processes.

The creation of such marks was not without complications — a point I shall examine in the second section with a brief discussion of commoner methods for patronizing the Buddhist clergy. Recent studies such as Herman Oom’s account of village life and Edward Pratt’s examination of wealthy peasants have extensively documented the divisive social and economic stratifications that pervaded commoner communities.\(^6\) Not surprisingly, within this context commoner elites sought means to create and place marks of authority upon their own spheres of activity — a process that could include efforts to appropriate forms of warrior identity.\(^7\) In terms of their religious practices, peasants and townspeople were compelled by Tokugawa regulations to patronize Buddhist institutions for certain services. At the same time, this mandated patronage ensured commoner access to the same fundamental ritual formats and derivative marks utilized by warrior houses. Thus while these hierarchically distinct communities shared similar religious objectives (e.g. both daimyo and peasants sponsored funerals and prayers for rain), warrior elites expected commoners to reflect their lower status by modestly scaling their own ritual performances and

\(^4\) Tamamuro Fumio has extensively covered the anti-Buddhist policies of these domains in many of his works; for a representative example, see *Nihon bunkyōshi: kinsei 日本仏教 - 近世* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1987), 105-166.


\(^7\) For example, in the area now defined by Tokigawa village 都幾川村 in Saitama Prefecture, village headmen strove to obtain surnames, the right to bear swords, and to wear the kamishimo 袋 combination of hakama and shoulder wings. See Tokigawamurashi hensan inkkai 都幾川村史編さん委員会, *Tokigawamurashi tsūshihen 都幾川村史通史編* (Tokigawamura, Saitama Prefecture: Tokigawamura, 2001), 444-445.
marking practices. However, since Buddhist temples activities constituted a nexus of shared warrior and commoner religious interests, codes and regulations did not always forestall commoner efforts to acquire, or mimic, religiously constituted manifestations of warrior prestige in their own modes of social definition.

It is natural to ask whether faith had any value as a motivational force amidst of all this political maneuvering. Patricia Graham’s article in this issue offers clear evidence that it did — an assessment that is supported by several other recent studies of early modern commoner patronage for religious institutions.8 In comparison, there is far less research on the daimyo and other warriors as people of faith. It is therefore difficult to make generalized claims over the degree of samurai belief in Buddhist ceremonies for the production of merit (kudoku 功徳) that could improve one’s karmic lot in subsequent lives. The example of daimyo patronage by the Kishū Tokugawa collateral house that I give below reveals the levels of warrior adherence might not be as low as Tokugawa period anti-Buddhist polemicists would have us believe. As the art historian Gregory Levine recently observed, written inscriptions on religious art may reflect the inscriber’s sense of affiliation with particular objects and the institutions that maintain them.9 In the context temple patronage by lay elites, the ritualized marking of Buddhist temples by warriors constituted a similar inscribing process writ large.

That being said, an expanded study of warrior faith is beyond the scope of this article. In keeping with the theme of patronage, I instead will juxtapose several examples from warrior and non-warrior sources to briefly consider how formalized modes for expressing faith and prestige via acts of religious patronage could simultaneously establish and subvert the social boundaries that defined Tokugawa Japan.

The Daimyo as Patron

In the early modern period, the Buddhist clergy’s foremost function in samurai ritual systems was the performance of memorial services. For the Tokugawa house, the Tendai cleric Tenkai 天海 played a key role in the apotheosis of leyasu into Tōshō daigongen 東照大権現, and both Kan’ei-ji 寛永寺 in Ueno and the Jōdo temple Zōjōji 増上寺 were caretakers of the cremated remains of other Tokugawa Shoguns, their wives, concubines and children.10 Several other prominent houses among the “outer” (tozama 外様) daimyo also employed a mixture of Buddhist and Shinto motifs to honor their dead. The Shimazu of Satsuma for one had daimyo grave markers inscribed with the deceased’s Buddhist posthumous titles on the front, and their Shinto deity names (shingō 神号) on the re-


10 Herman Ooms discusses the influence of the Tendai cleric Tenkai 天海 in the process to legitimize Tokugawa authority through religious symbolism in Tokugawa Ideology (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), especially 173-186.
verse.¹¹

Other daimyo houses did not replicate such deifications of their own immediate ancestors, but they did avail themselves of opportunities to use funerary rites and memorial services to similar ends. Operating in a world where the household constituted a fundamental social unit, the ancestral memories were integral to the identity of the living.¹² This held true for all social groups, but it was particularly vital to warriors who derived political legitimacy from the legacies of their late sixteenth and early seventeenth-century antecedents.¹³ Under such circumstances, ritual processes for ancestor veneration constituted an important element for maintaining continual links with a revered past. Furthermore, the ancestors of most daimyo families may not have been universal deities like Tōshō daigongen, but they were nevertheless spirits (rei 墓) worthy of veneration. Given the close correlation between daimyo family identity and domain integrity, memorial rites for deceased lords accordingly functioned as ritualized settings for daimyo expressions of public authority (kōgi 公儀) over vassals, clerics, and subordinate commoners.

Japanese ideals of ancestor veneration derive from a number of sources, and both Shinto and Confucian ritualists were eventually able to offer their own funerary ceremonies, yet Buddhist institutions by and large dominated this area of religious activity. For commoners, Buddhism’s near monopoly over mortuary practices derived in part from the Tokugawa Shogunate’s utilization of mandated temple registration of the whole population (terauke seido 寺請制度) to further its anti-Christian and anti-Fujifuse不受不施 policies. This stipulation did not directly affect the daimyo as they were not specifically ordered to register. Instead, their patronage of Buddhism generally stemmed from earlier family practices, the tradition of temples being maintained by kinship groups (ujidera 氏寺),¹⁴ and the cultural heritage of elite support for religious institutions noted above. Many daimyo thus acknowledged a particular Buddhist institution as their family mortuary temple (bodaiji 菩提寺), and as patrons they offered fiscal support in exchange for the performance of funerals and memorial services. Therefore, while daimyo did not own their memorial temple precincts, they did use these institutions as both repositories for the spiritual and physical legacy of their house, and as templates for the ritual reaffirmation of their house’s identity.

The material legacy of these events was multi-folding. Within the altar areas of temple halls, the clergy would place memorial tables (shéi 位牌) that were inscribed with posthumous titles (hōmyō 法名 [“Dharma name”] or kaimyō 咎名 [“precept name”]) and covered with black lacquer and gold leaf. Warrior titles often consisted of a four character personal name, and a set elaborate


¹² For the importance of the household as the fundamental social unit, see Mizubayashi Takeshi 水林竹彪, Hōkensai no saihen to Nihonteki shakai no kakuritsu 封建制の再編と日本社会の確立 (Tokyo: Yamagawa Shuppan, 1987), 255. Also see Mark Ravina, Land and Lordship in Early Modern Japan (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999), 37-40.

¹³ Ravina, Land and Lordship, 2.
prefixes and suffixes that indicated the individual’s stature. The “cloister” (ingō 院号) prefix and “great layman” / “great sister” (daikoji/daishi 大居士/大姉) suffixes (igō 位号) in particular conferred the greatest status. In the case of domain lords and their family members, even the cloister prefix was modified with the addition of the character for “lord” (dono 殿). The longer and more elaborate names were intended to reflect the merit acquired by the deceased through their faith, but they also symbolized the honor conferred upon the departed by the remaining family. In addition to the tablets, temples might have altar implements and decorative hangings with a patron’s house crest (mon 紋), and a registry of the dead (kakochō 過去帳) in which abbots noted posthumous names, dates of death, and family relations. These records, in turn, became the basis for monthly and annual memorial services. In effect, the display and production of such items constituted a Buddhist equivalent for the lineage charts (keizu 系図 or kafu 家譜) and other proofs of origins (yuisho 由緒) that a family might deploy to establish its social standing.

To cite an illustrative example of such daimyo-temple interaction, in 1767 the head of the Echizen Matsudaira 越前松平 house, Tomonori 朝知, became the daimyo of the Kawagoe 川越 domain. However, he soon after died in the fifth month of 1768, and due to previous transfers between holdings, the family did not have a set mortuary temple. Accordingly, domain administrators working on behalf Naotsune 直恒 (Tomonori’s six year old son and heir) established a funerary relationship with Kita’in 喜多院, a prominent Tendai temple in Kawagoe with connections to the main Tokugawa house. The abbot bestowed upon Tomonori the posthumous name of Ryōjuindono 霊鷲院殿 [cloister name prefix] Nenge Bishō 扇華微笑 [personal name] Daikoji 大居士 [rank-name suffix]. In the years following the main funeral, Naotsune paid for monthly services memorial services, and made periodic visits to the temple to pray for his father.

Outside the main buildings, yet still within the temple precincts, the Kita’in community maintained the actual gravesites. While few daimyo could, or would, aspire to the elaborate mausolea erected for the main Tokugawa house at Zōjōji or Kan’eiji, their burial grounds (reibō 霊廟) were decidedly a cut above those of their vassals and commoners. The Matsudaira patronage of Kita’in resulted in the placement of Tomonori’s and other daimyo graves immediately behind the main hall, with each individual’s site containing large stone markers, walls and gates that defined

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15 As “rank names,” suffixes are intended to reflect the degree of the deceased person’s faith. For explanations of posthumous names, see Tamamuro Fumio, Sōshiki to danka 葬式と檀家 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1999), 191-192, and Williams, “Representations of Zen,” 232-237.

16 The Tokugawa religious advisor Tenkai was the abbot of Kita’in in the early 1600s.

17 Data on Naotsune’s activities are listed in Shioiri Ryōzen 塩入亮善 and Udaka Yoshiaki 宇高良哲, eds., Kita’in nikkan 喜多院日鑑, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Bunka shoin, 1986); for example, see pp. 167-169; 188; 241-242 (thirteenth year memorial service, 1780); 309-312 (donation of votive sutra copies and services for the seventeenth memorial anniversary); 340-341 (monthly service); 429 (twenty-third year memorial rites); 483 (a private visit to the grave by Naotsune), and 492 (a letter of appreciation from domain officials for the abbot’s offering of prayers at Tomonori’s tomb).

the perimeters of the grave. In front were a host of votive stone lanterns (ishidōrō 石灯籠) on which vassals inscribed their own family names. This set up was not inherently unique, and a somewhat similar arrangement exists at the Ōkawachi Matsudaia 大河内松平 graves at Heirinji 平林寺 in Nobidome 野火止 (modern Niiza City 新座市, Saitama Prefecture). The only real divergence between the Kita’in and Heirinji sites is their overall layout: in contrast to the incorporation of the Echizen graves into the former’s central precincts, the Ōkawachi mau-
seola are set back from the main temple area, and lanterns line the approaches. 20 Although the Japanese did not entomb servants along with the dead lords, these grave–lantern arrangements do evoke in ash and stone the image of a daimyo seated above the serried ranks of his loyal retainers, and thereby marked the temples with the latent aura of daimyo authority. 21

The ritualized placement of the dead was a certain source of marking, but Buddhist practices for the living could also offer similar opportunities. Genze riyaku 現世利益 is generic nomenclature for a spectrum of ceremonies for gaining “worldly benefits.” In Tokugawa Japan, this genus of ritual activity included prayers for rain (amagoi 雨乞), good harvests, and the prevention of disease. Unlike the mortuary trade, Bud-


21 The differences in grave–precinct proximity should not be taken as either an indication of differing degrees of patron interest, or of temple estimations for the two daimyo houses. In contrast to the Echizen Matsudaia tendency to establish new temple ties with every domain transfer, the Ōkawachi branch maintained their relationship with Heirinji throughout the early modern period. See Kimura, et al., Hanshi daijiten, vol. 1, 605 and 655; vol. 2, 393, vol. 4, 238-239. This did not apply, however, to other family members, and the Ōkawachi also patronized Jōdo and Sōtō temples for the burial of deceased wives and children. See Tamamura and Hanuki, Heirinjishi, 133-135. Takatori, et al., also comments on the hierarchical ordering of votive stone lanterns before the Mōri house graves at Tōgenji in Hagi; Kokumin bukkyō no nichī, 111.

22 Date, Nihon shūkyō seidōshi, 380.

23 Yasuda Hiroko 安田寛子, “Takaosan Ya-
kuōin to Kishūhan: Yakuōin monjo no shokan to yuishosho wo chūshin ni” 高尾山薬王院と紀州藩 - 薬王院文書の書簡と由緒書を中心に, in Murakami Motoi, ed., Kinsei Takosanshi no kenkyū 近世高尾山の研究 (Tokyo: Meicho Shuppan, 1998), 261. Yakuōin archives contain an 1857 document that claims Kishū patronage began with Tokugawa Yorinobu, the domain’s founder. However, for reasons noted below, Yasuda suspects this ascription reflects the efforts of late Edo abbots to reinforce their ties to the Kishū domain, ibid., 262.
Kishū support occurred during the reign of the eighth daimyo Shigenori. Acting through his vassal Asai Shōzōemon, between 1772 and 1775, Shigenori made a number of requests for the “Eight thousand stick fire ceremony” (hasenmai goma kuyō 八千枚護摩供養) and other prayer rites to be performed before the image of Izuna Gongen (飯縄権現). Yakuūin’s primary deity for votive services. Shigenori’s concerns centered on the physical health of himself and his family. We thus see petitions for prayers and amulets (omamori 御守) to ward off illness, and to ensure the safe birth of his children. In compensation for these services, Shigenori usually offered the temple ten to thirty pieces of silver. In 1773 he gave the temple a further 200 ryō in gold to support the abbot’s trip to Kyoto along with a request that the prelate offer prayers for the dai-myō at various religious sites on the way.

Domain records indicate Shigenori may have prone to periods of mentally instability that were marked by sudden outbursts of violence, and the stigma of his personality may have adversely affected the domain’s attitude towards the Kishū support for the temple. Following Shigenori’s abdication in 1775, the volume of correspondence declines to at most one or two letters per year. Then in 1786, the domain claimed fiscal difficulties necessitated the termination of its patron-age. This hiatus in the Yakuūin - Kishū relationship continued until 1797 when the abbot Shūjin 秀神 strove to revive Tokugawa support with an earnest correspondence campaign. Drawing upon examples of past munificence, Shūjin’s efforts convinced the domain to once again request votive services. These renewed connections continued until the end of the early modern era, but there is little indication of the personal fervor that marked Shigenori’s support. It may very well be that subsequent daimyo patronage stemmed as much from a sense of tradition as from individual faith on the part of the daimyo and his family.

For the temple’s part, the reaffirmation of its connections with this collateral Tokugawa house enhanced its own prestige. It also offered a degree of elite samurai support in the face of late eighteenth and early nineteenth century warrior efforts to impose increasingly stringent social controls. From another perspective, the Kishū revival of its patronage can be read as a desire to “re-mark” the temple by reaffirming the house’s legacy of munificence, but this chronology reveals an interesting reversal relational dynamics. Whereas the daimyo once relied upon Yakuūin to pray for their well-being, by the end of the era the temple sought similar benefits from the domain.

The temple’s concern for the material legacy of its Kishū patronage reveals its desires for continued support. In contrast to the more durable stone monuments at Heirinji and Kita’iin, this Tokugawa house expressed its identity through gifts of cloth and paper goods bearing the hollyhock (aoi 葵) crest. The most frequently mentioned gifts in late Edo temple records are three sets of altar curtains and ornaments (tochō 戸帳 and mizuhiki 水引) of red and gold brocade and dark blue damask that were bestowed on the temple prior to 1711. In response to Yakuūin’s requests, the house subsequently replaced them in the Shōtoku period (1711 - 1716), in 1752, and even in 1791 (i.e., during the interval when the daimyo was not requesting services). Other donations included an image of Fudōmyōō 不動明王 painted by Tokugawa Munemasa 宗将; two white curtains 白幕; sets of paper lanterns (1824) 持燈; additional altar hangings from one Take-hime 竹姫 (1862); two crest-bearing robes (kesa 袈裟) for ritual use; a Fudō mandala 不動尊曼陀羅; handwritten scriptures; and a Fudōmyōō statue in a crested shrine that came paired with an altar for

25 TSM, 1: 474.
26 TSM, 1: 488.
27 Yasuda, “Takaosan to Kishūhān,” 255.
28 Temple inventories for hollyhock marked items are in TSM 1: 127-131, 502-506, 511-512; TSM 3: 537-539.
ritual performances (see Table One). The clerics used the white curtains specifically for house requested services, but the item lists note that the abbots did not apply such limitations to other articles in the temple’s possession. The temple accordingly displayed some crested items to visitors at the Main Hall on a daily basis, and the abbots appropriated certain paper lanterns for their own personal use at non-Kishū related events. At least in one instance, the temple also strove to maximize the visual value of these Tokugawa holdings beyond its precinct boundaries when it sought daimyo permission to include them among its treasures in an 1861 public exhibition of the usually hidden Izuna Gongen statue at Edo’s Ekōin 回向院. It is not clear, however, whether the Tokugawa acceded to the request.

Beyond Control? The Problematic Aspects of Commoner Access to Buddhist Marking Processes

These deployments reflect Yakuōin’s esteem for its Kishū-related objects, but the petition to display crested items during a public exhibition draw attention the potentially problematic aspects of material marking. Every symbol system for the creation of distinction contains the seeds of its own dilution or subversion. The codification of exclusion, for example, creates boundaries to be overcome or adopted, and markers for imposing or representing elevated prestige — whether they are political, cultural, or religious in origin — can become objects desired by those who might not otherwise have access to such cultural capital. When this occurs, ritually produced items can be taken out of context, and used in ways unintended by their makers. The Tokugawa and other domains were certainly cognizant of this trend, and officials strove to prevent or restrain inappropriate commoner access to silk clothing and other markers of warrior status prerogatives with sumptuary laws. Nevertheless, peasants, townsmen, and even clerics themselves were on the prowl for elite objects and materials to enhance their own stature.29

Unlike their medieval predecessors, early modern Buddhist institutions did not foment anti-warrior sentiments or movements. Indeed, to the contrary, the clergy appropriated the vestiges of warrior affluence to their own ends. Yakuōin’s display of temple treasures in 1861 afforded one such opportunity: if successful with the petition, the temple could have reaped profits from the fee-paying visitors attracted to the Tokugawa artifacts among its treasures. By the mid-eighteenth century, the Shogunate was increasingly willing to allow temple treasure displays and other fund-raising drives to ease from its early policy of financially supporting prominent Buddhist and Shinto institutions.31 But there were limits, and senior officials were certainly wary of any situation in which symbols of the Tokugawa house might be cast into the raucous world popular entertainment. Upon occasion Tokugawa officials moved to restrict questionable usage, and one 1768 mandate to the inspectors (ōmetsuke 大目付) stated:

1. women in the household [gojochū 御女中] should not carelessly give crested items to shrines and temples for public displays [kaichō] and other daily uses;
2. members of the three Tokugawa houses [gosanke 御三家] and other daimyo should not grant these items except to their house mortuary temple;
3. altar decorations and other items should not be used for an individual’s religious services.32

29 TSM 1: 511. Such events were known as kaichō 開帳 (“opening the curtain”).
32 Date, Nihon shūkyō seidoshi, p. 462.
Both this order and another ruling the following year required temples and shrines to register their crested objects with warrior officials.\textsuperscript{33}

These efforts, however, did not necessarily result in the denial of crested items to clerical holders. In 1836, for example, Yakuōin received verification of the paper lanterns from the Tokugawa Shogunate’s own Temple and Shrine Magistracy, even though the temple itself admitted that its abbots used these lanterns for non-Tokugawa related events.\textsuperscript{34} This play between actual and intended usage indicates the ambiguous nature of hollyhock gifts for the Shogunate: they reflected the presence of the Tokugawa houses and their munificence, but once beyond the direct control of Tokugawa officials, they could become problematic objects.\textsuperscript{35}

The profusion of mortuary rites and artifacts in the early modern period posed similar problems for warrior regulators, but for different reasons. Like their warrior contemporaries, commoners developed their own forms of patronage for Buddhist funerary services during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries — a trend that helped to fuel the continual construction of small temples in villages and towns.\textsuperscript{36} As a result, the late Sengoku period erosion of Buddhist institutional independence at the hands of increasingly powerful warrior suzerains was partially offset by the dramatic expansion of institutional Buddhism’s presence in commoner venues. The Tokugawa Shogunate’s usage of temple registration (terakuke 寺請) to both control non-warrior populations and to stamp out heterodox religious movements thus in one sense represents a practical adoption of already established patterns of lay religious patronage. The main difference between medieval and early modern modes of lay support was, of course, the fact that the Tokugawa mandates transformed every commoner household into temple parishioners (danka 檜家) regardless of their social status, economic conditions, or religious preferences. What is more, it was nearly impossible for lay families to cut these parishioner ties. Disgruntled commoners therefore lived under conditions of coerced patronage.\textsuperscript{37}

The net result of such policies towards the commoner and religious regulation was the creation of a multi-layered legal structure in which the Shogunate and domains strove to limit Buddhist institutional growth with one body of codes and prohibitions while simultaneously appointing clerics to oversee commoner compliance with other strictures.\textsuperscript{38} For most peasants and townsfolk, the Tokugawa reliance upon non-warrior auspices in governing processes was common in early modern Japan. Mizubayashi describes the early modern system as one of “indirect” control of religious affairs.
men, the material effects of such religious patronage reflected their general position within the status hierarchy. Aside from the orders pertaining to temple registration, and the general prohibitions against excessive expenditures found in codes at every regulatory level, the Tokugawa did not issue detailed restrictions against lay patronage practices until the nineteenth-century. Nonetheless, there was a body of accumulated daily practices and implicit understandings that generally defined appropriate levels of commoner marking. In contrast to the ornate reminders of permanent affiliations, the average peasant family usually received simpler names for its deceased relatives that it would display on far less imposing tablets and stones. Even so, the costs for such patronage were not cheap, and there is ample evidence that even less imposing names might still amount to several pieces of silver. For members of outcast groups like the *kawata* (皮多) who were engaged in leather production and other reviled occupations, the degradation they suffered in life followed them to their graves, because the characters in their posthumous names made direct reference to their lowly social position.

in which the Tokugawa claimed ultimate authority, but often left the daily practice of governance to intermediates (daimyo, peasant elites and the Buddhist clergy, for example). See his *Hōkensei no saihen*, 279-280. I discuss the implications of this system on Buddhist institutional practices in Vesey, “The Buddhist Clergy and Village Society.”


Many observers have noted the deleterious impact of access to easy money on clerical morals, and there is no denying the potential for Buddhist institutional abuse of hapless lay families who were forced to register. That being said, a singular emphasis on clerical malevolence yields a simplistic interpretation of temple patronage that ignores the pervasive influence of commoner agency in clerical-lay relations. As in the case of warrior motives, the degree of commoner belief in the doctrinal underpinnings of Buddhist methods for producing memorial markers is not always clear, but throughout the early modern period, temple auspices did offer a viable means for expressions of loss, respect, and hopes for a better future. Both Yakuōin and Kitain effectively tapped into these sentiments to become popular votive sites. In Yakuōin’s case, the temple expanded its support base beyond warrior patronage with the public treasure exhibitions noted above, and through a network of lay believers in the southern Kantō plains. Kita’in as well used special events to foster lay votive support, with the most generous expression being an impres-


See Tamamuro Taijō, *Soshiki bukkyō* 差別集団, 262-291. The locus classicus for many modern perceptions of Tokugawa clerical decline is in Tsuji Zenmosuke, *Nihon bukkyō* 日本仏教史, vol. 10 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1955). Tamamuro Fumio offers a particularly striking example of such abuse in his account of a 1786 incident of a Sōtō school cleric named Tetsumei who sexually forced himself upon the wife of one parishioner; see his *Sōshiki to danka*, 208-218.

sive donation of stone statues representing the Buddha’s disciples (rakan) by a peasant named Takezaemon in the 1820s. Therefore, while temple-commoner affiliations were not always the result of lay desires, we should posit at least a degree of willing patronage on the part of many peasant and urban communities regardless of the potential inequities inherent to mandated patronage. This is a point made by Patricia Graham as well in her study of Naritasan. On a more socio-political level, if some Buddhist were rapacious purveyors of funerary markers, then they were matched by equally rapacious customers among emerging entrepreneurial peasants (gōnō豪農) and wealthy townsmen who desired their own cultural capital and enhanced familial legitimacy through displays of ritual excess. Such appropriations of mortuary and memorial forms were not on the scale seen at Kita’in or Heirinji, but ambitious individuals did exploit regulatory loopholes to utilize the same basic ritual forms employed by warrior families, and thereby set themselves apart from other commoners. In concrete terms, these elites often tried to purchase expensive cloister titles for the death names of family members. They also strove to reflect their social prominence by inviting many clerics to officiate at their funerals and subsequent memorial rites, and by providing large meals to attendees. Depending on the burial traditions in their villages and wards, wealthy commoners might also purchase relatively larger grave markers, and place them in close proximity to important buildings at their mortuary temples.

As in the case of the daimyo patronage, such ritual performances offered prominent commoners a venue for engaging in the cultural politics inherent to the production and display of items for reflecting a house’s heritage. The extent to which commoners were willing to pursue Buddhist-derived markings is evident in a brief case study of one peasant’s effort to acquire a religiously based expression of elevated social stature. In 1738, the father of the headman of Nakatome village 那留村 in the Kawagoe domain, one Heiemon 平右衛門, petitioned the abbot of his house’s mortuary temple of Takufuji 多福寺 to use a cloister title in his eventual posthumous name. To reinforce his request, he produced a mortuary tablet bearing the honorary prefix “Ryōkōin了光院” — a name which Heiemon had purchased from a Shugendô cleric in Kawagoe. The temple community was not opposed to granting certain rank-names to esteemed peasants, but the abbot Tōgen 東原 denied the peti-

45 Details pertaining to one public event at Kata’in managed shrine are in Udaka and Shioiri, Kita’in nikkan vol. 2, 170-249. The statue donation is in ibid., vol. 5, 363,429, and 434.
46 The popularization of funerary ritual among commoner elites is surveyed in Ōtō Osamu 大藤修, Kinsei nōmin to ie-mura-kokka 近世農民と家・村・国家 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1996), 293-397.
47 Shintani Takanori’s 新谷尚紀 analysis of a “dual grave” (ryōbo両墓) system at the Shin-gon temple of Fukōmyōji 普光明寺 in Niiza 新座 (Saitama Prefecture) is indicative of this point. In this burial format, the site for memorial rites differs from the actual grave. Most scholars ascribe this bifurcation to lay desires for honoring the spirit of dead without the potential of coming into contact with the impurities of the dead. According to Shintani’s analysis of practices in Niiza, this facet of the dual grave system was overlaid with an increasing desire on the part of commoner patrons to heighten their social standing by locating family memorial markers near Fukōmyōji’s main hall. See his Ryōbōse to takaikan両墓制と他界観 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1991), 125-199.
48 Kurushima Hiroshi discusses the value of yuisho in village affairs in Kurushima and Yoshida Kinsei no shakai shūdan, 3-38.
49 The following account appears in Miyoshimachishi kenkyūkai三芳町史研究会, ed., Miyoshimachishi shiryōhen II Tafukuji oshō kiroku三芳町資料編 II 多福寺和尚記録 (Miyoshimachi, Saitama Pref.: Miyoshimachi, 1987), 56-61. I examine this event in greater detail in Vesey, “The Buddhist Clergy and Village Society,” 376-383. Tafukuji was a Rinzai Zen institution.
tion by stating that temple policy denied elite prefixes to non-samurai. To bolster his stance, Tōgen claimed Heiemon’s paltry support for the temple did not merit such recognition from Tafukuji. Furthermore, as a Buddhist abbot, he was not inclined to acknowledge any title pandered by a cleric from a different religious community.

Momentarily deflected, but not firmly dissuaded, in 1739 Heiemon attempted a negotiated settlement: in exchange for not displaying the tablet in public, would Tōgen keep it within Takufuji’s altar area? The abbot refused once again, and in a fit of pique, Heiemon cast aside the tablet as he departed.

At this juncture Tōgen relented and accepted the proposal. Although it is not clear why he did so, I suspect his reversal reflects a degree of unease with his position in the village. He was not native to the region, and was only in his third year as Tafukuji’s abbot. Therefore, while he technically was operating within his rights as the mortuary temple abbot in denying the title, he may have wished to avoid antagonizing Heiemon’s prominent family. This would particularly apply to Heiemon’s son who by virtue of his position as village headmen maintained his own form of legal authority within the domain’s administrative apparatus.

While Tōgen’s response apparently appeased Heiemon, it also established a new precedent that at least one other family exploited to garner a cloister title for a deceased relative. Responding to this gradual degradation of its prerogatives, Tafukuji used Heiemon’s death in 1759 as an opportunity to regain temple control over its own posthumous marking traditions, and reassert its position over its patrons. By this date, another cleric named Ryōgaku 亮嶽 occupied the abbacy, while the daily affairs were handled by a subordinate, Kōzan 湖山. With the formal abbot’s support, on the eve of Heiemon’s funeral Kōzan once again reiterated temple policy to demand the erasure of the cloister title from Heiemon’s memorial tablet. The family responded both with a point of honor (to scar the tablet would in effect scar their good name), and a petition by the Kawagoe Shugen cleric. Ultimately, other parishioners weighed in to negotiate a final settlement: in exchange for displaying the cloister marked tablet on the altar during the rites, Kōzan would not chant out loud the offending sections of posthumous name, and the other lay families would never again press the temple to accept cloister titles derived from non-Buddhist sources.

The value of Heiemon’s story lies in the ironies it reveals. In this case, neither the peasants nor the clerics denied the fundamental nature or structure of early modern temple-commoner patronage, but the vectors of coercive power went in both directions. Ultimately the Tafukuji abbots prevailed, yet clearly peasant desires to generate elitist markings could be quite strong. Secondly, the Shogunate and domain administrators often relied upon peasants such as Heiemon’s son to maintain order in village affairs, and to ensure the overall stability of status based identities. Yet, as the events at Tafukuji reveal, these same peasant elites were often in the best position to garner for themselves religiously derived appurtenances that mirrored samurai practices. What is more, they did so under the auspices of a warrior mandated system. Eventually the Shogunate did try to limit such excesses in 1831 by restricting grave heights to 4 shaku 尺 (approximately 132 cm.); by denying commoners the use of cloister prefixes and certain suffixes; and by limiting the number of clerics attending rites for commoners to no more

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50 The abbots bestowed the “layman” and “great sister” titles upon prominent parishioners who had manifested their faith generous support, and whose families were willing to pay six to ten ryō in gold. Lower down on the scale, the “believer” (shinja 信者 for men and and shinmyo 信女 for women) titles could be had for two to four ryō. For most peasants, the usual suffixes were “entrant to meditation” (zenjōmon 禪定門) and “meditating nun” (zenjōni 禪定尼).

51 Although both Buddhist and Shugendō temples offered names to their patrons in recognition of lay support, the Buddhist monopoly over mortuary practices extended to the titles on posthumous markers such as tablets, graves, and registries of the dead. In this case, Tōgen was under no obligation to accept Heiemon’s Shugendō derived ingō.
than ten. Yet despite such stipulations, wealthy commoner patronage of death and family related rituals for elite residual marks continued to the end of the Tokugawa regime.

Conclusion

In sum, the strength of the physical markers of daimyo authority derived from the multi-leveled meanings inherent to the ritual processes that produced them. In one sense daimyo used Buddhist auspices for merit production and ancestor veneration to foster order and propriety by symbolically representing their acceptance of the household as a social ideal. In doing so, they asserted their legitimacy by situating their individual houses within a larger system of social practice. Concurrently, through the same medium (i.e. the Buddhist temple), the daimyo consumption of Buddhist services allowed warrior houses to ritually produce artifacts of distinctive authority. And yet, warrior efforts to maintain the status quo could be undermined to a certain extent by normative practices they espoused, and by the markers they so prominently displayed.

While Buddhist dominance over mortuary practices remained strong throughout this period, temple abbots were faced with increasing competition from Shugendō clerics, Shinto shrine priests, and onmyōdō diviners who offered patrons other venues for expressions of faith and prestige. For example, Yoshida Shinto clerics garnered peasant and townsmen support by issuing “decrees of foundations and origins” (sōgen senji 宗源宣旨) to lay groups who sought documented ranks for the deities within their village shrines. Buddhist shrine administrators (bettō 別当) also keenly petitioned for such recognition from the Yoshida organization. This resulted in an interesting twist where hindsight reveals yet another irony, because Buddhist clerics as patrons furthered the expansion of another religious organization that eventually became a major contender for lay faith and lay funds. The increasing influence of Neo-Confucian thinkers, Nativists, Shingaku practitioners, and new religions further sapped the evocative power of Buddhist rituals and their material effects at all levels of society. Coupled with popularized visions of Buddhist moral decline and the socio-political fracturing that occurred during the last decades of the early modern period, these myriad shifts in the religious dynamics of the nineteenth-century fed into the attacks on temples after 1870. Buddhists in the end thus paid a heavy price for their place and function in Tokugawa society.

In post-Tokugawa Japan, the end of daimyo political authority, and the Meiji government’s decision to rescind obligatory temple registration created the potential for widespread lay rejection of temple practices. While some communities took this opportunity to switch their religious affiliations, the elimination of mandated support did not result in the immediate eradication of temple patronage as a whole. At sites such as Yakuin and Kita’in, early modern efforts to attract lay patronage through votive activities established a support base that helped both temples weather the loss of warrior munificence. Along similar lines, the continued existence of Tafukuji and its extensive parishioner base in modern Miyoshimachi reveals certain continuities in lay recognition of Buddhism’s cultural and religious value that traversed other disruptions in late nineteenth-century Japanese society. In fact, according to

Date, *Nihon shūkyō seidoshi*, 494. Since most temples had at most one abbot and two or three disciples, large funerals often required invitations to clerics from several temples.


Hiromi Maeda details the rise of Shinto oriented modes of patronage in “Imperial Authority and Local Shrines: The Yoshida House and the Creation of a Countrywide Shinto Institution in Early Modern Japan,” (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 2003), 119-133.

Over the last several decades, there has been increasing lay alienation from such modes of support, and a number of clerics and scholars believe Japan is now witnessing the gradual “death” of its early modern parishioner legacy. Nevertheless, the present existence of daimyo-sponsored gravesites and altar trappings, and the post-Tokugawa continuity of Buddhist temple rites for both funerary and votive purposes into the twentieth-century serve as a reminder that Tokugawa era modes for patronizing Buddhist temples fostered a system of symbolic production that ultimately outlived early modern period.
### Table One

Registry of Kii Tokugawa House Gifts of Hollyhock Crest Items  葵紋附品  to Yakuoin

*Takaosan Yakuoin monjo* 高尾山薬王院文書, vol. 3, item 713, dated 1856/3

<table>
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<th>Dates</th>
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<td>1. Gojōmoku 御条目</td>
<td>1613/8</td>
<td>Has black seal from Taitokuin 台徳院</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holding box with aoi mon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Fudōmyō mandara</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Said to be gift of 2nd Kishū dai-myō Yorinobu  For daily use 平常用</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Dark blue and gold brocade tochō 紺地金襴戸帳 One set</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>From Kishū  Replaced in: a. Shōtoku era (1711-1716)  b. 1755/2  c. 1791/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Dark blue damask tochō 紺染絞子戸帳 One set</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Red brocade tochō 赤地錦戸帳 One set</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Dark blue and gold brocade mizuhiki紺地金襴水引 One set</td>
<td>Same as above</td>
<td>Same as above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Dark blue damask mizuhiki 紺染絞子水引 One set</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Red brocade mizuhiki 赤地錦水引 One set</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. White curtain, 2 items 反幕</td>
<td></td>
<td>Used during kitō rites for Kishū house, and shrine ceremonies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Takahari chōchin: 8 高張挑燈</td>
<td>Original date unknown</td>
<td>1836: following Jisha bugyō order, Kishū confirmation for two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Yumihari chōchin 2 弓張挑燈</td>
<td>Same as above</td>
<td>For Kishū events, and abbatial use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Fudōmyōō in crested shrine 不動尊一体葵御紋附厨子入</td>
<td>1718</td>
<td>Given with goma platform 護摩檀</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. damask mizuhiki 絞子水引 one set</td>
<td>1862/5 [Note: later addition to registry]</td>
<td>From Takehime of Kishū For daily use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. White saiwaiishi tochō 白菱戸張 one set</td>
<td>1740/12</td>
<td>For daily use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Shichijō kesa 七条袈裟</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>For Kishū house kitō; repaired during Shigenori’s tenure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Fudō image by Munemasa</td>
<td>1748</td>
<td>In crest box For daily use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Scroll of prayers 大般若理趣分陀羅尼救咒光明真言一巻</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. White gojō kesa</td>
<td>Date unknown</td>
<td>Used for Kishū prayer rituals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fealty and Patronage: Notes on the Sponsorship by Matsudaira Sadanobu of Tani Bunchō and His Painting
© Frank L. Chance
University of Pennsylvania

By any consideration, Matsudaira Sadanobu (1758-1829) falls close to the ideal patron of the arts. Powerful and wealthy, Sadanobu was a collector, painter, and historian with a philosophical background and a personal stake in the life of the artist closest to him in the world. That artist was Tani Bunchō (1763-1841), personal retainer to Sadanobu. Bunchō was a prolific artist, skilled connoisseur, and author of works on the history and theory of painting; his works have been studied by scholars in Japan and abroad, and attempts have been made to analyze the connections between the two men. Nevertheless, their relationship is easily misunderstood, as it does not fit neatly into our expectations of the early modern Japanese hierarchy.

Two Lives Intertwined

Sadanobu was the third son of Tayasu Munetake (1715-1771), daimyo of the Tayasu lineage, which was one of the sankyō (“Three Lords”) houses, who were cousins of the Tokugawa family, and were at least theoretically in line for succession to the office of shōgun. However, as a third son, Sadanobu was unlikely to succeed even to leadership of his own family, so he moved up considerably in the world when he was adopted, at the age of 15, into the Hisamatsu branch of the Matsudaira family. Matsudaira was one of the sanke, or “Three Houses,” which was closer to the main Tokugawa line than the Tayasu The Hisamatsu branch held the Shirakawa fief north of Edo in modern Tochigi prefecture.1 As a member of this noble military lineage, Sadanobu studied assiduously and by 1783, when he succeeded to headship of the Shirakawa fief, he had written three books and a collection of waka poetry, studied painting with Kanō school masters, and served in the shogunal entourage on pilgrimage to Nikkō.2

This was, however, only the first stage in Sadanobu’s rise to power. In 1786 the Shogun, Tokugawa Ieharu (1737-1786, r. 1761-1786) died, and shortly after was replaced by Ienari (1773-1841, r. 1787-1837). As Ienari was just 14 years old at the time, Sadanobu was installed as a kind of regent, with the official title of rōjū shuseki, chief senior councilor. From that point until his resignation from the post in 1793, Sadanobu was arguably the most powerful person in Japan. He initiated reforms, later known as Kansei no kaikaku (“the Kansei reforms”), in large measure as a reaction to the corrupt government of his predecessor as senior councilor, Tanuma Okitsugu (1719-1788). These reforms attempted to return Japan to the strong economic and philosophical systems of the 1730’s, and included emphasis on Shushigaku, the “orthodox” interpretations of Confucian texts by Zhu Xi (1130-1200), while denying authority to alternate visions such as those held by the proponents of Yōmeigaku, the pragmatic interpretations of Wang Yangming (1472-1559). According to Timon Screech, Sadanobu pursued aesthetic and cultural goals with the intent of producing a new image of Japan as a clearly bounded nation moving toward a modern future.3 Sadanobu maintained a stable of artists in his service, including Ono Bunsen (dates unknown), the priest-painter Hakuun (1764-1825),

1 Sadanobu’s career has been explored in two surprisingly different volumes, Charismatic Bu-

2 For further details on the lives of Sadanobu and Bunchō, see among other sources the chronological chart (nenpyō) in Tokushima Kenritsu Hakubutsukan, Sadanobu to Bunchō (Aizu Wakamatsu: Tokushima Kenritsu Hakubutsukan, 1993), pp. 113-114.
3 Screech, pp. Chapter 5, pp. 208-64.
and the Western-style painter and printmaker Aōdenzen (1748-1822). The leader of this group, acting as mentor and director of many artistic activities, seems to have been Tani Bunchō.

Like Sadanobu, Bunchō was born to a well-connected family. His grandfather, Motonori (1689-1752), had been brought to the Tayasu fief from the Ōmi fief centered in Ōtsu. Motonori was a student of Yōmeigaku who wrote a series of economic treatises and reformed the finances of Ōmi. His service there was noted by the Bakufu, and in 1739 he was pressed into service for the Tayasu house, then suffering near bankruptcy. Motonori was able to bring successful policies to bear, and in 1744 was awarded a special allowance for his services. He settled in Edo in 1739, and retired there in 1751, just a year before his death.4

The heir of Tani Motonori was his eldest son Motoyoshi, better known as Rokkoku (1728-1809), but the son’s character was very different from his father’s. Though he succeeded to Moronori’s position and salary and retained them until retiring at the auspicious age of 60, Rokkoku was little interested in service or in economic issues. Instead, he was deeply immersed in the cultural life of his adoptive home, Edo, and became widely known as a kanshi poet. Writing poems in the classical language of China required Rokkoku to acquire a thorough knowledge of the Chinese classics in a variety of neo-Confucian interpretations. Slender of build and abstemious in character, Rokkoku made friends among the literati elite of Edo, including Shibano Ritsuzan, Kikuchi Gozan, and Hamada Kyō.5

Rokkoku’s first son was born on the ninth day of the ninth lunar month of 1763 and given the childhood name of Masayoshi. He later developed into the prolific painter and expert connoisseur we know as Bunchō. From around the age of ten, he began to study painting with a local master of the Kanō style, Katō Bunrei (1706-1782). After Bunrei’s death, or possibly even before, Bunchō began to study other modes of painting, including the Chinese realism of Shen Nanpin; the yamatoe style of the Tosa school; Western styles; and most importantly, the style of Chinese literati painting that has come to be known as Nanga.

Bunchō officially entered the service of the Tayasu house in 1788, beginning as okuzuke minarai (apprentice in service to the interior), with five subordinates under his command.6 Bunchō retained his position with the Tayasu throughout his life, but in addition was assigned, in 1792, the position of tsuke (personal attendant) to Matsudaira Sadanobu. Their special relationship continued for nearly thirty years, until Sadanobu’s death in 1829. The unusual fact that Bunchō retained his Tayasu position, as well as becoming a retainer of Sadanobu, has led many writers to comment on their relationship; some have accused Bunchō of sycophancy. Yamaouchi Chōzō asserts that:

Sadanobu employed Bunchō not only because of his personal taste for painting and calligraphy, but also, and perhaps more, because Sadanobu wished to develop and utilize Bunchō’s painting skills to the maximum. At least, Sadanobu probably


5 In the 1790’s, Bunchō edited and published the definitive collection of Rokkoku’s poetry. For more details see Frank L. Chance, Tani Bunchō (1763-1841) and the Edo School of Japanese Painting (PhD Dissertation, University of Washington, 1985), pp. 48-51. Bunchō also utilized the connections from his father’s poetry circle for early support of his painting career, as exemplified by the inscriptions on his Eight Views of Xiao and Xiang of 1788; see Frank L. Chance, “Tani Bunchō’s eight views of Xiao and Xiang: Origins, Ideas, Implications,” Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art, v. 76, (Oct. 1989), pp. 266-79.

had the desire to do so from the inception of Bunchō’s service.7

Authors with more conservative leanings, such as Soeda Tatsuryō in the 1930’s, place another layer of feudal and Confucian values on the relationship, emphasizing the fact that Sadanobu was actually a son of the Tayasu family adopted into the Matsudaira as a teenager:

Many think Bunchō was supported by Sadanobu simply because he appreciated Bunchō’s talent. Some even think it was because Bunchō was skilled at “diplomacy” and used Sadanobu for the sake of personal ascendency. … In fact, it was because Sadanobu remembered the loyal service given to his natural family by Bunchō’s grandfather Motonori; it may even be seen as a repayment of on [filial obligations]. If not for this, Bunchō would have been made a retainer of the Shirakawa han, rather than continuing to be a Tayasu vassal until his death.8

Public and Private Patronage

Given such a long relationship and the position of public power that Sadanobu enjoyed, we might expect a long list of monumental works by Bunchō executed for the palatial residences of his patron. Unfortunately, all of the wall and screen paintings Bunchō may have created for Sadanobu’s residences in Edo and Shirakawa have been lost. Indeed, only one complete room decorated with Bunchō’s paintings has survived, though perhaps six thousand works in more portable formats can reasonably be attributed to him today.9 This situation is the result of his working primarily in and around the city of Edo, which suffered major fires repeatedly throughout its history, in addition to the twentieth-century disasters of 1923 and 1944-45.

What does survive from the relationship are, instead, relatively private works that are small in scale. Large-scale works often employ a public iconography intended to convey symbolic power, and naturally require significant investments of artistic effort.10 Moreover, the choice of an artist for such a project implies a sort of public approval for his style and thus clearly grants status to the artist, whether or not this is augmented by official grants of title or office. Smaller works may not make such overt statements, but could in fact take up time and energy on a scale not much less than that required by screen and wall paintings. In particular, small works suffer from relative invisibility; they cannot be seen unless the owner chooses to share them with others. As a result their impact is more limited than that of screen or wall paintings. On the other hand, small works may provide viewers with a much deeper insight into the expressive potential of their creators, and a stronger sense of the desires of the patron for whom they were created. They create a direct link between their audience and their creators, without the mediation of public space or the simultaneous presence of numerous viewers. For better or worse, in the case of Bunchō and Sadanobu, we cannot today know what sort of monumental works Sadanobu might have ordered from his retainer, but four important works in small scale survive that limn the range of their relationship. These currently take the form of three handscrolls – Kōyo tanshōzu of 1795, Kinsei meika shōzō zukan of around 1800, and Ishiyamadera engi emaki of 1804-5 – and a book, Shūko jushū, published around 1800.

8 Soeda Tatsuryō, p. 30.
9 The surviving room is at the Honkōji in rural Shizuoka prefecture. For discussions of Bunchō’s surviving œuvre, see Chance 1985, pp. 154-156.
10 See for example Karen Gerhart, The Eyes of Power: Art and Early Tokugawa Authority (University of Hawaii Press, 1999), for an analysis of the political iconography of Kano school murals from the seventeenth century.
Three Handscrolls and a Book, or Three Books and a Handscroll

*Kōyo tanshōzu, [Views of an Inspection Tour of the Coast], 1795.* In the fourth and fifth lunar months of 1793, Bunchō accompanied Sadanobu on a tour of the coast of the Izu and Miura peninsulas in modern Shizuoka and Kanazawa prefectures. The tour was an official function occurring about three months before Sadanobu retired from his *ri* (insert macrons) office. Bunchō’s function in the entourage was primarily documentary, and he kept notebooks delineating the topographical features of the coastline for the purpose of preparing defenses against Russian ships, which had been sighted off the coast in the early Kansei years. The notebooks, probably finished with color after the group returned to Edo, consist of 79 scenic views on 80 pairs of paper pages, now mounted on two handscrolls and kept in the Tokyo National Museum. One might say that *Kōyo tanshōzu* began as a book, or more specifically a sketchbook, but was finalized in the handscroll format.

The topographical accuracy of these small paintings is remarkable. The beach at Ashina (Figure 1), for example, is clearly recognizable in a photograph of the same site (Figure 2) taken in 1984. The view from a cliff-hugging road over a curving beach to a small archipelago at the end of a jutting spit of rocks is little changed despite the passing of nearly two centuries. The inclusion of meteorological phenomena, from clear blue skies to clouds and mist to slanting lines of rain, provides the views with a striking sense of time as well as place that puts them in favorable comparison with some of the best topographical European works, such as the nearly contemporaneous landscape views of John Constable and J. M. W. Turner.

The link between Sadanobu and these paintings is clear and specific, since he was the leader of the inspection team for which these serve as documentation, but they came to be preserved in the shogunal collection, rather than Sadanobu’s. Hence, though private in scale, they have an official, and in some sense public function. As documentation for a public project, they were property of the shogunal authorities; on the other hand, as this function was linked to concerns of what we would today call “national security,” the document was not available for public view; indeed its very existence was never publicized outside the shogunal castle, but its presence in the

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11 The whole work was reproduced by Meichō Shuppan in 1975 in original size. Commentaries on them in English include, among others, those of Timon Screech in *The Shogun’s Painted Culture* and by Michael Cunningham in *Reflections of Reality in Japanese Art* (Cleveland, Ohio: Cleveland Museum of Art, 1993), p. 280.
Tokugawa archive may be telling. Among the pictures, the vast majority of sites are represented only once, and a few appear twice, but only one site was represented more frequently. There are a total of four views of the harbor at Shimoda. This may merely reflect the importance of this port as a center of local commerce and transportation, but a larger factor may also be at play. Some sixty years after the creation of Kōyo tan-shōzu, when an American fleet under the direction of Commodore Matthew Perry approached this coastal area, it was directed specifically to Shimoda in order that negotiations might be opened. It is entirely conceivable that the Bakufu officials who sent that order consulted these images before determining the best location for this historic meeting.

Shūko jushū [Collected Antiquities in Ten Types], published c. 1800. Among the four works most clearly indicative of Sadanobu’s patronage of Bunchō, Shūko jushū is both the largest and the least clearly indicative of Bunchō’s hand. In modern form, it consists of fourteen volumes of illustrated text, but was originally produced as a set of 85 handscrolls. Here again we have a work with private scale but public function, as it was converted from painted handscrolls to block-printed book form and thus achieved a wide audience. Bunchō was involved in its production from research through compilation, and Sadanobu signed off on the preface in 1800.

In 1796, Bunchō traveled from Edo to the Kansai region in order to gather materials for the project. He kept extensive notes, as did at least one of his traveling companions. During the tour, he visited private, temple, and shrine collections from Kamakura and Kanazawa to Kyoto, Osaka, and Nara, and sketched hundreds of paintings, sculptures, and other objects. During the trip he went to Daitokuji in Kyoto, for example, where he saw a pair of landscape paintings (Figure 3) then attributed, along with the icon between them, to the Tang dynasty master Wu Daozi (c. 700-792), but now recognized as the work of Li Tang (c. 1050-c.1130). These served as inspiration for a number of Bunchō’s later paintings, including a waterfall now in the Burke Collection in New York. Other paintings included in the Meiga [Famous Paintings] section of Shūko jushū, range from Chinese works attributed to Li

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13 Hirose Mōsai (1768-1828), quoted extensively in Mori, pp. 182-190.
14 The modern attribution is based primarily on the work of Shimada Shūjirō, who discovered an obscured signature of Li on the paintings in the 1950s. See Shimada Shūjirō, “Kōtō-in shō-zō no sansuiga ni tsuite,” Bijutsu kenkyū 165 (1952), pp. 136-149. See also Richard Barnhart, “Li T’ang (c.1050-c.1130) and the Koto-in Landscapes,” The Burlington Magazine 830(1972), pp. 304-311.
Gonglin (1049-1106; Figure 4) and Liang Kai (active early 13th century) to landscapes by the Japanese master Sesshū (1420-1506). Other pictorial works are reproduced in the Portraits section with representations of Kūkai, Shōtoku Taishi, and Minamoto no Yoritomo, among others.

Figure 4: *Tiger*, after a painting attributed to Li Gonglin, *Shūko jūshū*, 1908 edition.

**Kinsei meika shōzō zukan** [Portraits of Contemporaries], c. 1800. Perhaps the most controversial of the works associated with Bunchō and Sadanobu is the handscroll in the Tokyo National Museum known as “Portraits of Contemporaries.” The link to both Sadanobu and Bunchō is established only in the colophon written by a conservator at the Tokyo National Museum, Kosugi Sugimura (1834-1910), more than half a century after the work was produced. At least one scholar, Mori Senzo, has proposed that the portraits were produced around 1831, yet the inscriptions on many of the individual portraits correspond with dates recorded in Bunchō’s travel diaries. Ueno Kenji and others have proposed that in fact the current scroll is at best a copy of Bunchō’s work, itself copied from his sketches. The rectangular line framing each image may echo page-framing lines from the book format of the original work.

As it exists today, *Kinsei meika shōzō zukan* consists of 46 portraits mounted on one handscroll, with names and other information inscribed beside them; in addition, there are slips

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16 The inscription, reproduced in Kyoto National Museum, *Nihon no shōzō* (Portraits of Japan), p. 301, translates as follows:

Matsudaira Sadanobu commissioned Tani Bunchō to draw portraits of his [Sadanobu’s] compatriots. Sadanobu always kept the portraits by his side. In the Meiji era, the scroll was sold by the Matsudaira family to the Tokyo Imperial Museum Director, Machida Hisashige. It thus entered the collection, and was also restored at that time.

Kosugi Sugimura, conservator, based on oral transmission.


of paper attached to the scroll repeating some of the information about the sitters. All the subjects are male. Included are a number of famous painters, such as Maruyama Ōkyo (1733-1795, Figure 5); Matsumura Goshun (1752-1811); and Minagawa Kien (1734-1807); along with Confucian scholars such as Hayashi Jussai (1768-1832); Shibano Ritsuzan (1734-1807); and Rai Shunsui (1746-1816). Three feudal lords are included, and at least four Buddhist monks as well. Perhaps the most troubling image, in terms of Bunchō’s possible authorship, is that of the painter himself, especially as it is slightly larger in scale than the others except for the image of Ōkyo. This probably indicates the respect of the copyist for these two figures, who might have been considered the finest painters of the era, but makes it unlikely that Bunchō actually painted this version.

Many authors have speculated on the motivation behind the production of this scroll. Why would Sadanobu want portraits of friends (such as Shibano and Hayashi), and acquaintances “to keep by his side?” Why would the scroll also include persons Sadanobu may have never met, such as Kimura Kenkado (1736-1802), and also those Bunchō may never have met, such as Maruyama Ōkyo? As a supporter of Zhu Xi Confucianism, why would he have included prominent scholars of other schools, such as Rai Shunsui? Finally, how heavily did Sadanobu’s appreciation for Ōkyo’s representational vision color the realism of these portraits? These are not questions with easy answers, and lie beyond the scope of the current investigations.

**Ishiyamadera engi emaki** [Illustrated Handscrolls of the Ishiyama Temple Legends], 1804-5. A set of illustrated legends of the Ishiyamadera, a major Tendai edifice located in the foothills of Mt. Hiei outside Kyoto, remained uncompleted at the beginning of the twentieth century. The scrolls had been viewed by Bunchō in 1796, and Sadanobu was petitioned by the abbot of the temple, Sōken (dates unknown) to complete them. Sadanobu then commissioned Bunchō and his assistants to copy the five extant scrolls (dated by modern scholars to the fourteenth century) and add two more to illustrate the flowing cursive calligraphy of Asukai Masaaki (1611-1679) for the last eight episodes. Sadanobu added a colophon to the seventh scroll in the set, indicating that he asked Bunchō “to live in this world but depict that of long ago” in order to maintain consistency within the final work. Bunchō’s own note, at the end

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19 Hayashi, p. 269
of a set of preparatory sketches owned by the Matsudaira family but preserved today in the Tokyo National Museum, indicates that he began drawing early in 1804 and completed the scroll in the final month of the following year.\(^{21}\) The illustrations, executed in heavy colors on the silk of the final copy, are among the most faithful Edo era reproductions of the *yamatoe* narrative style. In this case we can strongly assert Sadanobu’s influence as a patron, as well as the success with which Bunchō followed the mandate to reproduce the style of late medieval *yamatoe* handscrolls.

Each of the thirty-three episodes of the full set of scrolls illustrates an incarnation of Kannon (Sanskrit Avalokitesvara), the bodhisattva of compassion, performing some deed for a believer who worshipped at Ishiyamadera. Bunchō sent his adopted son Bun’ichi (1777-1818) and two followers to Ishiyamadera in the closing months of 1803 to copy the five existing scrolls. He also made two scrolls of preparatory studies, preserved now in the Tokyo National Museum; these incorporate not only visual quotations from the other scrolls of *Ishiyamadera engi emaki* but also from at least five other medieval handscrolls and from other antique paintings. The result of these preparations is a remarkable consistency in style between Bunchō’s illustrations and the five preexisting scrolls of the set.

For example, let us look at the opening segment of the final scroll from the set (Figures 6, 7, 8). The main character of this episode is one priest Ken’en, abbot of a small subtemple named Enjōji. The scene shows Ken’en suffering from illness; Kannon miraculously appears in the form of an acolyte, who offers the priest a bowl of medicine to cure his fever. To emphasize the loneliness of the isolated setting, Bunchō opens the scene with a crescent moon gleaming over the autumn landscape of low hills painted with malachite green fading to brown along the lower edge. The texture of the cliff is indicated by a few wandering brush strokes that appear free and spontaneous, but that are in fact carefully calculated and practiced, since they are repeated with almost photographic accuracy in the two stages of preparatory sketches (as well as in two further copies of the scroll, held respectively by Ishiyamadera and Ninnaji). Confirming the season is a red-leaved tree, and the ivy draped elegantly over its withered branches contains the only spots of color on the first, otherwise monochrome roll of studies, indicating that they were planned from the start as “boneless” forms in pure color without ink outlines. The lines of the priest’s residence are almost line-for-line imitations of a scene from *Eshi no zōshi* [The

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Tale of a Painter], a handscroll stylistically dated to the fourteenth century.

Conclusions

The relationship between Bunchō and Sadanobu as artist and patron was unquestionably a long and complex one. In addition to the four hand-held works discussed here, Sadanobu commissioned Bunchō to create numerous other works — hanging scrolls as well as screens and wall paintings — but few of them survive. The mutual benefits of the relationship are beyond question — Sadanobu’s support gave Bunchō access he could not have hoped for otherwise, and Bunchō supplied works to satisfy the wide-ranging tastes and aesthetic needs of his patron. No surviving records indicate whether Bunchō was compensated for these works beyond his regular stipends, but it is clear that he also accepted commissions from other sources, including feudal lords, wealthy merchants, and others. In some respects, there are other daimyo-painter relationships that echo this one — for example, the links between Satake Shōzan (1748-1785), lord of Akita, and Odano Naotake (1749-1780). Satake and Oda, however, cooperated for less than a decade before the untimely death of the younger painter, while Sadanobu patronized Bunchō for three decades. It also seems clear that Bunchō’s service was both loyal and constant, a kind of fealty repaid by his patron over four decades. Only the lack of surviving documents, and the failure of modern scholars to interpret them correctly, prevent a deeper understanding of this fascinating interaction.


23 Three hanging scrolls with paintings by Bunchō and inscriptions by Sadanobu, for example, are reproduced in Tokushima Kenritsu Hakubutsukan, Sadanobu to Bunchō, (Aizu Wakamatsu: Tokushima Kenritsu Hakubutsukan, 1993), pp. 22-23.

24 For example, in his shukuzu sketchbooks, Bunchō made miniature copies of many of his paintings, often attaching brief notes naming the source of the commission.
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Please use Times New Roman 10.5 point font for the main text, Times New Roman 14 point font bolded for the main title, and Times New Roman 12 point font bolded for the author’s name, followed by the author’s institutional affiliation in normal Times New Roman 10.5 font, e.g.,

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