

Tokugawa Religious History: Studies in Western Languages*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

⁶ Bolitho, “Tokugawa Japan,” 102.

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

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

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

⁹ Yamashita, "Reading Tokugawa," 24.

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

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

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

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

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

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

School Shinto and Nativist Studies

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

to legitimize his place within the Norinaga school.²⁰

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

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

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

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

²³ Peter Nosco, "Masuhō Zankō (1655-

¹⁷ *Things Seen*, 213.

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

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

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

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

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

Confucian Studies

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

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

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

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

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

²⁵ Teeuwen, *Watarai Shintō*.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

³⁹ Yamashita, "Reading Tokugawa," 25.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Buddhist Studies

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

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

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

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

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

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

⁵³ Hardacre, "The Postwar Development," 208.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Heterodox and Popular Religious Movements

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

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

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

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

⁷⁸ See for example, Mary Ann Harrington,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

General, Thematic, and Interreligious Studies

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

4 (2001): 373-398.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

¹⁰⁹ Ooms, *Tokugawa Ideology*.

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

Concluding Reflections

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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