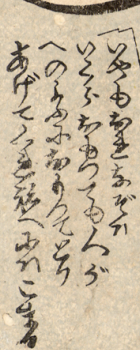


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2022



Through to *Japan Review* 36, individual issues of the journal were numbered consecutively. As of this latest issue, *Japan Review* 37, we have moved to a volume system. There will be no immediate change to the publication schedule, but this allows us more flexibility in the future. Thank you for your understanding.

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VOLUME 37

2022

CONTENTS

- 7 **INAGA Shigemi**
Classical Chinese Aesthetic Ideals meet the West:
Modern Japanese Art as a Contact Zone
- 29 **Philip SWIFT**
Prosthetic Revelations: Sticking the Teachings to the Body in a
Japanese New Religion
- 51 **KAMEYAMA Mitsuhiro**
Shaku Unshō in Korea: The Buddhist Precepts and Colonialism in
Modern East Asia
- 77 **Radu LECA**
Dynamic Scribal Culture in Late Seventeenth-Century Japan:
Ihara Saikaku's Engagement with Handscrolls
- 101 **SAKURAI Ryōta**
Remembering and (Re)storing War Memories:
The Postwar Fiction of Shimao Toshio
- 123 **Mengfei PAN**
Tōkyō Shitaya Negishi Oyobi Kinbō-zu and the Symbolism of
Community Mapping in the Late Meiji Period
- TRANSLATION
- 151 **Caleb CARTER**
Narrating the Spread of Shinto and Shugendō in the Eighteenth Century:
An Introduction to and Translation of the *Shugen Ichijitsu Reisō Shintō mikki*

*The God Susano and Korea in Japan's Cultural Memory:
Ancient Myths and Modern Empire*, by David Weiss

Reviewed by Mark E. CAPRIO

*Patriotic Pedagogy: How Karuta Game Cards Taught a Japanese War
Generation*, by Michaela Kelly

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by Janet Borland

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*In the Shelter of the Pine: A Memoir of Yanagisawa Yoshiyasu and
Tokugawa Japan*, by Ōgimachi Machiko; translated by G. G. Rowley

Reviewed by Bettina GRAMLICH-OKA

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Rebuilding*, edited by Barak Kushner and Sherzod Muminov

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edited by Erich Pauer and Ruselle Meade

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Classical Chinese Aesthetic Ideals meet the West: Modern Japanese Art as a Contact Zone

INAGA Shigemi*

This article engages with the notion of an aesthetic “chiasma” developed by the Japanese philosopher Imamichi Tomonobu in the 1960s. According to Imamichi, the nineteenth century saw an inversion of basic ideas associated with the artistic traditions of East and West. While in the East, the earlier dominance of expression was replaced by an emphasis on the importance of representation, for the West, the idea of mimesis-representation was superseded by a focus on expression. Imamichi’s argument remain influential.

Drawing on a series of philologically relevant reflections by several generations of scholars and artists, from Watanabe Kazan to Hashimoto Kansetsu, and situating them in relation to their Western and Chinese counterparts, this article clarifies the developments which occurred and the conflicts which emerged over the course of this interaction. In doing so, it demonstrates that Imamichi’s notion of chiasma remains too restricted to capture the degree of exchange between the Eastern and Western aesthetic ideals taking place in modern Japan. The article concludes that Imamichi’s chiasma was made possible by the awkward mapping of a pair of fundamental dualities associated with Eastern and Western thought onto one another, in a manner which reveals more about the geopolitical imperatives of the 1960s than the process of intellectual exchange itself.

Keywords: *qiyun shengdong*, *kiin seidō*, Imamichi Tomonobu, chiasma, confluence, Watanabe Kazan, Ernest Fenollosa, Okakura Tenshin, Arthur Dow, Hashimoto Kansetsu

* This article draws on material introduced in a lecture published in Japanese and Chinese, see Inaga 2021. The author wishes to thank Joshua A. Fogel, Christine Guth, Motoaki Kure, Tamaki Maeda, Asuka Minami, Tanehisa Otabe, Dōshin Satō, Maromitsu Tsukamoto, Alicia Volk, and Toshio Watanabe, as well as three anonymous peer reviewers.

*In all forms, ordinary or extraordinary, I seek that life rhythm
(pranachhande) of the reality whose vitality has generated the whole
world and all its forms, actual and imaginary, and pulsates within them.*

Nandalal Bose, “The Art Pursuit”¹

Modern Western art theories did not simply supersede classical Chinese ideas on painting when Japan modernized. The relation between the two was one of mutual superimposition rather than competitive alternatives. The Chinese framework that constituted literati culture in Japan continued to serve as a basic reference. Indeed, it was an indispensable seedbed within which newly introduced Western ideas finally took root. Even if Westernization was the leading slogan of the Meiji Restoration, Chinese culture remained the touchstone. It is for this reason that “official recognition” of *bunjinga* 文人画 (usually translated as “literati painting”), regarded as “contradictory” and “paradoxical” by Christine Guth, should actually be considered a logical consequence of the confluence of Western and Chinese ideas in Japan.² This article argues that this confluence occurred during the late Meiji 明治 (1868–1912) and early Taishō 大正 (1912–1926) periods.

This is important because Chinese culture was formally rehabilitated in early twentieth-century Japan, initially in the aftermath of the Xinhai Revolution of 1911. The outbreak of World War I interrupted this process, but the interwar period of the 1920s evidenced a clear shift. Instead of seeking to catch up blindly with the latest vogue in the West, Japanese intellectuals began explicitly measuring their understanding of Western values according to “Oriental” criteria and templates.³ The current article will critically reexamine the idea of an aesthetic “chiasma” initially developed by the Japanese philosopher Imamichi Tomonobu 今道友信 (1922–2012) in the 1960s.⁴ According to Imamichi’s formulation, a historical inversion in basic ideas related to aesthetics occurred over the nineteenth century. During this period, while in the West the idea of mimesis-representation was superseded by that of expression, the opposite occurred in the East, where the former dominance of expression was replaced by an emphasis on the importance of representation.

In order to examine the relevance of Imamichi’s chiasma hypothesis, this article will trace Japan’s role in the mutual development and emplacement of aesthetic ideas. It will engage with the following issues: first, how the interaction between Chinese and Western aesthetic ideals took place; second, the process of trial and error that led to a synthesis

1 Bose 1999, p. 18. The epigraph demonstrates the global relevance of the issue examined in this article. Bose was an Indian artist interested in *qi yun shengdong*, having been introduced to Chinese aesthetics by Yokoyama Taikan and Hishida Shunsō, two Japanese painters sent to India by Okakura Kakuzō (discussed below). For more on these “transnational dynamics,” see Inaga 2009.

2 Guth 2006, p. 192. This well-balanced overview of the re-appreciation of the *bunjinga* in the Meiji period remains the standard overview in English. While not refuting Guth’s argument, this article shows that a different facet is revealed by tracing the genealogy of the history of ideas.

3 “Oriental” here emphasizes that the notion was uncritically used in prewar scholarly discussion. The author does not think it sufficient simply to remove such historically-charged terms as Oriental or “Far East” (officially used by the FEN American military broadcast up until the end of the 1990s) because they are taboo in current English-language scholarship; for more on this, see Inaga 2012. On templates, see Inaga 2017.

4 “Chiasma” and the related term “osmose” were put forth by the Ishibashi Foundation International Symposium “Modern Japanese Art and China,” held on 2–4 November 2018 at the University of California, San Diego. The present article was initially prepared as a paper for this conference.

of Chinese and Western viewpoints in Japan; and third, the conflicts that emerged during the course of this synthetic process.⁵ Conducting this analysis in dialogue with Imamichi's ideas will allow for the following critical questions to be answered. What is the hidden background to Imamichi's hypothesis? Why and how did an eminent scholar of aesthetics come to develop such a global but unidirectional idea of the chiasma between East and West? And in what circumstances was this hypothesis accepted in the West in the 1960s?

The article covers a range of periods from the 1840s to the 1960s. It draws on a series of philologically relevant reflections by several generations of scholars and artists, from Watanabe Kazan 渡辺華山 (1793–1841, to whom the Imamichi paper is explicitly indebted) to Hashimoto Kansetsu 橋本関雪 (1883–1945), and situates them in relation to their Western and Chinese counterparts. The first section analyzes Watanabe Kazan's treatises in order to give an overview of the Chinese aesthetic tradition in Japan at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The subsequent influence that these ideas would have in Europe and America is examined over the course of the following two sections. The fourth section examines the rehabilitation and reconsideration of Kazan's insights through research on the aesthetic confrontation of Western ideas and Far Eastern tradition that took place in the Taishō era. Chinese contemporary reactions to this chiasma are analyzed through the case of Feng Zikai 豐子愷 (1898–1975) in the 1930s, while the concluding section shows how this reaction is closely connected to postwar Taiwanese aesthetic debates. The timeline and contours of the debate outlined here offer a drastic modification to Imamichi's notion of chiasma by better contextualizing both its creation and reception.

***Kiin Seidō* vs. *Shasei*: Kazan unites East and West**

Watanabe Kazan was a Japanese contemporary of Commodore Matthew Perry (1794–1858), memorialized in Japan's high-school history textbooks for his insights regarding Japan's diplomacy. Following the Morrison Incident in 1837, Kazan was among the first Japanese to recognize the danger of Japan maintaining its isolationist policies in the face of the Western menace.⁶ Caught up in the fallout over the incident, Kazan took responsibility by committing suicide, and thus did not survive to bear witness to Commodore Perry's arrival at Uraga 浦賀 in 1853.

Yet Kazan is also considered one of the pioneering artists of his generation, who tried to achieve a synthesis of Chinese and Western paintings.⁷ Kazan elucidates this intention in a reply to a question posed by his disciple, the *bunjinga* artist Tsubaki Chinzan 椿椿山 (1801–1854). In it, Kazan demonstrates his erudite and critical knowledge of *kiin seidō* 氣韻生動 (Ch. *qiyun shengdong*), which we might translate as “rhythmical resonance and vital movement.” The notion of *ki* 氣 (Jp.) or *qi* (Ch.) is notoriously difficult to translate, and is the source of much philological as well as ideological controversy. The present article

5 For more on the first of these objectives, see Fogel 2013. On the third, see Inaga 2011. Otabe 2020 has also recently criticized Imamichi's position.

6 The *Morrison*, a U.S. merchant vessel returning seven Japanese castaways, was fired upon by shore batteries in accordance with 1825's Edict to Repel Foreign Vessels.

7 Haga 2017, pp. 318–346.

will try to elucidate some of the historical aspects of this troublesome key term by recovering Kazan's interpretation of *kiin seidō* in relation to his other key notion, that of *shasei* 写生.⁸

In defining *kiin seidō*, Kazan first summarizes the explanations given by successive generations of Chinese writers before expressing his own opinion. He sees *ki* present in every brush stroke, in every trace of ink, while in *in* 韻 he recognizes the rhythmical movement of execution. When one divides *kiin seidō* into its component concepts of *kiin* and *seidō*, the former constitutes the “body” (*honshi* 本旨), and the latter the exegesis (*kyakuchū* 脚注), so that the *ki*, or energy, offers “life” or “vitality” (*sei*), while the *in*, or rhythm, defines “movement” (*dō*). Though different scholars used a variety of characters to compose the same idiom, Kazan himself put forward that it was “propensity” (*sei* 勢), “force” (*ryoku* 力), and “occasion” (*ki* 機) which come together to constitute the rhythm, going on to argue that, “Within this rhythm, propensity avoids sclerosis” (*ketsu no yamai* 結の病), “the force must be smooth to avoid a lack of coherence” (*koku no yamai* 刻の病), and “the occasion must be spontaneous and unpatterned” (*han no yamai* 板の病).⁹ These three elements are essential, according to Kazan, to produce a smooth rhythmic execution through “brush and ink” (*hitsuboku* 筆墨), through which *kiin* is made manifest.

On the relationship between *kiin* and *hitsuboku*, Kazan develops his own original idea by introducing the compound *fūshu* 風趣, or wind (external) and taste (internal), as an explanation of what must be brought together in the execution of action. Both of these factors (wind and taste) oscillate between “elegance and vulgarity” (*gazoku* 雅俗). Something like the wind (*fū* 風; glossed as *noema* here) requires refinement (*shōsha* 瀟灑), while taste (*shu* 趣; *noesis*) cannot be satisfied without comprehending rarity (*ki* 奇) through exhausting all varieties (*ben* 變). In his analysis of Kazan's reply, Sakazaki Shizuka 坂崎坦 (1887–1978), art critic and pioneering Japanese scholar of Gustave Courbet (1819–1877), made a point relevant to this article, namely that Kazan was the first scholar to distinguish between elegance and vulgarity in his articulation of vital resonance (*kiin*) and the *noema-noesis* (*fūshu*) combination.¹⁰

In his letters to his master, Chinzan confesses that he previously avoided the effects of *fūin* 風韻 (breeze) or *kiin* (resonance) as he could not understand them. He instead sought to achieve *shasei*, or copying life through the objective imitation of the outer shape of things, and assiduously sought to imitate the brush technique of the famous Chinese painter, Yun Nantian 惲南田 (1633–1690). Chinzan's pursuit of realism was appreciated by his master. “Copying the real” (*shashin* 写真)—the term would later refer to photography in Japanese—may have invited criticism for being “vulgar” (*zokuin* 俗韻), but Chinzan was confused as people tended to critically appreciate his work on account of its resonance. Kazan replied that it was thanks to Chinzan's learning from the old masters that he could copy the real without approximating reality too closely. The results were not vulgar because Chinzan faithfully followed the lessons of Yun Nantian. Kazan added an anecdote about Yun Nantian attaining a level of “excellence” (*myō* 妙) thanks to his engagement with his friend

8 On the notion of *shasei*, see Satō 2011, pp. 231–254. The classic study of the multiple historical interpretations of *kiin seidō* remains Tanaka 1964. For a critical survey of the issue in Japanese, see Inaga 2022.

9 These are periphrases by the author; Kazan's originals are too concise to be fully comprehensible in English.

10 Sakazaki 1942, pp. 93–111, especially p. 96. Kazan's original texts are reproduced in pp. 281–320. *Noema-noesis* draws from Husserl's phenomenology and is the author's theoretical gloss intended to paraphrase Sakazaki's idea.

Wang Shigu 王石谷 (Wang Hui 王翬, 1632–1717), and of Wang Shigu doing likewise. This emphasis on mutual emulation implicitly alludes to the role Kazan would assume toward Chinzan.

Etymologically, *shasei* 写生 means “copying and duplicating life,” but it also connotes an objective depiction similar to the idea of realistic representation taught in the Western academic tradition of Aristotle’s mimesis, or imitation. In their discussions, Chinzan and Kazan describe Western painting techniques using the six rules of painting (*Huihua liufa* 繪畫六法), which come from the preface to *The Record of the Classification of Old Painters* (*Guhua Pinlu* 古畫品錄) written by Xie He 謝赫 in the early sixth century. The six elements that define a painting are: (1) “Spirit-resonance” (*kiin seidō* 氣韻生動, translated as such to distinguish the term from Kazan’s later interpretation); (2) “Bone method” (*koppō yōhitsu* 骨法用筆), the use of brush, texture, and strokes to link handwriting and personality; (3) “Correspondence to the object” (*ōbutsu shōkei* 応物象形), the depiction of form, including shapes and line; (4) “Suitability to type” (*zuirui fusai* 隨類賦彩), the application of color, including layers, value and tone; (5) “Division and planning” (*keiei ichi* 經營位置), the placing and arrangement, composition, space, and depth; and (6) “Transmission by copying” (*den’i mosha* 伝意模写), the replication of models, not only from life but also from the works of antiquity.¹¹ Kazan, in a letter several months before his death in 1840, confesses that he was on the point of inventing a new method of “copying form and transmitting color” (*shakei densai* 写形伝彩), but that it had proved impossible. Kazan justified his failure by noting that “there had been no complete formulation on the matter since the beginning of the world.”¹² What Kazan was undoubtedly aiming at was a tentative synthesis of Eastern and Western traditions.

We can thus appreciate why Sakazaki took an interest both in Kazan’s theoretical writing and in Courbet’s realism. While it is common in aesthetic studies to regard Courbet as the ultimate representative of the notion of mimesis in the European realist tradition, Kazan, without knowing anything of Courbet, was part of the second generation of Japanese painters exposed to Western influence, following in the footsteps of Satake Shozan 佐竹曙山 (1748–1785), Odano Naotake 小田野直武 (1749–1780), and Shiba Kōkan 司馬江漢 (1747–1818). However, Kazan is singled out here as his reflections provide an early attempt to synthesize the Oriental theory of *kiin seidō* with Western practice.¹³

In searching for an East-West synthesis through the chiasma between *shasei* and *kiin seidō*, there remains the question of whether the sixth rule, namely “Transmission by copying” in Chinese, is equivalent to mimesis-imitation in Western terminology. In his hypothesis, Imamichi argued that the two terms should be understood as being “*equivalenz*.”¹⁴ In the West, the notion of mimesis-imitation was predominant in art theories up until the end of the nineteenth century, when expression finally assumed importance, culminating in the German Expressionism of the 1920s. The opposite is observable in East Asia, where the classical Confucian theory of expression finally began to grant respect for representation at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In arguing for this East-West

11 The present article treats only the first and the last of the six rules, given their relevance to cross-cultural dialogue. On the methodology of comparison, see Inaga 2007.

12 This can be found in a document commonly known as “Letter 7” in Sakazaki 1942.

13 For other Dutch studies scholars and painters in Japan, see Inaga 2014.

14 Imamichi 1961; Imamichi 1971, pp. 198–199. On *equivalenz*, see Iser 1976.

chiasma, Imamichi invoked the pioneering importance of Watanabe Kazan to shed light on the exchange between East and West in aesthetic ideas. As we will see below, however, Imamichi's aesthetic assessment simply overlooks many facts in art history.

Chiaroscuro, *Nōtan*, *Mōrōtai*: From Fenollosa to Okakura and Arthur Dow

A new idea of mimesis, or naturalistic representation, prevailed in Japan in the second half of nineteenth century, mainly due to the introduction of Western academic education. Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908) was a key contributor to this process, and promoted the Kanō school (Kanōha 狩野派) as representing Japan's classical tradition in painting. Adapted from prescribed Chinese styles, the Kanō school had enjoyed shogunal recognition and distinguished social status in the early modern period, and in accentuating its position as an established tradition, Fenollosa was arguing for the presence of an authentically Japanese style of painting. On the other hand, in the introduction to his 1912 book on *Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art*, Fenollosa singled out the Japanese notion of *nōtan* 濃淡, the “harmonious arrangement of values,” as being characteristic of Japanese and Oriental painting in general.¹⁵ Fenollosa insisted on the use of this Japanese notion to assert a fundamental difference between Oriental principles and the Western tradition. While *nōtan* bears a superficial resemblance to the conventional Western art historical term of chiaroscuro, Fenollosa argued the two were fundamentally incompatible. In Fenollosa's understanding, chiaroscuro refers to the contrast between the highlights and shadowy parts of each object, but *nōtan* refers to the general tonal harmony and contrast of the surface of a pictorial work as a whole (figure 1). However, while *nōtan* originates in the Oriental tradition, Fenollosa was of the opinion that one might also talk about *nōtan* in relation to the paintings of Velázquez or Rembrandt. Thus Fenollosa insisted on the universal aesthetic validity of an Oriental notion at the scale of global art history.

The notion of *nōtan* allows us to appreciate the dripping or blot effects and blurred expression typical of ink paintings in the Chinese literati tradition.¹⁶ Imamichi's hypothesis assumes that the contrast between representation and the expressivity of *kiin seidō* superimposed itself on the distinction that Fenollosa drew between chiaroscuro and *nōtan*. In the 1920s and 1930s, a Chinese scholar trained in Germany, Teng Gu 滕固 (1901–1941), pushed this superimposition further by borrowing the Wölflinian pair of *malerisch* and *linearisch* to account for stylistic differences between the Northern and Southern Song dynasty painting styles in Chinese art.¹⁷ Layering up these dichotomies left *malerisch* as equivalent to *nōtan* and *linearisch* to chiaroscuro.¹⁸ In the Oriental tradition, as understood

15 Fenollosa 1963, pp. xxiv–xxvi. In the sense used by Fenollosa, *nōtan* is not a classical Chinese term, but a Japanese neologism of the early nineteenth century.

16 Exemplified in Japan by the seventeenth century Kyoto artist Tawaraya Sōtatsu 俵屋宗達, see his *Renchi suikinzu* 蓮池水禽図 (Waterfowl in Lotus Pond), Kyoto National Museum (A甲261), <https://www.kyohakugo.jp/jp/collection/meihin/kinsei/item03/> (last accessed 7 November 2022). The contrast between these paintings of Caravaggio and Sōtatsu was first proposed by the art historian Yashiro Yukio 矢代幸雄 (1890–1975).

17 Objective classifying principles proposed in the early twentieth century by the Swiss art historian, Heinrich Wölfflin (1864–1945).

18 If *linearisch* (linear) is closely connected with *klarheit* (clarity), *malerisch* (picturesque) shows more affinity with *unklarheit* (ambiguity) and *bewegtheit* (motion). Ten Gu and his Japanese contemporaries referred to the original German. See Tsukamoto 2007.



Figure 1. Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio. *The Incredulity of Saint Thomas*. 1601. Fenollosa contrasted the “extravagance” of Caravaggio’s chiaroscuro, or contrast between light and shade, visible in paintings like this one, with the total harmony of *nōtan*. Property of the Sanssouci Picture Gallery, Potsdam. Image courtesy of the SPSG Painting Collection, Prussian Palaces and Gardens Foundation Berlin-Brandenburg (GK I 5438).



Figure 2. James McNeil Whistler. *Nocturne: Grey and Silver*. 1875–1880. Oil on canvas, Part of the John G. Johnson Collection, 1917. Cat. 1111. Image courtesy of the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

by Fenollosa, Ten Gu, and their contemporaries, the mountain-and-water ink paintings of the Southern Song dynasty tradition were considered to reflect the prioritization of *nōtan* by their Zen-Buddhist artists, to the detriment of clear linear depictions of the contours of the objects represented.

For Fenollosa, the notion of *nōtan* had the merit of going beyond realistic representation. The generation of Western avant-gardists associated with Manet and the Impressionists from the 1860s onwards openly questioned the value of representation. One key representative of this tendency, the American artist James Whistler (1834–1903), “composed” a series of “Arrangements” (as the artist referred to the sequence of paintings) from the late-1860s onwards and entitled some of the pieces *Nocturne* (figure 2).¹⁹ *Nōtan* was a more useful term to describe this shift toward non-representational rendition than any Western terminology. In his later years, Fenollosa praised Whistler’s work for having realized a synthesis of Western and Oriental arts, and argued that the contemporary confluence of those two currents, the two primary traditions in world art history, would lead to the “isolating” of the “island of three hundred years of academic extravagance,” which Caravaggesque chiaroscuro represented.²⁰

Okakura Kakuzō 岡倉覚三 (often referred to as Tenshin 天心, 1863–1913) was another who was fully conscious of this shift in contemporary aesthetic tastes.²¹ This was the context within which, at the beginning of the twentieth century, he advocated for the newly invented style of *mōrōtai* 朦朧體, an intentionally obscure rendering of the shape of things. *Mōrōtai* epitomized *nōtan* aesthetics. Yokoyama Taikan 横山大観 (1868–1958), Okakura’s faithful disciple, applied this technique to the pieces he exhibited during his tour of the United States, some of which were entitled *Nocturne* in a clear homage to Whistler’s aesthetics.²² The Bengal School, the avant-garde, nationalist artistic movement that emerged in British India around the turn of the century also adopted the Chinese ink brush stroke, which they had learned from Japanese painters like Yokoyama and Hishida Shunsō 菱田春草 (1874–1911), whom Okakura had sent to India in his place, as another manifestation of their rejection of the Occident. This Bengali movement also applied the same style of *mōrōtai*, and developed a technique called “wash.” Abanindranath Tagore (1871–1951), Nandalal Bose (1882–1966) and their colleagues made use of this watercolor effect that they obtained by washing freshly painted paper in a water tub—a symbolic gesture distancing themselves from the Mughal miniature tradition while washing their hands of the bondage of old-fashioned conventions derived from Western academic training in the fine arts (figure 3).²³

19 This deployment of musical terminology by Whistler is indicative of the shift in aesthetic tastes influenced by French *Japonisme*.

20 Fenollosa 1903, p. 15.

21 The author disapproves of the current non-critical usage of “Okakura Tenshin,” unless for the purpose of posthumous veneration. “Tenshin” was the Chinese sobriquet to his poetic works during his lifetime. See Inaga 2014, p. 132. Contrary to convention, “Tenshin,” “Taikan,” or “Shunsō” will not be used here as the artists are clearly identifiable by their family names.

22 Satō 1989, pp. 127–138. See for instance Yokoyama’s *Gekka no umi* 月下の海 (Waves in Moonlight) at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, <https://collections.mfa.org/objects/29312/waves-in-moonlight> (last accessed 5 August 2022), known as *Nocturne* during its initial exhibition in the United States.

23 Inaga 2009.



Figure 3. Abanindranath Tagore. *Music Party*, also called *Nocturne*. 1908. Woodblock print reproduction published in *Kokka* 國華 226, 1909. Photograph by the author.

Yet the experience of the Bengal School shows that what Whistler pursued and the Japanese *mōrōtai* intended were neither identical nor equivalent. Even if similar in outcome, their vectors were in opposite directions. Whistler, guided by his highly personal aestheticism, tried to “Orientalize” his oil painting by deviating from Western academic rules. On the other hand, Yokoyama and Hishida tried to compete with Western oil painting. It was imperative for them to realize works worthy of appreciation in the Western market and at Westernized exhibitions. To attain this aim, and to realize similar pictorial effects, they renovated their own traditional techniques based on glue paste (*nikawa* 膠). They also made use of shell powder (*gofun* 胡粉) in order to enhance the thickness of pigment on the pictorial plane.

An American observer of these Japanese artists and assiduous student of Japanese art, Arthur Dow (1857–1922) was appointed assistant curator under Fenollosa at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts in 1893, and adopted the notion of *nōtan* as his central principle. Subsequently a teacher at the Pratt Institute (1895–1903), and at Columbia University (1904–1922), Dow would exert a huge influence on artistic education worldwide, and would structure the whole of *Composition*, his artistic manual for students and teachers, around two elements; composition on the one hand and *nōtan* on the other.²⁴

For composition, Dow referred to the wooden structure of Japanese houses in general, and to the timbers of the *tokonoma* alcove in particular, and showed a variety of models reframing and arranging partitions in geometric forms. While almost contemporary to Frank Lloyd Wright (1867–1959) and his Japan-inspired architectural plans, Dow’s exercise in composition also resembles the geometrical abstraction of Piet Mondrian (1872–1944).²⁵ Dow’s idea of framing, freely cutting out significant fragments according to the anticipated

²⁴ Dow 1913.

²⁵ Nute 2000.

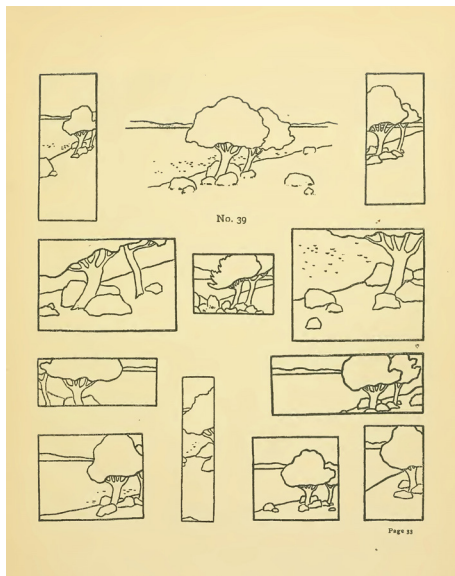


Figure 4. Arthur Wesley Dow. *Composition*. 1905 edition. Exercise No. 39, p. 33. Reproduction of material in the public domain.

effect, shows a strong affinity with what Sergei Eisenstein (1898–1948) would develop in his film-editing techniques.²⁶ In the 1920s, the French avant-garde would deploy specific terms to describe such intentional arrangements in composition, like *montage*, *assemblage*, *découpage*, and *collage* (figure 4).²⁷

Dow developed these compositional principles through his systematic study of the Japanese landscape prints of Hokusai and Hiroshige, from which he distilled their essence. Dow proudly claimed to have systematized what Whistler had been intuitively searching for in his tentatively experimental, trial-and-error way. He declared:

Nōtan in landscape, a harmony of tone relations, must not be mistaken for light-and-shadow which is only one effect or accident ... Light-and-shadow is a term referring to modeling or imitation of solidity ... It does not help one to appreciate tone-value in pictures ... Roundness and solidity lead to sculpture.²⁸

Composition excludes the traditional Western notion of chiaroscuro, which Dow intentionally replaced with *nōtan* as a universal artistic principle.²⁹ To this renewed grammar of decoration, Dow would produce variations in color in his woodblock landscape prints, modifying the atmosphere according to the four seasons or the hours of a day. Fresh air in the morning, bright sunshine at noon, dim blurred scenery at dawn and nightscape: Dow claimed that the artist could render such temporal and seasonal variations on the same set of woodblocks by careful tone-value control, and through the differentiated application of color. In later editions of *Composition*, Dow established a “synthesis” by integrating

²⁶ Berger 1980, appendix.

²⁷ Kōmoto 2007.

²⁸ Dow 1913, p. 69.

²⁹ Dow 1913, p. 53.



Figure 5. James McNeil Whistler. *The Peacock Room*. 1877. Freer Gallery of Art, gift of Charles Lang Freer. Image courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C.

lessons from William Morris' Arts and Crafts Movement, which had sought to reform design and decoration. While Whistler regarded spatial art as a visual music, he had largely, notwithstanding his decorative panels, confined himself to painting, faithfully respecting the traditional definition of Fine Arts. Dow was convinced that in his *Composition* he had gone beyond Whistler, and achieved "synthetic exercises" of fine arts and design over the course of his life-long artistic career.

Kandinsky and the "Oriental Tradition"

Okakura, the mentor of *mōrōtai*, was also conscious of these developments in Western art. In his lecture "Current Problems in Painting," delivered at the World Fair in Saint Louis in 1904, Okakura pointed to the limits displayed by the art critic John Ruskin (1819–1900), who had been unable to understand Whistler's swift execution.³⁰ Going on to praise the plein-air effects of the impressionists, Okakura insisted that the Rinpa school 琳派 in Japan had achieved a similar result two hundred years earlier through its application of gold foil to obtain highly decorative effects on a variety of objects.³¹ Okakura emphasized the Rinpa tradition with Whistler's decorative panels in mind. *The Peacock Room* (1877) was Whistler's most significant attempt at decoration under Oriental inspiration, and it convinced Okakura of the relevance of emphasizing the decorative aspects of Japanese art in front of the learned American and European audiences he was addressing (figure 5).

³⁰ Okakura 1984b, p. 77. On the Nocturne controversy, see Whistler 1967.

³¹ *Rinpa* artists worked in various formats, notably screens, fans and hanging scrolls, woodblock printed books, lacquerware, ceramics, and kimono textiles. In his 1904 lecture in New York on "The *Bijutsuin* or The New Old School of Japanese Art," Okakura introduced Yokoyama Taikan as an "ardent researcher" of the Tosa 土佐 and Kōrin 光琳 traditions, and promoted the Nihon Bijutsuin 日本美術院, the private institution Okakura had established in 1898, as the successor to Edo-period artists like Kusumi Morikage 久隅守景 (1620–1690) or Ogata Kōrin 尾形光琳 (1658–1716); see Okakura 1984a.

In 1914, one year after Okakura's death and publication of a revised edition of *Composition*, Arthur Eddy (1859–1920), the art dealer, critic, and close friend of Whistler, published *Cubists and Post-Impressionism*. Written under the direct impact of the Armory Show the previous year, the book contains a chapter entitled “Esoragoto.”³² In it, Eddy captures the attention of his readers by asserting that Japanese viewers are unsurprised by either the Cubists or Kandinsky, for these reflect “the teachings they have been accustomed to for a long time.” Instead of minimizing the self, so as to transcribe reality, modern art is shifting toward the maximization of the self to create compositions as an idea. According to Eddy, who claims to be well informed of things Japanese, *esoragoto* 絵空事 is an apt term for these post-impressionists, who no longer intend to make representations of reality. As there is no equivalent of *esoragoto* in either English or French, Eddy claims his right to use the Japanese term, and further argues that *esoragoto* was what Velázquez, Rembrandt, and Frans Hals were searching for.³³

This chapter on *esoragoto* does not survive in the Japanese translation by Kume Masao 久米正雄 (1891–1952).³⁴ This is curious because Kume was a member of the Shirakaba school (Shirakaba-ha 白樺派), famous for the kind of self-affirmation and naked manifestations of the ego (*sekirara* 赤裸々) which would accord with Eddy's ideas. Perhaps the intention of the translation was limited to providing a Japanese readership with an outline of recent developments in the West, from Postimpressionism to Fauvism, Cubism, and Futurism. Yet the intentional elimination of Oriental factors—the whole chapter is excised—allows us to hypothesize that the Japanese editor or translator was rather reluctant to transmit to his domestic readership the fact that the latest developments in Western art and theory had a close relationship with Western critical understandings of Oriental aesthetics.

As the previous section detailed, Fenollosa had already understood the latest tendencies in world art as emerging from a confluence of Western and Eastern currents, which came to be personified by Whistler. In her wonderful study on Yorozu Tetsugorō 萬鐵五郎 (1885–1927), Alicia Volk makes it clear that as early as 1913 young Japanese artists, including Yorozu, were conscious of the fact that “Western and Eastern Art are drawing together.”³⁵ However, this convergence did not necessarily allow them to spontaneously return, or immediately refer, to the so-called “oriental aesthetic tradition,” and it is significant that it was not considered relevant during the Shirakaba school's early period.³⁶ Kume's 1916 translation clearly avoided emphasizing the modern Japanese confluence with Western avant-garde. Kume and his collaborators were apparently uncomfortable with Eddy's use of the term *esoragoto* to explain the latest tendencies in the West. This may be because *esoragoto* has a negative connotation of “falsehood,” or “lack of sincerity” similar to the idea of “baseless fantasy,” if not of “forgery.” And yet *esoragoto* (literally meaning “fantasy like floating in

32 The Armory Show, or International Exhibition of Modern Art, was organized by the Association of American Painters and Sculptors in 1913 as the first large exhibition of modern art in America.

33 Eddy 1914, pp. 147–153.

34 Kume 1916.

35 Volk 2010, p. 41.

36 Volk 2010, p. 36. For more on Yorozu, on whom Volk's book concentrates, see also Inaga 2015. Volk judiciously notes that the omitted chapter of Kume's translation was presented as an abridged summary in *Chūō-Bijutsu* magazine (No. 2, 1915), see Volk 2010, p. 270, fn. 59.

the sky”) was singled out by an American as designating visual images beyond the limit of mimesis-representation. This clearly shows a cognitive gap between the Japanese (for whom it was a pejorative expression) and English-speaking readers (for whom it meant positive appreciation).³⁷

Where do Eddy’s ideas come from? Though his references remain incomplete, this article argues that Eddy’s understanding of Japanese aesthetics can be traced back to Henry Bowie’s (1848–1920) *On the Laws of Japanese Painting* (1911). Bowie came to Japan in 1893, and became a student of Kubota Beisen 久保田米僊 (1852–1906), Shimada Sekko 島田雪湖 (1865–1912), and Shimada Bokusen 島田墨仙 (1867–1943). Bowie explains *esoragoto* as “invention,” and gives *seidō* as “living movement,” which Eddy paraphrases as “matter responsive to mind,” and explains that in this Chinese principle resides one of the bases of Japanese art.³⁸

Significantly, from around 1910 onward, *seidō* and, by extension, *kiin seidō*, were frequently compared by young Japanese scholars in aesthetics with the Western notion of *Einfühlung* (empathy), originally proposed by Theodor Lipps (1851–1914) and Johannes Volkelt (1848–1930). Students at the Imperial University of Tokyo, Abe Jirō 阿部次郎 (1883–1959), Tanaka Toyozō 田中豊蔵 (1881–1948), Abe Yoshishige 安倍能成 (1883–1966) and others, organized a gathering named the “Rippusu kai.”³⁹ In Kyoto, Sono Raizō 園頼三 (1891–1973), teaching aesthetics at Doshisha University, also reacted to Eddy’s understanding of *seidō*. Sono’s book, *Geijutsu sōsaku no shinri* 芸術創作の心理 (Psychology of artistic creation), includes a chapter on “From *Einfühlung* to *Kiin seidō*.”⁴⁰ Here Sono insists, “Eddy’s ideas are wrong, as he misleadingly confines the idea of *seidō* within the sphere of Oriental Art. However, *Einfühlung* in Lipps’ sense exists both in the East and in the West.”⁴¹ Obviously, Sono considers here that *Einfühlung* and *seidō* overlap, and to a certain degree are equivalent. However, Sono adds that Yun Nantian’s phrase, “the Creation in my mind and bosom leaks out from the tip of my brush,” manifests a much higher state of spirituality. The idea of *Einfühlung* alone can therefore no longer properly explain this mental state.

Based on this interpretation, Sono displays his pantheistic tendencies and goes as far as to identify *kiin seidō* with the Hegelian idea of “der Absolute Geist,” which generates the world as phenomenon. Sono was also the translator of Kandinsky’s *Über das Geistige in der Kunst* (*Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, 1912), and suggests that Yun Nantian’s thinking reminds him of Kandinsky’s “die Innere Notwendichkeit” (inner necessity) connecting man’s inner nature with Nature, that is, the Universe. Sono also recognized Watanabe Kazan’s writings as offering the ideal synthesis between inner- and outer-nature. Thus,

37 In fact, *tsukuneimo sansui* 捏ね芋山水 or “mountain-and-water paintings in a mashed potato-like style” was a common term of contempt for amateur literati painting in late Meiji-period Japan. The critical reassessment of such works in the Taishō era not only coincided with, but was directly influenced by, the import into Japan of the latest literati painting from late Qing and early Republican China. Kuze 2012 and 2013 gives detailed accounts of this gap in art appreciation between China and Japan through a meticulous analysis of the entries on Chinese pictorial pieces in the periodical *Kokka*.

38 See “esoragoto” p. 36 and “seido” pp. 79, 149 in Bowie 1911. On Bowie, see Minami 2015, pp. 270–271, 294–296.

39 This refers to the Theodor Lipps Society. On the “Rippusu kai,” see Inaga 2015.

40 Sono 1922, pp. 120, 125, 133, 142–143.

41 This judgment by Sono may be misleading, and yet it is true that Eddy talks of *kiin* (if not *esoragoto*) as if it were particular to Oriental and Japanese painting practice.

Sono, with his philological expertise in Chinese classical texts, judged that the ancient Chinese notion of *kiin seidō* contained the theoretical potential to go beyond that of “*Einfühlungstheorie*” (given in German in his Japanese text).

Sono’s theoretical reflection led him to a conviction of the superiority of Oriental classical notions in comparison to what he supposes are their Western equivalents. However, Sono did not pay attention to the historical evolution that the notion of *kiin seidō* had undergone in China, and merely made a synchronic comparison between Eastern and Western aesthetics.⁴² Yet while this theoretical competition between *kiin seidō* and *Einfühlung*, which obviously relied on their alleged, if inadequately demonstrated, affinity, was to have far-reaching effects, it was entirely absent from Imamichi’s discussion of the chiasma between Western and Eastern art.

From Hashimoto Kansetsu to Feng Zikai

The Taishō era’s immersion in Western aesthetic ideas, illustrated above, encouraged contemporary artists to seek to synthesize Western notions with Oriental traditions. A typical case would be that of Hashimoto Kansetsu, one of the leading figures in the rehabilitation of the Southern school of Chinese painting in Japan.⁴³ Kansetsu’s own referencing of Chinese classics and his “Orientalist” ideology have been discussed elsewhere.⁴⁴ Here, attention will be given to *nōtan*, *kiin seidō*, and Kansetsu’s evaluation of modern Western masters.

First, according to Kansetsu, “what has been typical in Oriental pictorial rendering is currently being taken over by Western painting.” If tableaux in the West mainly consisted of painting, covering the pictorial plane with a layer of pigments, Japanese painting used to excel in linear drawing. However, in recent years, “while Western oil painting has been showing thrillingly interesting brush strokes, young Japanese painters in the national style have begun taking care to blur the surface of the painting with a misty and foggy touch, as if it were covered by frosted glass.”⁴⁵ Western painters from the Impressionists onward began emphasizing the importance of the brush strokes. The predominance of brush and knife effects reached their culmination in van Gogh and Cézanne (figure 6). Fauvists and Expressionists followed suit.

However, in Japanese painting, the opposite was happening. Color blots and spots were replacing sharp definition. The frequent use of *karabake* 空刷毛 (course deer-hair brushes used dry to blur the paint) and the mixing of *gofun* seashell chalk powder into the pigment seem to have contributed to this tendency of erasing lines. These were characteristic of the paintings of Kansetsu’s contemporaries and rivals, particularly members of the *Nihon*

42 In his classic 1913 paper, Tanaka elucidates in detail the historical evolution of the notion in the Chinese theory and practice of aesthetics, Tanaka 1964. On this basis, Sono’s facile identification of *kiin seidō* as *Einfühlung* with the *qiyun shengdong* of Xie He’s era (roughly, the first half of the sixth century) is simply misleading, and open to question.

43 On the development of Kansetsu’s idea as well his influence on Feng Zikai, see Nishimaki 2005.

44 On Kansetsu’s references to Chinese classics in his historical painting, see Inaga 2017. On his Orientalism, see Inaga 2015. The comparison of Shi Tao 石濤 (1642–1707) with the Western Postimpressionists was frequently proposed in Japan. At around the same time in China, Liu Haisu 劉海粟 (1896–1994) published an essay on “Cézanne and the Postimpressionists,” in *Shishi Xinbao* 時事新報 in Shanghai in 1923. See Kure 2015.

45 Hashimoto 1924, p. 83.



Figure 6. Paul Cezanne. *Le Garçon au gilet rouge*. 1888. Oil on canvas. While in Cezanne's painting the knife and brush effects are evident, in the piece by Tsuchida Bakusen, traces of lines and the effects of the brush work have been completely effaced, as Hashimoto judiciously remarks. Emil Bührle Collection, on permanent loan at Kunsthaus Zürich. Image courtesy of Kunsthaus Zurich.

Bijutsuin, who inherited Okakura's teaching, or those of the Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai 國画創作協会 (National Painting Creation Association) in Kyoto.⁴⁶ This evolution suggested to Kansetsu that *nōtan* had suffocated and excluded the linear element from recent Japanese paintings.

Second, Kansetsu recognized a “tendency toward the Chinese painting of the Southern school” in Western painting from the Impressionists onwards. According to Kansetsu, the ancient Oriental ideal of *kiin seidō* was reincarnated through Western painting becoming “filled with Life.” And yet, Kansetsu emphasized that “the Orient is in advance of the

46 Contrast Cezanne's *Le Garçon au gilet rouge* in figure 6 with Tsuchida Bakusen, *Serving Girl in a Spa*. 1918. Tokyo National Museum, viewable at <https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/serving-girl-in-a-spa-tsuchida-bakusen/VQFB-ilwu5r9yg?hl=en> (last accessed 5 August 2022).



Figure 7. Yosa Buson 与謝蕪村. *Fugaku Resshō zu* 富嶽列松図 (Mount Fuji seen beyond Pine Trees). 1778–1783. Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art (Kimura Teizo Collection) 愛知県美術館 (木村定三コレクション). Image courtesy of the Aichi Prefectural Museum.

Occident by at least two hundred years,” arguing that “the superiority of the East to the West in the art of painting would turn out to be evident” if one “put a Cézanne side by side with a Yosa Buson” (figure 7).⁴⁷

Third, Kansetsu proposed an audacious comparison of modern Western masters with their historical Chinese counterparts. Kansetsu thought it evident that “the Western expressionist tendencies stem from Oriental subjective depiction,” and that “the West still has much to learn from the Oriental tradition.”⁴⁸ He therefore compared Renoir to Yun Nantien, Cézanne to Wang Shigu, and van Gogh to Chen Laolian 陳老蓮 (1598–1652). Kansetsu shared a basic understanding of Qing dynasty Chinese masters with Watanabe Kazan, amongst others.⁴⁹ This was obviously no innocent analogy. By classifying modern Western masters using a Chinese template, Kansetsu sought to rehabilitate Chinese painting and claim Oriental superiority, as these Chinese masters were active over two hundred years earlier than their Western counterparts.

Kansetsu’s assertions struck a chord: the contemporary Chinese painter and essayist, Feng Zikai, one of the representatives of Shanghai Modernism, was to quote from Kansetsu’s essay in his “The Triumph of Chinese Modern Painting in Contemporary World Art,” a nationalistic essay which appeared in the January 1930 issue of the *Oriental Review*, an influential monthly magazine based in Shanghai.⁵⁰ Feng Zikai followed Kansetsu in proposing his own three-point comparison between Western painters and Chinese calligraphers, whom he stylistically selected regardless of chronological order. For Feng, the strength and experimentalism of Cézanne was comparable to Yan Zhenqing 顏真卿 (709–785), while the fluidity of Matisse was compared to Dong Qichang 董其昌 (1555–1636), and the eccentricity of Picasso to Zhang Xu 張旭 (eighth century).⁵¹

47 Hashimoto 1925, pp. 124–127, 265. Yosa Buson 与謝蕪村 (1716–1784) was an Edo-era artist and poet. Compare figure 7 with Paul Cézanne. *The Plain with Mont Sainte Victoire, View from Valcros*. 1882–1885. Pushkin Museum, viewable at https://pushkinmuseum.art/data/fonds/europe_and_america/j/2001_3000/zh_3412/ (last accessed 5 August 2022). Kansetsu would have been familiar with this painting, which was reproduced as a monochrome plate in an introductory text on Cézanne by the German art critic Julius Meier-Graefe (1867–1935), and frequently referred to by Japanese artists at the time. See Meier-Graefe 1910, p. 67.

48 Hashimoto 1925, pp. 4, 12.

49 Kansetsu’s “trio” of Expressionists, Cézanne, Van Gogh and Gauguin, may also have drawn on Meier-Graefe. For more on this, see Inaga 2015, p. 160.

50 Attributed to Ying Xian 嬰行, one of Feng Zikai’s pen-names, see Feng 1930. This was part of a “Special Issue on Art” which Feng edited.

51 Feng 1934. On this book, see Nishimaki 2005, pp. 245–246, 251.

Kansetsu and Feng's comparative classifications were outcomes of an aesthetic dialogue between East and West. This had led to a renewed appreciation of the primacy of traditional Oriental aesthetic notions in Japan and China, under which Western masters and aesthetics were to be judged according to Chinese criteria and precedent (rather than vice versa). What, though, were the consequences of this chiasma of Western and Eastern art that had been played out over the past century? Its broader East Asian implications will be analyzed through the lens of postwar Taiwan, before we conclude with the significance of Japan as an artistic contact zone in the modern era.

Oriental Abstract Expressionism in Taiwan

The chiasmatic cross-fertilization between East and West in the arts took place in a modernizing Japan. One of its outcomes saw a reprisal of this process in a place where modernizing Japan had been. This was on Taiwan, and involved a confrontation between abstract painting (which identified Kandinsky as an originator), and the Chinese landscape painting tradition known as "mountain-and-water scenery." Pursuit of a synthesis of the two resulted in a debate called the "controversy on modern and contemporary painting" (*xiandai huihua lunzheng* 現代繪畫論爭).

A dozen years after independence from Japanese imperial rule, painters in Taiwan still owed most of their knowledge on modern western art to Japanese sources, including Japanese translations of the latest Western trends.⁵² Prior to the outbreak of the controversy, the first organization for contemporary abstract painting, the Eastern Painting Society (or Ton Fan Painting Association; Dongfang Huahui 東方畫會) had been founded in Taiwan in 1956. Around the same time, another avant-garde group initially influenced by Western modern art, the Fifth Moon Group (Wuyue Huahui 五月畫會; named after the "Salon de Mai" in France), was established, and would ultimately include painters of international renown like Zheng Daqian 張大千 (1899–1983), who excelled in the *pomo* 澆墨 splash-ink technique.⁵³

The leader of the Fifth Moon Group, Liu Guosong 劉國松 (b. 1932), sought to develop abstract landscape painting, and from the early 1960 began to insist upon the necessity of rehabilitating the Chinese tradition of "brush and ink" (*bimo* 墨筆), while recognizing a common "non-pictoriality" (*hikaigasei* 非繪畫性) in the brush strokes of late Ming and early Qing painters like Shi Tao and Bada Shanren 八大山人, as well as painters of the republican era like Qi Baishi 齊白石 (1864–1957). Liu Guosong stirred up the "controversy on modern and contemporary painting" in 1961 through his opposition to the ideas of Xu Fuguan 徐復觀 (1903–1982), one of the representatives of the New Confucian school. Xu, a close friend of Aisin-Gioro Puru 愛新覺羅溥儒 (1896–1963), younger cousin of Puyi, the last Emperor of China, was conservative in his opinion. Although respecting Xie He's idea of *qiyun shengdong*, and influenced by the philosophy of Zhuang Zhou 莊子 (369 BC–286 BC), Xu strongly adhered to the Platonic idea of *eidos* (visible forms), and could not accept the notion of abstraction. Conversant with phenomenology, Xu saw in abstract expression the menace of Communism, an artistic tendency inherently opposed to order and security.

⁵² Kure 2014, pp. 110–114.

⁵³ North American abstract expressionism searched for a similar effect as the Chinese ink-brush *pomo* splash-ink technique, and was also inspired by classical Chinese aesthetics, see Munroe 2009.

Liu fought back in defense of abstract expressionism, arguing that the Communist Party was responsible for the repression of spiritualist tendencies in contemporary art. Due to the political situation, their exchange lacked logical coherence.⁵⁴

Yet although the Taiwanese controversy was far from constructive, it did contribute to a revival of Chinese-style ink-wash painting in the contemporary art scene in Taiwan. In fact, Taiwanese abstract painting in the 1960s revealed a conspicuous affinity with the Chinese literati tradition. The resultant divergence perceived between socialist realism on the continent and the abstraction in ink-wash painting in Taiwan in the 1960s largely replicates the opposition between the Western paradigm of mimesis-representation, and that of *qiyun shengdong*, “spiritual resonance and vital movement,” in the East.

Conclusion

Imamichi Tomonobu developed his own chiasma hypothesis to explain East-West aesthetic intersections at around the time this Taiwanese controversy was raging. The ideological confrontation between socialist realism and abstract expressionism in the Cold War period, which characterized the aesthetic controversy in Taiwan, provides the background conditions which help explain the general acceptance of Imamichi’s paper as a valid aesthetic hypothesis in both the West and the East.

Nevertheless, the opposition that Imamichi sought to capture through his notion of chiasma was not, and could not be, merely a simple dichotomy between Western and Oriental artistic tendencies, as the Taiwanese controversy shows us. Rather, a fundamental duality in Western thought (between spiritualism and materialism) and another duality in Eastern artistic ideals (between “spiritual resonance and vital movement” and “transmission by copying”) were, hesitatingly and awkwardly, mapped onto one another. The overlapping and heterodox interpretations that characterized the Taiwanese aesthetic controversy provide evidence for the complexity of the chiasma in question, one which ultimately stems from the mutual lack of equivalent notions between the West and the East.

In this context, one may better understand Japanese modernity to be a contact zone, wherein a historical metamorphosis took place via a process of reciprocal trans-cultural translations between the Eastern and Western artistic traditions.⁵⁵ Did this exchange constitute an initial step towards a global art history for the twenty-first century, one which encompasses both East and West? That question remains to be addressed in future investigations.

54 For more details on this controversy, see Kure 2014.

55 For earlier accomplishments, see Fogel 2013.

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Prosthetic Revelations: Sticking the Teachings to the Body in a Japanese New Religion

Philip SWIFT*

The Japanese new religion, Mahikari, is known primarily for its practical technique of manual purification, *okiyome*. However, this article instead focuses on the program of practices that is regarded as being equally important in terms of its purificatory and salvific effects: that of engaging with revelatory teachings, a form of engagement that is often articulated in terms of the expression “sticking the teachings to the body” (*oshie o mi ni tsukeru*). I consider this particular idiom of attachment and the ways in which it is actualized in devotional practices, and I contend that this notion of somatic yet spiritual “sticking” acts as a conceptual corrective to overly internalizing models of religiosity. In conclusion, I suggest that while Helen Hardacre once proposed that “cosmology” was analytically restricting, and argued instead in favor of “worldview,” the issue with regards to the role of embodied practice in Mahikari calls for a reconsideration of these analytical terms. Accordingly, the article ends by suggesting a turn away from “worldview,” back towards the category of the cosmological.

Keywords: Mahikari, *mi ni tsukeru*, learning, embodiment, ritual, conversion, Japanese religion, cosmology

Not for the first time, Shōji-san—my neighbor and a long-standing member of the Japanese new religion, Sūkyō Mahikari 崇教真光—was attempting to explain to me the meaning of the Mahikari revelation that one should “stick the teachings to the body” (*oshie o mi ni tsukeru* 教えを身に付ける). To attach something to the body is *like this*, he explained, taking off his glasses to illustrate. Thus, “I stick my glasses to my body” (*megane o mi ni tsukeru* メガネを身につける) he said, putting his glasses back on. It is the same when you put your clothes on, when you also “*mi ni tsukeru*”; and so too with the teachings. To stick Mahikari

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teachings to the body, he continued, is to ensure that they will “emerge spontaneously” (*shizen ni deru* 自然に出る) in daily life.

Shōji-san’s brief demonstration, if vivid enough, was perfectly straightforward. It was an object lesson in elucidating what is an otherwise utterly conventional expression in Japanese, for the phrase *mi ni tsukeru* simply refers to the physical action of putting or carrying something on the body, and, by extension, to the act of learning or the acquisition of a skill.¹ But precisely because this Japanese idiom is so ordinary, it has, I think, remained rather underexamined.² In this article, I shall argue that this notion of learning actually has something to teach us, not only because it speaks to the wider sociological issue of learning or enskilment as material practice, exemplified, for instance, in Pierre Bourdieu’s elaboration of the concept of *habitus*, the incorporated space of acquired aptitudes and sensibilities.³ It is also significant that this idea, as articulated in Mahikari, highlights a key theme in Japanese religiosity more generally, which is its thoroughgoing praxical or pragmatic ethos.⁴

In what follows, I also wish to suggest that this particular ethnographic instance of what it is to “learn religion,” conceived in terms of somatic attachment, can act as a useful conceptual corrective to widely held assumptions about religion—and in particular, the process of religious conversion, where priority is given to interiority, at the expense of embodied practice.⁵ As I have argued elsewhere, conversion, in sociological accounts of it, is often understood in internalizing terms, as a process of acquiring new beliefs, or a change of one’s “worldview.”⁶ But, in Mahikari, as I hope to show, revelatory truth is explicitly understood to be somatically accessible. In an important sense, the truth of revelation in Mahikari is mobilized and actualized via the surfaces of the body. As an elementary Mahikari textbook explains, “the reality of divinity” (*kami no gojitsuzai* 神の御実在) is “realized not conceptually” (*gainen toshite de naku* 概念としてでなく), but “through the skin” (*hadami de* 肌身で).⁷ That is to say, the knowledge revealed in the divine teachings is acquired through a kind of sensuous contact; an operation of bodily absorption or attachment that is often articulated in terms of the idiom of “sticking.”⁸

Considered in this way, as a procedure of adhesion to the body, Mahikari practice presents us with a figuration of conversion that is rather different from its standard depiction in scholarship. For instance, according to the seemingly unobjectionable contention of Marc Baer, “conversion has an internal component entailing belief and an external component

1 An anonymous reviewer proposed that I might use “suturing” in place of “sticking,” because the former is more suggestive of the formation of strong attachments. The point is a very good one. Nevertheless, if the reader will forgive the pun, I want to stick with “sticking” because it seems closer to the spirit of Shōji-san’s demonstration, which established an equivalence between the action of putting something on the body and the operation of incorporation. That is, “sticking” seems to me to possess more general applicability as a translation of *mi ni tsukeru*, because it roughly covers both the attachment of clothes and of skills or, in this instance, revelatory knowledge.

2 With a few notable and excellent exceptions. See Kondo 1990, pp. 238–239; Mohácsi 2008; Mohácsi 2018, pp. 104–106.

3 Bourdieu 1977.

4 See for instance Reader 1991, pp. 15–20.

5 This point has been argued by Keane 2007, among others.

6 Swift 2012.

7 Sūkyō Mahikari 2002, p. 62.

8 Nor is this in any way unique to Mahikari. Köpping (2002, p. 154) has brilliantly described the crucial role of the “skin-membrane” in the generative dynamics of much Japanese ritual, whereby operations of transformation are explicitly understood to take place “through the body or the skin (*karada de* or *hada de*).”

involving behavior, leading to the creation of a new self-identity and new way of life.”⁹ This is the minimal definition of conversion endorsed by the editors of the recent *Oxford Handbook on Religious Conversion*, and it is admirable in its clarity and concision. After all, it just seems axiomatic that “beliefs” are inside, and behavior is “outside.” Scholarly work on religious change in Mahikari also fits with this definition. For instance, Brian McVeigh has framed Mahikari transformations in terms of a process of “building belief through the body,” while Miyanaga Kuniko argues that Mahikari “conversion” involves an “absolute change of an individual’s epistemological orientation,” in other words, the assimilation of a novel “belief system.”¹⁰

And yet, to interpret conversion as the addition or adaption of beliefs is to answer a question that Mahikari practitioners are not asking, for they do not, in the main, conceptualize conversions in terms of “beliefs” at all, nor do they conceive of themselves as “believers” (*shinja* 信者). Rather, the term that Mahikari members use to characterize themselves is *kamikumite* 神組み手 (which literally means to be “hand in hand with the *kami*” [that is to say, with divinity]).¹¹ I would argue this particular formulation gives us an important indication of the way in which potentially transformative connections are conceptualized in Mahikari more generally. This is less in terms of a connection between “beliefs” and “behavior” than it is about the relationships between bodies, divinity, and truth. To be a *kamikumite*, as we shall see, implies having an intimate and tactile relation to revelation. Furthermore, the mode of engaging in revelation (and by implication, the attendant transformation of one’s way of living) that I will ethnographically examine here points to a more involuted topology than that assumed by the straightforward demarcation made between beliefs “inside” and bodily action “outside.” The notion of learning as somatic attachment instead suggests that what is “outside” the body is knowledge in the form of revelation, which is coextensive with the truth of the cosmos.

Thus, for Mahikari *kamikumite*, the crucial, soteriological objective, to be achieved by means of “sticking to the body,” is the task of turning this “outside” into an “inside” in order to embody the truth of Mahikari teachings in one’s everyday existence. In this sense, knowledge takes on physiological dimensions, for, just as Diana Espírito Santo has argued of the practices of Cuban spiritualists, revelatory knowledge in Mahikari is “a substance of sorts—one that is sensed and absorbed by bodies that must communicate it.”¹² The emphasis on the physicality of spiritual practice is further indicated by the designation of the Mahikari center as a *dōjō* 道場—namely, a space of training, or “site of practice,” in Grapard’s felicitous translation.¹³ The approach adopted here is therefore steadfastly centered on practice not only because, as Lucia Dolce has cogently argued, it is the most productive trend in the study of Japanese religiosity but also because Mahikari itself is quite emphatic about the centrality of the pragmatic.¹⁴

9 Cited in Rambo and Farhadian 2014, p. 11.

10 McVeigh 1997, p. 39; Miyanaga 1991, pp. 106–107.

11 I would like to thank John Breen here, who long ago got me thinking about the specificity of this conception of the relation to the *kami* in terms of *kumu* 組む.

12 Espírito Santo 2015, p. 581.

13 Grapard 2016, p. 126; cf. Davis 1980, p. 1.

14 Dolce 2015.

It is useful to think of Mahikari in terms of Peter Sloterdijk's almost gymnastic image of religion, considered less from the perspective of belief than in terms of the technosomatic formats by which it is enacted. From this vantage point, as Sloterdijk remarks, "the dichotomy of believers and unbelievers becomes obsolete and is replaced by the distinction between the practising and the untrained, or those who train differently."¹⁵ Likewise, as I will try to show, the ascetic efforts of Mahikari members to engage with sacred teachings are a matter of developing capacities of affectivity, of rendering the body receptive to truth. At issue, then, is the idea of a corporeal relation to revelation in Mahikari, such that the truth is something to be bonded to a body, in such a way that it becomes an extension of the person.

Sūkyō Mahikari

Sūkyō Mahikari is a Japanese new religion with an estimated membership of about half a million.¹⁶ Its origins are generally understood to go back to Ōmotokyō 大本教, the massively influential late-nineteenth century new religion which spawned numerous offshoots. As with the aetiologies of a number of other new religious groups in Japan, Mahikari has its foundation in revelation. It specifically traces its own beginnings to the early hours of 27 February 1959, when Okada Yoshikazu 岡田良一 (1901–1974), the founder, received an urgent instruction from a divinity named Su. "The time of heaven has come," commanded the *kami*. "Rise. Your name shall be Kōtama 光玉 (jewel of light). Raise your hand. The world has entered severe times."¹⁷ The imperative reference to "raising the hand" (*te o kazasu* 手をかざす) has to do with what would become Mahikari's distinctive practice, that of purification (*tekazashi* 手かざし, more commonly known as *okiyome* お浄め). *Kamikumite* gain the ability to perform *okiyome* because they wear an object on their bodies called an *omitama* お御霊, which anyone may receive after taking a three-day training course. The procedure of *okiyome* itself involves the radiation of divine light from the open hand, a light that is deemed to purify anything it contacts, although it is most often bodies that are the intended target of purification. Under the hot light of *okiyome*, hardened poisons which are constantly building up in the body can be melted, and accumulated karma dissolved, so the self can be brought closer to divinity.

Among Japanese new religions, Mahikari is one of the more well-documented organizations, and, understandably, *okiyome*, as Mahikari's principal ritual procedure, has claimed the lion's share of academic attention.¹⁸ But there is more to Mahikari than *okiyome*, and engagement with written texts is also a crucial aspect of Mahikari practices, which have been the subject of some excellent analyses.¹⁹ Heretofore, however, Mahikari revelation

¹⁵ Sloterdijk 2013, p. 3.

¹⁶ The question of what constitutes the "new" with regards to religious groups in Japan has been a matter of some discussion. The general consensus is that it refers to religions that have arisen since the nineteenth century. Nishiyama Shigeru has proposed a typology of "new-new religions" (*shin-shinshūkyō* 新新宗教) covering groups that came into prominence in the 1970s, which would include Mahikari. Such groups are characterised by an emphasis on experiment, on spiritual efficacy, and material evidence—in short, on "proof" rather than belief as a means of establishing relations with the divine. See Nishiyama 1988.

¹⁷ Quoted in Shimizu 1994, p. 243.

¹⁸ See Davis 1980; Knecht and Hatanaka 1993; McVeigh 1997; Louveau 2012. For a short, excellent treatment of Mahikari, its concepts and practices, see Staemmler 2011b.

¹⁹ See, for example, Knecht 1995; Broder 2008. One of the earliest is the outstanding analysis by Köpping 1967. That article retains its importance not simply owing to its stress on cosmology, but also because Köpping, the young ethnographer, was actually able to interview Okada Kōtama himself.

has largely been treated as doctrinal content, to be variously discussed and deconstructed in terms of its symbolism, its influences, and often unacknowledged borrowings. My interest is somewhat different. In an innovative analysis of Amerindian shamanism, Graham Townsley went against the grain of standard academic understandings in treating shamanism, not as a body of knowledge but as a mode of knowing. That is, his emphasis was less on what shamanism consists of, as a framework of beliefs or meanings, and more on what that framing entails, as a form of action.²⁰ My analytical strategy is similar here, in that I am not so much concerned with the substance of Mahikari revelation than with revelatory knowledge *as* substance; the notion, in other words, of written texts as somatically attachable material.

It may well be the case, as both Frédérique Louveau and Louella Matsunaga have asserted, that Mahikari produces few publications by comparison with other religious groups such as Kōfuku no Kagaku 幸福の科学 and Seichō no Ie 生長の家, whose voluminous output is such that they have been referred to as “publisher religions” (*shuppan shūkyō* 出版宗教).²¹ Matsunaga is surely mistaken, however, in deploying this difference to establish a contrast between Japanese new religions which “encourage or even require members to study” their publications, and Mahikari, which does not.²² This crucially overlooks the energy and attention that Mahikari members invest in practices of reading and writing, as we shall see below. Or, to put the point differently, while Matsunaga is absolutely correct in observing that Mahikari lays stress on experience, it is not so much that the experiential is emphasized *at the expense of* the textual, but rather that texts, too, are intended to *be experienced*, just as much as read.²³

Adhesive Exercises: Practice in Mahikari (I)

It was on one of those days when I did not go to the dojo when Shōji-san phoned at around ten o'clock at night, urging that I should receive *okiyome*. He had been a member of Mahikari for some seventeen years, and was a constant source of insight, while being quick to step in whenever he felt that I was backsliding in my practice. When he finished giving me *okiyome*, by holding his open hand over various areas of my body, he asked me for something to write on, and I offered him my notebook. He began to write the words, “The true law...” (*seihō* 正法) and I immediately guessed that he was giving me a lesson. “These are the *fundamentals* of Mahikari” (*Mahikari no konpon* 真光の根本), he said with some emphasis. I looked at the text he had handed me. It read: “Practice of the true law is indeed a treasure.’ Through the practice of giving and receiving light, and by sticking the teachings to the body, the soul will be able to come closer to the *kami*.”

“Practice these things,” Shōji-san explained, and your spirit will “move upwards.” “It’s not difficult to understand. Is it?” he added, with a certain impatience in his voice. From time to time after this, Shōji-san would repeat this maxim to me. I later learned

20 Townsley 1993.

21 Louveau 2012, p. 17; Matsunaga 2011, p. 246. “Publisher religions” is a translation of “Verlags-Religion”; see Winter 2012, p. 144.

22 Matsunaga 2011, p. 246.

23 Catherine Cornille similarly concludes that it is ritual performance rather than “the understanding of the teachings” which is paramount in Mahikari, see Cornille 1998, p. 287. But, once again, to put it like this is to miss the point that the engagement with texts is itself a kind of ritual enactment.

from him that this citation comes from the last sentence of the last revelation given by the Oshienushisama 教え主様 (master of teachings), Okada Keishu 岡田恵珠, the previous leader of Mahikari, who has since handed over the responsibility of leadership to her successor, Okada Kōya 岡田晃弥.

The sense of this divine directive is uncomplicated, as Shōji-san emphasized, but it has exacting implications, for it is intended to be nothing less than a blueprint, or model in miniature, of the practicing life in Mahikari. *Seihō*, the “true law,” is Mahikari’s own particular variation on the Buddhist expression *shōbō* 正法, “the true dharma.” Coupled with the keyword, *jissen* (practice), it refers, in Mahikari, to practice in accordance with the cosmic plan of the *kami*, and comprises two vital requirements. First, the performance of *okiyome* (both given and received); and second, the learning of divine teachings (*mioshie* み教え), to be stuck to the body, a process of learning that, as the phrase *mi ni tsukeru* says so suggestively, is as much corporeal as it is spiritual, since it associates the possibility of spiritual elevation with the act of attaching teachings to the body. As an initial observation, I want to draw attention to the propaedeutic dimension of this revelation. As with some of the other texts I will mention below, Mahikari teachings, themselves revelations, are often concerned with imparting the correct ways of engaging with those selfsame revelations.²⁴ Shōji-san’s own conduct was consummately modelled on the doctrine, since he had incorporated this very revelation—attached it to his body—by committing it to memory.

But, more importantly, what the revelation makes plain is that the argument that Mahikari values the pursuit of experience over the study of texts is only half right, since both the procedure of *okiyome* and the acquisition of the teachings are regarded as coequal praxical imperatives. It would be more correct to say that, just as much as *okiyome*, the study of texts demands embodied and experiential engagement. Mahikari teachings are understood to consist of a series of vital principles, which can only be discovered in action. Here, comprehension is corporeal; a matter of “hands-on” experience. It is relevant then, in this connection, that the then-Acting Oshienushi, in one of his monthly teachings, should point to the graphic etymology of the Chinese character for *gaku* or *manabu* 學 (to learn), a component of which (臼) means “to hold something in the hands.” A reminder, once again, of the almost physiological quality of knowledge in Mahikari. Understanding, in Mahikari, is a function of experience. “If you don’t experience it, you won’t understand” (*taiken shinai to wakaranai* 体験しないとわからない) was a phrase I heard over and over. The teachings, too, come to make sense in the light of experience, or perhaps they make sense following the experience of light. Thus, I once complained about the insoluble texture of the teachings to a young trainee minister (*dōshi* 導士) at the main dojo in Osaka. He agreed. Even Japanese don’t understand them, he cheerily admitted. “It’s a funny thing, though,” he said thoughtfully, “but if you can’t grasp some teaching or other, when you perform *okiyome*, you come to understand it.”

The model of learning at work here, as Pierre Hadot has shown regarding programs of ascetic exercise more generally, is intended to be more transformative than informative in its

²⁴ I use the term “teachings” synonymously with “revelations” because all official teachings in Mahikari are understood to be revelatory. In Mahikari, the relevant terms, *mioshie* and *gokyōji* 御教示, are used interchangeably.

aims and effects.²⁵ As I have argued elsewhere, *okiyome*, as understood by its practitioners, is fundamentally transformative; it is a technology of ontological conversion that creates material and spiritual effects capable of tangible apprehension.²⁶ But this sense of the tangibly transformative is also present in engagements with divine texts, and not only because the principle of sticking the teachings to the body is based on the notion that the teachings require a kind of haptic access if their truth is to be realized. It also reflects, as will be demonstrated below, that the texts themselves, as material objects, are deemed to be capable of producing transformative effects.

By understanding that truth is a matter of palpable, rather than purely intellectual, effects, we can perceive a relation between the realization of truth and the receptivity of bodies that is explicitly associated with neither pedagogics nor persuasion as a rhetorical expedient for the production of conviction. Rather, truth is more like something which is capable of being corporeally absorbed, admitted into a receptive body.

There are some suggestive sentences in Foucault, which might make this relation clearer. Foucault proposed that, prior to Descartes, it was

always held that a subject could not have access to the truth if he did not first operate upon himself a certain work which would make him susceptible to knowing the truth—a *work of purification* ... To put it another way: truth always has a price; no access to truth without asceticism. In Western culture up to the sixteenth century, asceticism and access to truth are always more or less obscurely linked.²⁷

These remarks would appear to be tailor-made for Mahikari, wherein operations of purification are absolutely essential, but so too is this idea that truth requires ascetic access in order to be realized. I would venture to suggest that rather more than the pre-Cartesian procedures with which he was concerned, Foucault's proposal gains even greater analytical traction when applied to the wide range of physico-spiritual programs in Japan, where the linkage between ascetic practice and the activation of truth has always been anything but obscure.²⁸

Now, one might well question the extent to which Mahikari practices can be described as “ascetic” at all, since one of the democratic attractions of such religious groups is the almost instant efficacy of the practices they promote. It is certainly true that Mahikari promotional literature often draws a distinction between *okiyome* as an easily accessible ability and the arduous ritual exercises associated with more traditional means of attaining magical powers.²⁹

But I would argue that this presentational discrepancy is the product of a well-marked inside/outside contrast that Mahikari draws with respect to members, and those who

²⁵ See Hador 1995.

²⁶ Swift 2012; Swift 2021.

²⁷ Foucault 2000, pp. 278–279 (author's emphasis).

²⁸ To take a single instance, in Shugendō 修験道 the body is explicitly recognized as the medium for the realization of salvific truth; see Grapard 2016, p. 143.

²⁹ Thus, one such Mahikari publication states that, in order to obtain spiritual powers, it is no longer necessary to engage in “decades of hard austerities” (*nanjūnen to iu kibishii shugyō* 何十年という厳しい修行), see Sūkyō Mahikari 2002, p. 16.

have yet to join. For, as we shall see further below, the life and language of practice *within* Mahikari is characterized by a strongly ascetic dynamic, where practice is framed as an urgent task, a matter of devotional, repetitive efforts.³⁰ That is to say, it is easy enough to join Mahikari, but to remain as a diligent member is to commit oneself to a regime of daily life practice. As Louveau remarks, “If it’s easy to raise the hand [in performing *okiyome*], maintaining the effectiveness of the sacred is conditional on rigorous practice.”³¹

To the extent that Mahikari teachings exhort their adherents to “transform their existence into a kind of permanent exercise,” these kinds of somatic truth-procedures can also be understood in Foucauldian fashion to comprise “techniques of the self,” ascetic regimens orchestrated for the purpose of self-change.³² My point is that the whole series of practices coming under the rubric of *seihō jissen* are a physical expedient requiring perpetual exercise for the conversion of the self, and that they are also a means of generating a spectrum of other spiritual and material transformations, not merely within the individual, but in the cosmos at large.

Doing Truth: Practice in Mahikari (II)

The simultaneously ascetic and existential trajectory of practice in Mahikari was illustrated during a study session I once attended at the main dojo in Osaka. After expounding on the significance of a revelation given by Oshienushisama, the Mahikari minister turned to the importance of putting the teachings into practice. He began drawing on the blackboard: the bell-curve line of a hill, and at the very bottom, a stick figure. At the hill’s summit he wrote the word “happiness” (*kōfuku* 幸福). We all wish for happiness, he observed, pointing to the picture. We are all looking towards it, from below. We are, however, heavily burdened with impurities. To illustrate, he drew a looping, blue cloud around the stick figure. But, he went on, by following *seihō mioshie* we can try and make our way towards happiness. We try to climb the hill. We might lose sight of the top, but the *kami* will give us guidance (*omichibiki* お導き). We might be tempted to give up, but by coming to the dojo, giving *okiyome*, performing divine service (*gohōshi* 御奉仕), and saving people (*bito sukui* 人救い), he stated, gesturing at the words he had written up, we can dissolve spiritual obstructions and clouds of spiritual impurities. It is insufficient merely to study the teachings, as one can only discover these things through experience (*taiken o tōshite* 体験を通して).

If almost everything in the study session was concerned with the importance of doing and experiencing, then these imperatives were not said to be easy. As the minister’s allegory of the hill made clear, Mahikari practice can be arduous, an uphill struggle, and the way to salvation difficult.³³ But what the lesson also makes clear is that revelatory truth in Mahikari has to be accessed somatically; it can only be realized through the prism of

30 To take a single instance, the term *gyō* 行 (ascetic practice) makes frequent appearances in Mahikari teachings, often in various compounds and combinations: e.g., *magyō* 真行 (true austerities); *kansha no gyō* 感謝の行 (the ascetic practice of gratitude); *sunao no gyō* ス直の行 (the practice of meekness towards Su *kami*); and *kokoro no geza no gyō* 心の下座の行 (the austerity of humility).

31 Louveau 2012, p. 196. The notion that a system of soteriological practices can, at different moments, be presented either as easy or difficult has been explored by Faure in his analysis of the sudden/gradual dichotomy in Chan/Zen Buddhist rhetorics. See Faure 1991.

32 Foucault 1990, p. 49; Swift 2012, pp. 276–277.

33 What is also evident from this analogy of ascent is the association between elevation and the state of purity in Mahikari. I have explored this connection elsewhere; see Swift 2021.

experience. Mahikari pedagogy consists, in large measure, of appeals to the concrete, to the idea that the teachings require sensuous comprehension, or what Ian Reader, emphasizing a central tenet of Japanese religious practice, calls “the importance of personal verification.”³⁴ Indeed, Mahikari practice could well be characterized in terms of what William James called “*verification*,” insofar as truth is conceived as a matter of making and doing.³⁵ In James’s scheme, truth is understood as a dynamic property, which is, as he says, “realized *in rebus*”—that is, in things.³⁶ Similarly, in Mahikari understanding, truth is something that is actualized in practice. The notion of truth at work here is not so much something taken to be an inherent property of propositions as it is a property and consequence of action. John Dewey’s appraisal of the pragmatism of the Alexander Technique would work just as well as a description of Mahikari’s praxical ethos: its “principle is experimental,” wrote Dewey; the “proof lies in *doing it*.”³⁷ In similar fashion, truth in Mahikari is deemed to be something that is *done*.³⁸

Indicative of this notion of “doing” truth are the terms for a number of different activities, all prefixed by the character *ma* 真 (“truth”): most obviously, Mahikari (“true light”), which designates the group itself as well as its principle ritual procedure (*Mahikari no waza* 真光の業, the “technique of true light”). But missionary activities are also marked as forms of truth-doing: *maboe* 真吼え, meaning to spread the truth of the teachings, and *makubari* 真配り (“distribution of truth”); that is, the dissemination of promotional literature—a practice I will return to below. But the relevance of this pragmatist understanding of truth-doing extends further, insofar as Mahikari announces itself as a movement defined by “supra-religious pragmatism” (*sūkyō puragumachizumu* 崇教ブラグマチズム).³⁹ This is not to suggest, of course, that Jamesian philosophy is somehow the secret key to understanding Mahikari doctrine. Rather, owing to Mahikari’s pragmatist emphasis, experience is understood to offer the key verification procedure for the truth of its teachings, and that this emphasis itself is just a more ascetically inflected, intensified form of the pragmatic principle underlying much religious practice in Japan.

Mahikari practices, then, are conceived as various means of *verification*, various forms of doing the truth, which, taken all together, are governed by an “ascetic imperative.”⁴⁰ In other words, a totalizing program of practices and perpetual exercises. This is summed up in the oft-mentioned exhortation in Mahikari to live “a spirit-first way of life” (*reishu no ikikata* 霊主の生き方)—that is, to give precedence to the spiritual in everything a person does. But this does not mean that one thereby turns one’s back on the somatic, for Mahikari members are urged to “attach” this spiritual way of life to their bodies.⁴¹

Mi ni tsukeru, as we have already observed, refers not only to putting or wearing something on the body, but also means “to learn” or to “acquire a skill.” But note that the physical dimension is no less present in this latter sense, since, as Dorinne Kondo points

34 Reader 1996, p. 268.

35 James 2000, p. 88; italics in original.

36 James 2000, p. 96.

37 Cited in Armstrong 1998, p. 108; italics in original.

38 See, for example, Holbraad 2012, p. 58.

39 Okada 2000a, p. 9; cf. Davis 1980, p. 213.

40 Harpham 1987.

41 Oshienushisama 2002, p. 11.

out, to develop an ability by attaching it to the body means to intensively incorporate it, so that it becomes a “palpable part of the self.”⁴² Here, I propose that the idea of learning as somatic attachment comprises a “body technique” in the classic Maussian sense: a palpable operation of adhesion to the body—a prosthetic project.⁴³ This is a mode of learning more concerned with the apprenticeship of the body than with the apprehension of ideas, and, as with apprenticeship in general, such learnings laid down in the body are open-ended in their potential for development. A technique once learned is not learned absolutely, and is always capable of further elaboration. As Mauss says, “the technique of swimming perfects itself day by day.”⁴⁴

In an edition of the monthly Mahikari journal (*Mahikari-shi* 真光誌), the Acting Oshienushi of Mahikari comes very close to this Maussian conception. He states that to learn (*manabu* 学ぶ) is more about “praxical bodily acquisition” (*jissen-teki ni taitoku suru* 実践的に体得する) than it is about acquiring abstract “knowledge” (*chishiki* 知識). Therefore, to learn in Mahikari is akin to learning to swim: “No matter how much one knows about the theory of swimming [*oyogi-kata no riron* 泳ぎ方の理論], one won’t be able to instantly swim when one gets in the water.” The skill of swimming can only be “learned through experience” (*taiken-teki ni manabu* 体験的に学ぶ).⁴⁵ Accordingly, kamikumite are urged to undertake a similar kind of experiential immersion in Mahikari practice. This program of bodily adaption and attachment is also an explicitly ascetic project—we might even speak of a prosthetic ascetics—since, as Yuasa Yasuo points out regarding Japanese practices of self-cultivation (*shugyō* 修行), an accomplishment is attached to the body (*gei ga mi ni tsuku* 芸が身につく) through constantly accumulated exercises of the body.⁴⁶

In the same teaching quoted above, the leader of Mahikari explains that humans are not the only beings that learn by means of immersing their bodies in practice. Animals also engage in training their bodies. For example, nightingales learn how to sing through practice; and the cicada lives through learning (*manande ikite’oru* 学んで生きておる), training its tiny body to produce its resounding songs.⁴⁷ In this expanded notion of bodily training, we are presented with a kind of cosmic ecology of practicing beings (both human and nonhuman), a planetary vision of ascetic practice reminiscent of Nietzsche’s notion of the earth as the “ascetic planet par excellence.”⁴⁸ I will return to this cosmological theme below.

Copying as Somatic Sticking and the Autonomous Agency of Revelation

Perhaps the most vivid instance of the ascetic imperative of “attaching teachings to the body” is the monthly event known as the *gokyōji kakitori* 御教示書き取り (lit., “writing down the teachings”). The revelations (*gokyōji* 御教示) in this case are teachings revealed by Oshienushisama—and subsequently, by her surrogate, the Acting Oshienushi—at

42 Kondo 1990, p. 238.

43 See Mauss 1950, pp. 365–386.

44 Mauss 2002, p. 51.

45 Oshienushisama Odairi 2003, p. 20.

46 Yuasa 1990, p. 133.

47 There is a precedent for this image of practicing animals. In his study of educational practices during the Tokugawa period, Dore (1965, p. 38) quotes the Tokugawa-era philosopher Miura Baien to the following effect: “*Gaku* means learning. A bird learning to fly, a cat playing with a ball, are each learning their own ‘way’ in life.”

48 Cited in Ansell-Pearson and Large 2006, p. 426.

a ceremony (*gesshisai* 月始祭) held each month at Suza, Mahikari's main shrine in Gifu Prefecture. These revelations are published later in the monthly Mahikari journal, and *kamikumite* are urged to read and reread them. But prior to their publication, a meeting is held at which *kumite* are given the opportunity to copy down the content of the relevant revelation from a text that is dictated to them.

The manner in which this pre-published text is produced is rather remarkable. Mahikari members and staff who have attended the *gesshisai* at Suza in person, who have copied down what they heard at that event, will compare notes (*yomiawase* 読み合わせ) with others who were there, in order to produce a document that is as faithful as possible to the given revelation. It is this collated, provisional text which is then dictated at local dojos. The *kumite*, the majority of whom will not have attended the ceremony, are then able to make copies for themselves, by hand, of the revelation.

Turning up at such an evening meeting at Akashi dojo, I asked the minister if I might make an audio recording of it, for research purposes. This is not possible, she said, since the version of the revelation to be read out, based as it was on the accumulated notes of a number of *kumite*, might not be completely "correct"—she said in English. However, she would allow me to make a copy of her copy, so long as you do it "with your own hand," as she put it. The minister's stipulation in favor of manual, against mechanical, copying, is a telling instance of the importance of tangibly engaging with the text.

But the transcription of revelation is not confined to *kakitori* meetings. Mahikari members also make individual efforts to copy (*kakiutsusu* 書き写す) the teachings. A sign on the wall in Osaka's main dojo carried the motivational slogan, "Let's copy the received, reverent teachings." While at this dojo, members *were* allowed to use a photocopier, but this was regarded as inferior to copying by hand. The latter "takes a long time," about two to three hours, one member told me. Indeed, Shōji-san made it into a regular practice, explaining to me that he learned the teachings by "reading them and writing them, reading, writing, reading, writing"; a repetitive expression that mirrored the repetitions of his method.

It appears that efforts have been made within Mahikari in recent years to reinforce the importance of devotional copying as a means of incorporating revelation. Previous ethnographic accounts of Mahikari mention the practice of listening to recordings of the teachings delivered at the monthly ceremony at Suza, using tapes distributed to local dojos.⁴⁹ But during my time in Mahikari, no such taped revelations were played at any of the dojos I attended.⁵⁰ Additionally, a *kumite* at the dojo in Akashi told me that a transcript of these teachings used to be sent to each dojo by fax from the headquarters at Takayama, but that this was no longer the case. When I asked why, she explained that Mahikari is "strict" (*kibishii* 厳しい). Reading between the lines, it seems that it was the act of *reading* itself that was regarded as problematic, since it might lead to too shallow an engagement with revelation; and the same reason might account for the discontinuation of the tapes. A divine teaching by Oshienushisama lends support to this ascetic explanation: commenting on the

49 Okada 1993, p. 125; McVeigh 1997, p. 162.

50 There is an exception here, which is that tape recordings of teachings by Sukuinushisama (Okada Kōtama) were sometimes played at the monthly ceremonies at Suza. The fact remains, however, that the revelations delivered each month at Suza were transmitted at local dojos by means of the dictation of texts that had been put together by the *kumite* themselves.

ending of the practice of playing tape-recordings of Mahikari revelations (*mikoe no tēpu* み声のテープ, lit., “tape of the honorable voice”), Oshienushisama states that listening to a tape encourages the development of a “casual attitude” (*an’i na sōnen* 安易な想念). If the teachings only “go in one ear and out the other” (*kikinagasu* 聞き流す) then they will not become “attached to the body” (*mi ni tsuku mono de wa arimasen* 身につくものではありません).⁵¹

The Mahikari knowledge-practice of transcription invites comparison with the long-standing practice of sutra copying (*shakyō* 写経). The copying of sutras, the *Heart Sutra* (*hannya shingyō* 般若心経) in particular, since it is so short, is a practice of devotion and merit generation (*kudoku* 功德) that constitutes an abiding form of ritual action in Japan, associated, for example, with the making of pilgrimages.⁵² And, as with *shakyō*, there is more to the manual copying of the texts in Mahikari than the mere dissemination or inculcation of information, for this action produces effects in its own right. Ian Reader and George Tanabe note of the practices of transcribing and reciting sutras in general that, “The value of the sutra is not just in the discursive meaning of the text, but in the ritual invocation which activates its mysterious powers.”⁵³ Thus, a Mahikari member at the Akashi dojo suggested to me that the teachings would work their effects even if I could only read *hiragana* characters. She recalled reading a story in a Mahikari magazine about a boy who tried to read *gokyōji* even though he did not know many *kanji*; still, “somehow, it [the teachings] went in to his spirit” (*nantoka, tamashii ni haitte kita* 何とか、魂に入って来た).

Revelatory knowledge in Mahikari is more than merely epistemological; it also has ontological consequences.⁵⁴ In this sense, comprehension is not a necessary condition for transformation. Thus, in their capacity as *goshinsho* 御神書 (divine writings), Mahikari publications are *themselves* deemed to be capable of producing effects, whether one engages with them or not. For example, it is regarded as inadvisable to leave Mahikari publications anywhere near *butsudan* 仏壇 (ancestor altars) for any length of time, since *goshinsho* give off divine light, which might temporarily blind the ancestors enshrined in the altar. Similarly, to read from a divine book can sometimes be to feel its effects. Attempting a thirty-times trial of reading the most recent monthly teaching in the Mahikari magazine, required in order to attend a study meeting, one *kumite* told me that she “became hot” from the light emanating from its pages.

In sum, this intensive engagement with texts is indicative of the efforts that *kumite* make in order to absorb the truth of Mahikari teachings, to fuse the teachings together with their own bodies. In his excellent study of asceticism, Gavin Flood frames the project of ascetic self-formation in terms of a process of “entextualisation of the body.”⁵⁵ By incorporating the form of a particular tradition, the body becomes progressively text-like; a sort of ascetic palimpsest. But Mahikari practices of *mi ni tsukeru* effectively turn Flood’s formulation on its head, for they are less concerned with a process of bodies turning into texts than with one of the texts turning into bodies; it is not so much the entextualisation of bodies, but the embodiment of texts, that is at issue.

51 Okada 2000b, p. 102.

52 See Reader 2006, p. 67; Borup 2008, pp. 201–204.

53 Reader and Tanabe 1998, p. 76.

54 As Diana Espirito Santo argues for the nature of knowledge among Cuban spiritualists, see Espirito Santo 2015, p. 580.

55 Flood 2004.

The Quantification of Devotion and Perpetual Pedagogy

In his account of ascetic exercises in the Graeco-Roman world, the transformative programs that he styled “techniques of the self,” Foucault remarks on what he calls the “testing procedures” by which such exercises could be measured, having “the dual role,” as he says, “of moving one forward in the acquisition of a virtue and of marking the point one has reached.”⁵⁶ Mahikari practice, too, is replete with such procedures, such as reading teachings thirty times, noted above. There are numerous means in Mahikari of marking the progress of practice and of moving it forward, challenges and objectives that are set at every level, from the transnational and organizational to the level of the local dojo and down to the personal—which is where it really matters, insofar as the personal is conceived as the fractal and partible aspect of the cosmos at large.

A good illustration of a testing procedure at the local level is a particular form of truth-doing known as *makubari*. *Makubari* is the practice of handing out promotional literature in order to spread the word about Mahikari. A pamphlet, *Yōkō raifu* 陽光ライフ (Sunshine life) is produced by Mahikari and delivered to each dojo expressly for this purpose. Members themselves buy the pamphlets from the dojo; how they are given out is generally an individual affair. I once spent a couple of hours in the summer doing *makubari* at the behest of Shōji-san. We handed out leaflets in the hot streets around the entrance to Akashi West train-station; an awkward afternoon when my ethnographic self temporarily turned promoter. There were, naturally, *kumite* who were much better at this practice than I was. In order to measure its success and to give it an extra incentive, the Akashi dojo had launched its own initiative. On the wall in the dojo was a poster that announced “Distribute one hundred thousand copies of the Truth” (*jūman-mai makubari* 十万枚真配り). On the poster was printed a grid and this had been half filled with stickers of various shapes and colors. Each square on the grid represented a hundred copies of *Yōkō raifu* handed out. Every time a member achieved this target they were entitled to fill one square with a sticker. Certain *kumite* appeared to be trying to differentiate their efforts by their choice of sticker, creating the impression that a certain one-upmanship was at work. (One member was using cute little stickers of dogs, for example, and their spread across the grid spoke eloquently of their individual exertions.) Other dojos had different schemes. The *makubari* roster was just one of a range of material means of quantifying commitment, and of making it visible. As Andrew Holden has remarked with regards to the arguably more stringent audit culture enacted by Jehovah’s Witnesses, in which the time spent proselytizing is subject to continual assessment, these ways of gauging and displaying devotion encourage members to “think quantitatively about their salvation.”⁵⁷ But the practice of *makubari* not only serves as a means of spreading the Mahikari message, it is also said to benefit the person doing it. In the same way that the giving of *okiyome* also purifies the giver, the performance of divine services (*gohōshi*) like *makubari* is understood to be a form of purification.

Moreover, the leaflets themselves are often purified before they are handed out, with the bundles of *Yōkō raifu* being placed in front of the *goshintai* 御神体 (lit., “honourable *kami* body”), a sacred panel of paper hanging in the dojo, which emits divine light from the *kami*. Left there for a while, they become irradiated with the *kami*’s light. Here,

56 Foucault 1990, p. 58.

57 Holden 2002, p. 72.

purification serves the purpose of increasing their effectiveness as material mediators of truth. But equally, what this also demonstrates is that truth, which is so often considered to be correlative with the sense and effects of divine light, is understood to be transmittable by means of *contact*. It is capable of being absorbed, whether by bodies, or, in this instance, bundles of paper. Other kinds of material objects, the *goshintai* being the most powerful example, are also attributed with light-emitting, purificatory agency in their own right, as I showed above.

The ultimate arbiters and orchestrators of testing procedures are the divinities. The challenges and adversities that Mahikari members may face are sometimes referred to as “the testing of the *kami*” (*kamidameshi* 神試し) and “training by the *kami*” (*kamikitae* 神鍛え). It is, however, their human representatives, the leadership of Mahikari, whose ascetic directives set the pace of practice, in the form of a seemingly unending series of organizational objectives (*mokuhyo* 目標) and personal performance targets. But the leaders, and the Oshienushi in particular, do not only instruct; they also set the example. As with other Japanese new religions, the leader of Mahikari is the very embodiment of ultra-ascetic accomplishment.⁵⁸ Oshienushisama herself was said to be perpetually at work in a small room, without air-conditioning in summer or heating in winter.⁵⁹ No one ever saw her sleep because she began her work before others awoke and finished only after they went to bed. Among her many ascetic engagements, she was said to undertake the “modulation” (*chōsei* 調整) of every *omitama* that anyone would receive after taking a training course. But in addition to all this, she also accomplished the “four sacred tasks” (*yondai seigyō* 四大聖業), that is, the completion of four monumental building projects, including the construction of Suza, Mahikari’s main shrine.

But if the body of the Oshienushi is exemplary as the paradigm of the practicing body, it also has a more expansive cosmological function. For, in keeping with the logic of what we might call the “cosmic somatics” of Mahikari, in which the body is regarded as a major cosmic and soteriological operator, the body of the Oshienushi constitutes a kind of super-body, a scaled-up version of the bodies of regular *kumite*. This is so because, according to Okada Kōtama, although the *omitama* worn on the body establishes a link (*omusubi*), otherwise known as a “spirit-line” (*reibasen* 霊波線) to the *kami*, all such connections must first pass through the body of the Oshienushi, without which it would not be possible to link (*tsunagu*) to divinity.⁶⁰ Hence, just as the *omitama* functions as a container for the relation between the *kami* and the *kumite*, so too, the body of the Oshienushi is characterized by a kind of “expansive containment,” operating as a meta-container for the relations of the entire corporate body of *kumite*.⁶¹

The extra-ordinary body of the Oshienushi is at the very apex of a system of ascetic metaphysics, a global, or cosmic conception of practice—a cosmological pedagogy. In this, Mahikari’s vision of transformational training, embodied in the notion of *seihō jissen* as a lifelong enterprise, bears certain similarities to the Christian model of conversion as a cosmic pedagogy, where, particularly in its Augustinian incarnation, conversion is configured as “a

58 See Köpping 2002, pp. 107–108.

59 See Louveau 2012, p. 342.

60 Shodai Oshienushisama 2003, p. 42.

61 See Copeman and Ikegame 2012.

long pedagogical process lasting until death, full of pitfalls and reversals, and by no means assured of attaining its goal, no matter what its beginning.”⁶² Except that, in Mahikari, this pedagogical process carries on beyond death itself, for the spirits of the dead are also subject to a program of ascetic practices (*gyō*), having to undergo training in the astral world (*yūkai* 幽界). The arduousness of that training to a large extent depends on the degree of ascetic effort made by the living in the present world (*genkai* 現界) before they die.

But this totalizing and stringent vision of the cosmos as a deep space of perpetual exercise is perhaps best exemplified in Okada Kōtama’s own revision, made with an extra, ascetic inflection, of the familiar metaphor of human life as a theater. “Life,” he countered, “is not a stage, but a dojo, where one engages in a serious game until one dies.”⁶³ This cosmological notion that the dojo is coextensive with the totality of life amounts to equating the dojo with the world, or a *dojo-fication* of the space of existence; in other words, a transposition of dojo space onto what Schattschneider (after Nancy Munn) calls the “bodily spacetime” of ascetic practice, the cultivation of an ascetic perspective—a dojo disposition—in the everyday lives of Mahikari members.⁶⁴

Concluding with Cosmology

In the course of this inquiry I have stressed the importance of the cosmological angle in order to foreground the totalizing character of the conception of practice in Mahikari. Yasumaru Yoshio noted that “cosmological questions are total questions” which, articulated in the concepts and practices of religious groups, are capable of relating the most intimate insides to the most ultimate outsides, the innermost aspects of the self to fundamental cosmic processes.⁶⁵ In her seminal investigation into the underlying conceptual framework common to Japanese new religions, however, Helen Hardacre disavowed “cosmology” altogether as a useful term of analysis, in favor of “world view.”⁶⁶ The problem with cosmology, she argued, was that it was hampered by a “static language,” hardly amenable to the dynamics of practice that she was, rightly, concerned with analyzing. Hardacre’s methodological move was justified given that cosmology in studies of religion at the time had come to be associated with a kind of frozen holism, or a fixed picture of the world.⁶⁷

In an instance, as it were, of the karmic law of academic concepts, the fortunes of the two terms have since reversed, and I suggest that it is now cosmology that allows for a more conceptually flexible and expansive language of description. For cosmology does not only refer to a particular vision or configuration of the cosmos, it also enables the potential to give more emphasis to actions and processes.⁶⁸ While the word cosmology carries no implications as to the way a world is engaged with, worldview—suggesting, as it does, the relation of a viewer to a vision—is, as Walter Ong noted long ago, marked by a visualist

62 Morrison 1992, p. 24.

63 Okada 1999, p. 69.

64 Schattschneider 2003, p. 149

65 Quoted in Shimazono 2013, p. 355. As McVeigh argued of the experiences of Mahikari members, transformations at the level of the self are often taken as tangible evidence of wider cosmic operations, see McVeigh 1997, p. 44.

66 Hardacre 1986, p. 9.

67 See Abramson and Holbraad 2014, pp. 5–6.

68 For an excellent analysis of the conceptual state of play of cosmology in anthropology, see Abramson and Holbraad 2014, as well as the contributions therein.

bias.⁶⁹ In the case I have been considering here, it does not, and cannot, adequately capture the praxical, somatic, and sensuous engagement with textual materials in Mahikari. One might summarize the difference in the following way: if worldview implies “viewing,” cosmology implicates “doing,” and that practices of sticking in Mahikari constitute not simply a view *of* the world, but a mode of engagement *with* it. As Webb Keane argues, if we want to understand practitioners of religion, then we are required to stick to the ethnographic principle of attending to what they “have to say about their cosmos and its implications for how they set about acting in, and on, the world.”⁷⁰

Thus, the conception of practice in Mahikari, epitomized by the idea of *mi ni tsukeru*, is not framed in terms of viewing or vision or systems of belief. It is, as we have seen, instead a tactile and embodied, cosmological operation, whereby the substance of revelatory truth is accessed by a much-repeated means of somatic attachment. Having been sufficiently, somatically “stuck” and internalized by this adhesive ascetic process, the truth of the teachings is held to emerge spontaneously, in everyday action. To borrow the phraseology of Alfred Gell, it is a “process of involution” which involves “making an inside of an outside, and an outside of an inside.”⁷¹ As such, “worldview” is inadequate as a means of making sense of the kinds of intimate connectivities involved. The haptic modality of relation to the teachings in Mahikari is arguably more akin to the concept of “skinship,” which better represents the ascetic efforts Mahikari members make in order to achieve a skinship with divinity.

In closing, I should note a potential objection to the emphasis that I have placed on the body. This would be to argue that, contrary to what this article asserts, Mahikari actually grants preeminence to the *spirit*, since it inherited from Ōmotokyō the cosmological postulate of *reishu taijū* 霊主体従.⁷² According to Mahikari’s rendition of this principle, human beings are composite constructs, consisting of the spiritual body (*reitai* 霊体), which is foremost, followed by the astral (*yūtai* 幽体), and finally the physical (*nikutai* 肉体). But notice how all three concepts are nonetheless configured in terms of “bodies” (*tai*, *karada* 体). It is partly for this reason that I referred earlier to Mahikari’s “cosmic somatics,” a cosmology premised, in important respects, on different but interrelated, or correlative aspects of, bodies. The spirit, too, is conceived as a kind of body.

Mahikari exhibits many of the features which Ernst Cassirer identified with the operations of mythical thinking. “Despite all the ‘spirituality’ of its *objects* and *contents*, its ‘logic’—the *form* of its contents—clings to bodies,” with the result that various spiritual attributes, relations and agencies, are accordingly conceived in terms of “transferable substances,” concretized forms of the spiritual, capable of being physically transmitted.⁷³ It is quite in keeping with this spirit that I give a final instance of contact, of the significance of sensuous attachment and tangible transfer. Attending the monthly ceremony at Suza, my friend Yoshino-san appeared, seeming excited, and grabbed my hand, shaking it, saying,

69 Ong 1969.

70 Keane 2007, p. 32.

71 Gell 1996, p. 39.

72 See Staemmler 2011a, p. 133.

73 Cassirer 1955, pp. 59, 56. Among other examples, Cassirer considers the Shinto practice of *katashiro* (形代, usually a person-shaped piece of paper that has an apotropaic function) as instantiating the idea of substantial transferability; in this case, the transfer of impurity.

with a certain thrill in her voice, that she had just shaken hands with someone who had just shaken hands with the Oshienushi. “*Utsushita*” (移した), “I’ve transferred it,” she declared, satisfied.

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Shaku Unshō in Korea: The Buddhist Precepts and Colonialism in Modern East Asia

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In this article, I will examine the engagement of two precept-upholding monks, Shaku Unshō and his disciple, Tanaka Seijun, with the notion of “Korean Buddhism.” Disaffected by the decadence surrounding Japanese Buddhism, in 1906 Unshō and Seijun traveled to Korea, seeking an ideal Buddhism in what became Japan’s new protectorate after the Russo-Japanese War.

Existing scholarship on Japanese Buddhism has emphasized its disregard for the precepts. Meanwhile, post-World War II Korean Buddhists sought to reform Korean Buddhism by associating it with priests who observed monastic precepts. Japanese Buddhism and Korean Buddhism were therefore associated with breaking and adhering to the precepts, respectively, and the boundaries between them were discursively produced during Japan’s colonization of Korea.

The article both details the origins and complicates the simple contrast which is often drawn between these two Buddhisms. I argue that Unshō and Seijun used the idea of Buddhism’s supposed degeneracy in Korea to redirect the criticism of their contemporaries in Japan. By the time of the Russo-Japanese War, the precept-oriented vision associated with Unshō, in particular, had made these priests object of deep skepticism in Japan, but Korea provided a new stage for the realization of their ideal Buddhism. Unshō and Seijun’s deployment of narratives regarding reformation and regeneration around Buddhism demonstrates how modern religious dynamics in East Asia revolved around these precepts.

Keywords: modern Japanese Buddhism, Tanaka Seijun, transnational religions in Korea and Japan, precepts-revival movement, true dharma, modern esoteric Buddhism, Buddhist reformation

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The Japanese phrase *Nihon bukkō* 日本仏教 (Japanese Buddhism) combines a term referring to the nation-state of Japan (*Nihon*) with a modern compound, consisting of the characters for “Buddha” and “teachings,” that is used to refer to “Buddhism” (*bukkyō*). It is a recent invention. From the Meiji 明治 period (1868–1912) onwards the singularity of “Japanese Buddhism”—a Buddhism particular to one country—would be articulated through a discourse that highlighted the dichotomy between East and West and drew upon the newly translated categories of “science,” “civilization,” “philosophy,” and “religion.”¹ This new Japanese Buddhism was knitted from multiple, intertwined threads by Japan’s Buddhists and their allies, and was influenced by both broader domestic developments shaping the modern study of Buddhism in Japan, and the intimidating scrutiny the new concept was subjected to by European and American scholarship. One particularly vital thread in the resultant tapestry was Japanese encounters with Buddhism throughout Asia, which, as Richard Jaffe, Erik Schickelanz, and others have pointed out in recent years, played a significant role in the development of notions of a particularly Japanese Buddhism.²

This article will tease out the importance of this Asian encounter by examining how two Shingon monks, Shaku Unshō 釈雲照 (1827–1909) and his disciple, Tanaka Seijun 田中清純 (1876–1941), responded to “Korean Buddhism.” Unshō and Seijun’s encounter with Buddhism in Korea was mediated by this burgeoning discourse on a specifically “Japanese” variant, as well as being crucially shaped by the efforts of the Japanese state to colonize Korea after the Russo-Japanese War. Unshō was a major figure in modern Japan’s monastic precept-revival movement who, unlike many of the monastics in Japan at the time, made maintenance of the traditional precepts central to his authority; Seijun was his young disciple who accompanied and vigorously supported Unshō’s missionary activities, keeping detailed records of them. In foregrounding Unshō and Seijun’s engagement with Korean Buddhism, I will show how their idealized vision of precept practice in fact became a tool with which to draw new boundaries between “authentic” and “corrupted” Buddhism, and contributed to the articulation of a specifically Japanese Buddhism during the colonial expansion of the Japanese Empire.

Existing scholarship on Japanese Buddhism has emphasized a disregard of the precepts as a defining feature of the Buddhism that developed in Japan. Most scholars today would posit that a perception of the existence of differences from the monastic precepts characteristic of Buddhism elsewhere in Asia has played a significant role in discourses surrounding a specifically Japanese Buddhism. However, the assertion that freedom from monastic precepts was positive for Buddhism in Japan only appears in the modern period, before accelerating after 1900.³ This discourse on monastic precepts in modern Japan has inherently transnational referents that do not fit neatly within the framework of national history, as will be demonstrated below.

The same can be said for the formation of a discourse on Korean Buddhism (*Kankoku bukkō* 韓国仏教/*Chōsen bukkō* 朝鮮仏教), the contemporary self-perception of which places great store in the rejection of meat-eating and marriage. According to the historian

1 See Klautau 2011; Klautau 2012.

2 See Schickelanz 2016 and Jaffe 2019.

3 As seen in the writings of the historian of Buddhism Murakami Senshō 村上專精 (1851–1929). Orion Klautau emphasizes that the effort to articulate the specificity of Japanese Buddhism in these terms was in full swing by the second half of the first decade of the twentieth century. See Klautau 2012, pp. 83–117.

Je Jum-suk 諸点淑, “Korean Buddhism” was also called “Buddhism in the mountains” before the colonial period. In other words, it emphasized priests leaving the secular world in order to strictly observe the precepts and meditate deep in the mountains. However, under colonial rule, Korean Buddhism transformed into an “urban Buddhism,” in which the majority of priests married. After the liberation of South Korea in 1945, a campaign to drive out Buddhism perceived as pro-Japanese took place under the slogan of “removing the residue of the Japanese empire.” Postwar Korean Buddhists sought to reform Korean Buddhism by once again associating it with those “pure priests” who had observed the monastic precepts, transforming them into symbols of anti-Japanese resistance.⁴

Kim Tachoon 金泰勲 notes that Korean Buddhism is “a category of modern Buddhism that emerged as an academic term and a religious institution” in an effort to articulate Korean national identity “in the context of the modern empire of Japan.”⁵ Specifically, he claims that the notion of Korean Buddhism was invented by the Japanese, was only used by Korean Buddhists themselves after 1912, and thus that the idea of Korean Buddhism reflected the gaze of Japanese Buddhists.⁶ Japanese Buddhism and Korean Buddhism were therefore associated with breaking and adhering to the precepts, respectively, and it is generally understood that the boundaries between these two Buddhisms were discursively produced within academia over the course of Japan’s colonization of Korea.⁷

This article challenges the simple binary represented by these two Buddhisms through its analysis of the writings of Unshō and Seijun. I argue that Unshō and Seijun, as precept-oriented Japanese Buddhists, used the idea of Buddhism’s supposed “degeneracy” in Korea to redirect criticism from their Japanese contemporaries. By the time of the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905), the clerical-oriented vision associated with Unshō, in particular, had become a marginal presence and object of deep skepticism in Japan, but Korea provided a new stage for the realization of ideal Buddhism. Unshō and Seijun’s deployment of narratives regarding the need for “reformation” and “regeneration” in religion, and their use of the logic of self/other in their interaction with Buddhist traditions on the Korean Peninsula, also demonstrates how modern Japanese religious discourse was articulated as a set of transnational issues.

In an important study, Hwansoo Kim has shown that Unshō’s mission in Korea aimed at realizing an ideal Buddhism through the revival of monastic precepts.⁸ He argues that, in this sense, Unshō must be distinguished from those Japanese Buddhists who destroyed Korean Buddhism by introducing meat-eating, marriage, and the non-observance of the precepts. It is significant that Unshō also thought that Buddhism in the Japan of his time

4 Je 2018, pp. 7–8.

5 Kim 2014, p. 295.

6 Kim 2014, pp. 302–305.

7 To give one example, Kawase Takaya 川瀬貴也 argues how, in a 1927 book on Joseon dynasty Buddhism, Takahashi Tōru 高橋亨 (1878–1967) of Keijō Imperial University presupposed that Japanese Buddhism was advanced in doctrinal studies while Korean Buddhism focused on upholding the precepts, see Kawase 2009, p. 169.

8 Kim reexamines Japanese Buddhist proselytizing discourse, and shows that Unshō and his party had a diverse set of aims and interests: the expansion of sectarian power, resistance to Christianity, the conversion of Koreans, and the realization of a Buddhist ideal in Korea. He also argues that Unshō placed more emphasis on the establishment of a Buddhist ideal than such proselytizing priests as Katō Bunkyo 加藤文教, who had internalized a “civilizing mission.” See Kim 2012, pp. 96–106.

was decadent and should be rejected. However, as I will argue, the positions of these two precept-oriented priests were also greatly colored by their imperial gaze, which meant they saw even Korean sangha members living in precept-based communities in the mountains as in need of correction.

The first section of the article will outline the place of the precepts in late-Meiji Buddhism and how they figured in Shaku Unshō's understanding of Japanese Buddhism. The next section provides a general overview of the missionary activities of the Shingon sect on the Korean Peninsula, and details Unshō's specific role within the rapidly shifting political and religious situation after the Russo-Japanese War, as the Korean Empire became a protectorate of the Japanese imperial state. The third section will examine Tanaka Seijun's travelogue, which details his journey with Unshō and offers a window into the criticisms and logic of renewal around the relationship between Japanese monastics and Korean Buddhism in the colonial state. The fourth section will look in more detail at the dialogue between Unshō and his Korean interlocutors, and investigate how his encounter with new monastic traditions in Korea brought him a new understanding of the "corruption" regarding the practice of the Buddhist precepts. In the final section, I will elaborate on Unshō's views of Korean Buddhist reform to delve into how his revivalist agenda was shaped by his entangled perceptions of Korean and Japanese Buddhism. The article demonstrates how the intertwined threads of Korean Buddhism and the Buddhist precepts provided a canvas upon which Unshō and Seijun were able to project their ideal Japanese Buddhism.

The Buddhist Precepts in the Modern Period and Shaku Unshō

The Buddhist monastic precepts in Japan have a complicated history. A popular perception of early modern Buddhist decadence (*kinsei bukkyō daraku ron* 近世仏教墮落論) held that priests in the Edo 江戸 period (1603–1868), protected by the temple-parishioner system (*terauke seido* 寺請制度), deviated from the true spirit of Buddhism, and became mired in decadence and corruption. This understanding was elevated to historical fact in the work of historian Tsuji Zennosuke 辻善之助 (1877–1955). However, recent years have seen both the deconstruction of this narrative, and greater attention paid to precept revival movements during the early modern period. For example, Sueki Fumihiko 末本文美士, in his survey of the place of precepts in early modern Buddhism, including the debate over the Tendai 天台 sect's Anraku precepts (*Anraku ritsu* 安楽律) and the work of monks such as Tokumon Fujaku 徳門普寂 (1707–1781), argues that one characteristic of Edo-period monastic precept-revival thought was a return to Buddhism's starting point of Śākyamuni via a "complete pan-Asian set of precepts (*gusokukai* 具足戒)."⁹

We should keep in mind that in the Edo period, the precept practices of priests were not solely motivated by sectarian-derived notions of discipline. The requirement for Buddhist monks to observe the precepts was also informed by the shogunate's secular control of the populace, which was mediated by temple regulations (*jiin hatto* 寺院法度). As a general rule, everything from names and behavior to hair length and clothes functioned as a sign of social status. In the early modern Japanese social order, Buddhist renunciates had

9 Sueki 2010, pp. 114–115. Regarding the precept revival movement in the early modern period, see Ueda 1976 and Ueda 1977. A more recent work on the subject is Nishimura 2008.

the social status of “monk,” and precept transgressions resulted in expulsion from religious organizations and sociopolitical exile from shogunal regions.

The situation altered dramatically after the 1868 Meiji Restoration, as the new government set about dismantling the early modern social status system under the slogan “equality of the four classes” (*shimin byōdō* 四民平等). Pressured by the persecution of Buddhism in the early Meiji years (referred to as *haibutsu kishaku* 廃仏毀釈), priests often adopted apologetic narratives to defend the dharma (*gohō* 護法), embracing the charge of clerical decadence and the need for sweeping reform. To retain state protection, many became involved in creating a trans-sectarian movement aimed at persuading the government of their determination to reform the clergy (*sōfū sasshin* 僧風刷新).¹⁰

This was the context within which Shaku Unshō launched his radical and wide-ranging movement calling for a revival of monastic disciplinary practices. Unshō was born in 1827 in Izumo Province (present-day Shimane Prefecture) as the fourth son of Watanabe Chūzaemon 渡辺忠左衛門.¹¹ At the age of ten, he was ordained as a Kogi Shingon 古義真言 (Ancient Rites Shingon) priest and spent the first half of his life devoted to traditional Buddhist training. Following the Meiji government’s issuing of the “Edict Distinguishing Kami and Buddhas” (*Shinbutsu hanzenrei* 神仏判然令) in 1868, he began to protest the persecution of Buddhism. In addition to his role in founding the League of United Buddhist Sects, he petitioned the Meiji government. Unshō’s “Petition to the Council of State on Sweeping Away the Evils of the Buddhist Clergy” (*Sōhei issen no kanpu kenpakusho* 僧弊一洗ノ官符建白書) called for clerical reform centered on the precepts, highlighting important connections between the observance of the monastic precepts, the imperial household, and Buddhism.

Unshō’s subsequent activism won him many backers from outside Buddhist institutions. These included the sword master Yamaoka Tesshū 山岡鉄舟 (1836–1888), bureaucrat Aoki Teizō 青木貞三 (1858–1889), Sawayanagi Masatarō 澤柳政太郎 (1865–1927), an educator who subsequently became the first president of Tohoku Imperial University, and the Imperial Princes Kuni-no-miya Asahiko 久邇宮朝彦親王 (1824–1891) and Komatsu-no-miya Akihito 小松宮彰仁親王 (1846–1903). With their support, Unshō launched the Society for the Ten Virtuous Precepts (*Jūzenkai* 十善会) in Kyoto in December 1883. These “ten virtuous precepts” (*jūzenkai* 十善戒) were for all seven types of Buddhist disciples (*shichishū* 七衆), including laypeople and renunciates. Famously, they had been advocated for by the Edo-era Shingon priest, Jiun Onkō 慈雲飲光 (1718–1805), a frequent reference point for Unshō. The society ministered to laypeople and asserted its importance in nationalistic terms, swearing to protect Japan’s national polity and worship Japan’s gods.

Nevertheless, the efforts of Unshō and his supporters to promote the precepts as a means of revitalizing Shingon Buddhism in Japan and its relationship with the state ended in failure. At a meeting of all the Shingon sects (*Shingonshū taisei kaigi* 真言宗大成会議) in 1884, Unshō’s precept-centered approach foundered due to the rise of the doctrinal studies faction, which sought to modernize the sect through a revival of scholastic Buddhism.

10 The Jōdo sect’s Fukuda Gyōkai 福田行誠 (1809–1888) would play a major role with Unshō in founding of the League of United Buddhist Sects (*Shoshū Dōtoku Kaimei* 諸宗同徳会盟), which sought to “wash away the old evils of one’s sect” (*jishū kyūhei issen* 自宗旧弊一洗).

11 Biographical material on Shaku Unshō includes Yoshida 1902, written while Unshō was alive, and the first volume of Kusanagi’s three-volume work (1913). Kusanagi had been Unshō’s disciple and later became the chief officer (*kanchō* 管長) of the Daikakuji 大覚寺 school.

This served as the impetus for Unshō to instead develop a supra-sectarian movement. At the suggestion of the aforementioned Aoki Teizō, Unshō moved his center of operations to Tokyo, where he founded an independent lineage at a new temple established by his followers—Shinhasadera 新長谷寺 in Mejirodai 目白台. In 1887, he sent his nephew, Shaku Kōnen 釈興然 (1849–1924), to what was then British Ceylon to study Theravada Buddhism. The following year, he launched the Monastic Precepts School (Kairitsu Gakkō 戒律学校), which would later be renamed the Mejiro Monastic Academy (Mejiro Sōen 目白僧園). Finally, in 1889, he relaunched the Society for the Ten Virtuous Precepts with the cooperation of Sawayanagi Masatarō, and began publishing its journal, *Jūzen hōkutsu* 十善宝窟.

Unshō thus initiated a variety of projects that sought the revival of the monastic precepts. In this, the “true dharma” (*shōbō* 正法), a concept which he inherited from Jiun, served as his ideological touchstone. “True dharma” in this context refers both to the orthodox teachings transmitted by Śākyamuni, and to the “age of the true dharma” found in Buddhism’s theory of time, namely, the period lasting five hundred (or one thousand) years after Śākyamuni’s death in which Buddhist doctrines, practices, and enlightenment were all accessible in their original form. This initial period is followed by the semblance dharma (*zōhō* 像法) and then the latter dharma (*mappō* 末法). The former lasts for one thousand years, in which teachings and practice remain, while the latter retains teachings and continues for ten thousand years. Fundamental to Unshō’s ideal of the “true dharma” was recreating the sangha of Śākyamuni’s time through a revival of monastic precepts. He also thought that priests’ observance of monastic discipline, and the spread of Buddhist teachings, such as the results of good and evil karma of the past, present, and future (*sansei zen’aku inga* 三世善惡因果), would lead to the realization of an ideal social order.

While Unshō’s precept revival movement acquired support from his lay followers, it faced significant resistance in the rapidly shifting religious environment of Meiji Japan. This was particularly true in the latter half of the 1890s, with the spread of views that came to accept priests eating meat and marrying. According to Richard Jaffe, the background to this was both the question of modernizing intra-sectarian institutions, and a practical problem: sons born into “legal marriages” after the Council of State order permitting clerical marriage were beginning to assume head priest positions at branch temples. While the focus of discussions concerning meat-eating and clerical marriage had been on doctrine in the early and mid-Meiji periods, they now shifted to the practical issues of institutional politics.¹²

By the first decade of the twentieth century, younger Japanese Buddhists had come to see Unshō’s precept-revival movement as conservative and behind the times. Representative of this view was the New Buddhism Movement (Shin Bukkyō Undō 新仏教運動), which emerged around the turn of the century following the formation of the Fraternity of New Buddhists (Shin Bukkyōto Dōshikai 新仏教徒同志会) by Sakaino Kōyō 境野黄洋 (1871–1933), Takashima Beihō 高嶋米峰 (1875–1949), and others. This movement has been hailed as the apex of modern Japanese Buddhism due to its progressive nature. Its members, primarily laypeople, criticized temple organizations and the conservative worlds of priests, even predicting their extinction. New Buddhists were particularly harsh in their criticism of Unshō’s precept-revival movement as representative of “old Buddhism” (*kyūbukkyō* 旧仏教), an unnatural and abnormal asceticism that ran counter to human nature. In response,

12 Jaffe 2001, p. 189.

Unshō and his supporters referred to New Buddhists as “heavenly demons” and “demon armies” aiming to destroy the unchanging essence of Buddhism’s teachings. The divide between them quickly became unbridgeable. Unshō, disaffected with the Japanese Buddhist world, would set sail for the Korean Peninsula in search of an opportunity to realize his idealized Buddhist reformation, and to seek institutional allies for his aspirational view of Buddhism.

Shingon Proselytization in Korea, and Unshō’s Visit

Under Korea’s Joseon dynasty, which adopted a pro-Confucian, anti-Buddhist stance, Buddhist priests were relegated to the lowly position of “commoners” (Kr. *jeongmin* 賤民). This has often been taken as evidence of Buddhism’s decline in the early modern period. However, as Kamata Shigeo 鎌田茂雄 points out, regardless of the position of priests in society, it was during this period that the religious beliefs and practices associated with Korean Buddhism spread throughout the populace.¹³ Kim Yong-tae 金龍泰 argues that the rejection of a role for Korean Buddhism by the Japanese during the colonial period was crucial for the emergence of the view that Korean Buddhism had “declined.”¹⁴

The intrusion of “Japanese” Buddhism into the peninsula is generally associated with the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895) and the Russo-Japanese War. Especially significant in this regard was the decision of the Korean cabinet to lift the ban on Korean priests from entering Hanseong 漢城 (Seoul; Jp. Kanjō), made after the Nichiren 日蓮 sect priest Sano Zenrei 佐野前勵 (1859–1912) petitioned Prime Minister Kim Hongjip 金弘集 (1842–1896) in March 1895, following the conclusion of the First Sino-Japanese War.¹⁵ Sano’s petition was received favorably and even with hope by some Korean Buddhists.¹⁶ Around the same time, the Jōdo 浄土 sect was extending its influence in Korea, primarily through social projects based in educational reform, and other Japanese sects rapidly followed them onto the peninsula, especially following the 1896 anti-Japanese “Righteous Armies of Elumi” conflict.¹⁷ However, at this initial stage, the activities of Unshō’s Shingon sect were primarily focused on the Japanese population in Korea—when the sect founded the Daishidō 大師堂 hall in Pusan in 1898, it was reported that there were no Korean followers in attendance.¹⁸

In 1897, Korea changed its name to the “Great Korean Empire” (Kr. Daehanjeguk 大韓帝国) to show to the outside world that it was an autonomous, independent state, and Kojong 高宗 (1852–1919) became emperor. Subsequently, the Korean government implemented a series of new religious policies, establishing a religious affairs office (Kr. Jongmuwon 宗務院), and Korean Buddhism underwent institutional reforms modeled on Japan’s chief abbot (*kanchō* 管長) system. Korean priests and temples, formerly situated outside the realm of politics, were now being put under state administration. However, after imperial Korea became a protectorate of Japan following the Russo-Japanese War, the situation grew turbulent, as Japanese Buddhist sects competed to annex Korean temples

13 Kamata 1987, p. 28.

14 Kim 2017, p. 106.

15 The Kim cabinet was heavily influenced by the Japanese government.

16 Je 2019, pp. 524–525.

17 See Nakanishi 2013, pp. 107–164.

18 Kankoku fukyō ippan 1899.

as branch temples.¹⁹ This competition would intensify after the resident-general issued regulations regarding religious propagation in November 1906 (*Shūkyō no senpu ni kansuru kisoku* 宗教の宣布に関する規則; ordinance no. 45).

Unshō's arrival in Korea at the end of June 1906 was considered a landmark event by those in Korea affiliated with the Shingon sect, a fact overlooked in earlier research. Shakuo Kyokubō 釈尾旭邦, chief of the Shingon Sect's First Dharma Office in Daegu (Tegu Shingonshū Kaikyōjo 大邱真言宗開教所), lamented that year that "our Shingon sect" had not sent even one missionary, unlike the Nishi Honganji 西本願寺, Higashi Honganji 東本願寺, and Jōdo sects, all of which were working to "expand their propagation here in Korea." Shakuo was particularly alarmed by the visit of the Ōtani school missionary Okumura Enshin 奥村円心 (1843–1913) to Tongdosa 通度寺, noting "If [Okumura] is able to save Korean priests, the opening act in Korean Buddhism's development will be in [this] teacher's hands." However, he celebrated the "recent delightful event" of the "eminent Shingon priest" Unshō coming to the Daishidō as he headed home from his tour of Manchuria and Korea.²⁰ Aoyagi Nanmei notes that when Unshō visited Korea, he visited the "Temporary Mt. Kōya Missionary Facility" (*Kōyasan kari fukyō jo* 高野山仮布教所) established in Hanseong, and was invited to perform the completion ceremony and name the temple.²¹ Clearly, Unshō's mission to Korea was meant to coordinate with the Shingon sect's advancement into the Korean Peninsula after the Russo-Japanese War.

Nonetheless, there was a large gap between the precept-promoting Unshō and those in Korea affiliated with the Shingon sect. While one purpose of Unshō's mission to Korea was to establish a local monastic academy and "revive" Korean Buddhism through a renewed emphasis on the precepts, Shakuo instead suggested using Unshō's reputation to establish a Shingon sect propagation facility in Hanseong, cautioning that "in Hanseong, a precept-oriented Mejiro branch will be of no use at all, whereas an ordinary Shingon-sect missionary center would be."²² The direction of Shingon proselytization and Unshō's emphasis on the precepts were deemed by Shakuo to be incompatible.

Unshō arrived in Japan's new protectorate of Korea at a time when the Shingon sect's missionary machine was lagging behind that of other Japanese Buddhist organizations. While Unshō visited entirely in a private capacity, his stay was seen on the ground as an excellent opportunity to expand Shingon influence, and he would play an active role in this effort. However, as illustrated by Shakuo's remarks, there was a gulf between Unshō and the Shingon organization regarding the proper approach to propagation. Unshō aimed to lay the groundwork for a revitalization of Korean Buddhism largely anchored in a revival of the Buddhist precepts, a proposal which had earlier resulted in total failure in Japan, despite concerted efforts within the Japanese Buddhist world. On the other hand, the Shingon Buddhists in Korea exercised constant vigilance over Unshō's precepts-oriented activities and his initiatives. The promulgation of particular Shingon teachings constituted the subject of their considerable interest rather than adherence to the precepts among Korean monks.

19 In February 1907, the Ōtani 大谷 sect received permission from the resident-general to place Korean temples under its protection, while the Sōtō 曹洞 sect drew up plans to annex Korea's powerful Won 圓 sect. See Kim 2012, pp. 184–185.

20 Shakuo 1906a. On Shakuo Kyokubō (Shunjō 春菰), see Abe 1934, pp. 602–604.

21 Aoyagi 1911, p. 148.

22 Shakuo 1906c.

In the next section, I will consider the perceptions of Unshō and his party towards local Korean Buddhism by focusing on the activities of his disciple, Tanaka Seijun, who authored a detailed travelogue about his journey with Unshō.

Redirecting Criticism: Tanaka Seijun's Critique of Korean Buddhist Monks

On 8 May 1906, Unshō, Tanaka Seijun, and Unshō's other disciples, Shinkai 真戒, Sen'yū 宣猷, and Junkai 順海, were seen off by supporters as they departed from Tokyo's Shinbashi on a trip to memorialize the deceased on both sides of the Russo-Japanese War. The party arrived back in Japan in November of the same year. In 1907, Seijun published *Senjō no hana: Unshō risshi Man Kan junshakushi* 戦場の花: 雲照律師満韓巡錫誌 (Flower of the battlefield: A record of precept master Unshō's tour of Manchuria and Korea). Seijun's travelogue is rich in detail about the group's itinerary and activities as they traveled from Japan to Manchuria and then on to the Korean Peninsula. Its eighth and ninth chapters, which respectively cover the first and second half of their stay in Korea, are filled with Seijun's somewhat sentimental observations regarding Korean Buddhism.²³ These provide useful material for considering the orientation of Unshō and his disciples toward religious practices and institutions there.

One of the primary goals of the mission was to hold memorial services for the war dead in the Russo-Japanese War. During the war, Unshō had encouraged the citizenry to support the military effort through esoteric rituals and prayers for the submission of the enemy country.²⁴ Seijun would recall that in late March 1906, Unshō had already written his *Tokan yōshi* 渡韓要旨 (Outline of my trip to Korea) in preparation for the tour.²⁵ However, Miura Gorō 三浦梧楼 (1847–1926) and other supporters opposed Unshō's tour, on account of his old age, so it was decided that the young Seijun would go with him.²⁶

Unshō and his party first traveled through Okayama and Fukuoka, giving sermons and performing ceremonies conferring lay precepts (*jukaie* 授戒会) in various localities. From Sasebo 佐世保 in Nagasaki, they headed to the port of Dalian. After disembarking, they conducted memorials at battle sites in Lüshun 旅順, Shahe 沙河, Mukden (Ch. Fengtian 奉天; now Shenyang 瀋陽), and elsewhere. They then proceeded to Korea, now occupied by Japan. After arriving in Hanseong on 28 June 1906, Unshō and his party spent 124 days in Yongsan at Shin'entei 心遠亭, secondary residence of the imperial Korean government's "hired foreigner" engineer, Inoue Yoshifumi 井上宜文.²⁷ During this time, Unshō's party, including Seijun, visited famous Korean temples such as Tongdosa and Haeinsa 海印寺 and interacted with local priests.

Tongdosa, one of Korea's three major Buddhist temples, is a large complex located on the outskirts of Pusan, and today belongs to the Jogye order (Kr. Jogyejong

23 Seijun would subsequently make a name for himself in the Shingon sect's relationship with China; see Kōmoto 2012.

24 As part of this initiative, Unshō also launched a nationwide campaign which spiritually mobilized lay followers to organize "Associations for One Million Recitations of the Mantra of Light" (*Kōmyō shingon hyakumanben kō* 光明真言百万遍講) for a Japanese victory.

25 Unshō 1914c.

26 *Shinkō* 1934, p. 178. Seijun would later accompany Unshō on his teaching tour around Japan, from Karafuto 樺太 (Sakhalin) in the north to Kyushu in the south. In this sense, Seijun was the disciple most responsible for supporting Unshō's activities in his later years.

27 For detailed information on Inoue, see Kim 2019.

曹溪宗). *Senjō no hana* describes their visit to this temple in a section entitled “Ryōjusan Tsūdoji sankeiki” 靈鷲山通度寺參詣記. Seijun had previously written that Korea is Japanese Buddhism’s “motherland,” and praised Buddhism’s past efflorescence there with reference to Beopheung 法興 of Silla and Munjong 文宗 of Goryeo, but also criticized the current Korean policy of favoring Confucianism at the expense of Buddhism:

Now, temples of the eightfold path merely sit empty and decay in the deep shadows of twilight breezes and falling leaves. The eight-thousand priests, not even having the right to proselytize and carry out funerals, and unable to endure the abuse of being seen as sub-human, create separate communities in completely different worlds deep in the quiet of the mountains. They are indifferent to the rise and fall of the nation’s cultural vitality, and to deviations in the nation’s moral life.²⁸

However, Seijun’s encounter with the Tongdosa priests moderates this judgment, and on viewing Tongdosa’s priest halls and quarters, he depicts them as creating a landscape resembling “[the Shingon headquarters of] Kōya 高野 and [the Tendai headquarters of] Eizan 叡山 of old.”²⁹ For Seijun, the priests at Tongdosa, a temple “cloistered away in an entirely separate world and detached from the defilement of society,” generally practice the precepts.

Nevertheless, their practice was not something meriting unreserved praise for: “The precepts, meditation, and the recitation of the Buddha’s name are just limited to formal adherence to old customs,” and lack “deep investigation of Buddhist principles and inquiry into the distinctions between sects.” Seijun also notes that “aside from Buddhas, sect founders, and people with great religious belief aside, there is nothing as pathetic for normal people as being bound by primitive, Buddhism-like precepts.” While for Unshō, Korean priests lived in “fear of government officials,” and lack “social knowledge,” and “vitality, hope, and vigor,” in Seijun’s eyes, Korean priests were evidently backward, fettered by “primitive Buddhism-like precepts,” and practicing the precepts in form only.³⁰

Next, let us turn to Seijun’s record of their visit to Haeinsa. Haeinsa is one of Korea’s most important temples, famous for its “Tripiṭaka Koreana” on which the Taishō Tripiṭaka is based. At the time, it was for all intents and purposes under the aegis of the Shin sect’s Ōtani school. Seijun did not mention that point, but likens the temple’s founders, Sun-eung 順応 and Yi-jeong 利貞, to his own sect’s founder, Kūkai 空海 (774–835), before describing the “relationship between religion and the tall, deep mountains” as follows:

If priests hold that an ascetic lifestyle is to be revered in every respect, then they should live in such a place. This is because the surrounding environment will naturally make them live an ascetic, a so-called “pure,” life. However, an ascetic lifestyle of strictly endeavoring to entirely overcome the self’s desire is [only] one early step in ego expression (*jiga hatsugen* 自我発現). It is not the goal of life. Humans naturally lean toward pleasant feelings. This impedes social progress and ego expression ... This is

28 Tanaka 1907, pp. 109–110.

29 Tanaka 1907, p. 115.

30 Tanaka 1907, p. 116.

because the content of the ego is both the fundamental substance of self-restraint and pleasure.³¹

Seijun, for whom the ego comprised self-restraint and pleasure, asserts that Korean priests' precept practice was an "ascetic lifestyle which strictly endeavors to overcome and suppress the self's desires," and criticized it as nothing more than "one step in the early stage of ego expression." In other words, Seijun is advocating for a more moderate, middle path based on stringent self-restraint, and sees pleasure as harmful for ego expression and social progress. He clearly distinguishes the ideal religious life that is centered and proper from what he sees as the qualitatively inferior lives of the Korean priests around him.

Seijun based his claim of Korean Buddhism's devolution not only on precept practice. While "Goryeo-era Buddha-dharma," prospered to a degree comparable to the time of Japan's Emperor Shōmu 聖武天皇 (r. 724–749), with its capital of Gaeseong 開城 like Nara, Korean Buddhism's flourishing led to priests indulging in luxurious lifestyles under royal protection, producing a great deal of corruption. The oppressive policies of the Joseon dynasty were thus an inevitable development. According to Seijun, the same problem arose "in our country" during the reign of Emperor Kanmu 桓武天皇, but thanks to two figures—Kūkai and Saichō 最澄 (767–822)—the situation did not deteriorate to the same extent.³² In this way, while emphasizing the role of Shingon in the history of Japanese Buddhism, Seijun tries to identify a logic to the perceived decadence and decline of its Korean counterpart.

At the same time, Seijun reserves his highest praise for the "commoner" (*heiminteki* 平民的) Shin and Jōdo sects, which suffered less damage than Shingon and Tendai during the persecution of Buddhism around the time of the Meiji Restoration. He criticizes Korean Buddhism for lacking such a "pure and simple, commoner-like" nature.³³ We should note that his use of "commoners" as a metric by which to criticize Buddhism for its "royal and aristocratic" religious beliefs was common in histories of Buddhism written in Japan at this time. Mori Shinnosuke 森新之介 emphasizes how the "commoner/aristocrat" schema spread through Japanese society from the mid to late Meiji period. Katō Totsudō 加藤咄堂 (1870–1949) and other Buddhists contrasted, as historical fact, the Buddhism of "aristocrats," unsuitable for general practice by the populace, with the Buddhism of "commoners." Heian Buddhism (Shingon, Tendai) came to be seen as the former, while the narrative of "commoner-like Buddhism" widely took root as a Buddhism that transcended specific group interests and met the demands of the time.³⁴ In the case of Seijun, he attempts to find this negative aristocratic nature in Korean Buddhism and Shingon, which had both suffered significant blows due to anti-Buddhist persecution, all while emphasizing the status of the Shin sect as "commoner" Buddhism.

In summary, Seijun developed a vigorous critique of Korean Buddhism, in which his criticisms were quite similar to those which New Buddhists directed at Unshō's emphasis on the precepts.³⁵ The relationship between self-denial and the ego, the problem of formalism in precept practice, and the issue of aristocratic Buddhism had all been used to target

31 Tanaka 1907, pp. 129–130.

32 Tanaka 1907, p. 130.

33 Tanaka 1907, p. 131.

34 Mori 2012, pp. 125–126.

35 See Kameyama 2019.

Unshō in Japan. In this sense, the Korean Buddhism that Seijun saw was similar to “old Buddhism,” the primary point of reference for which was Japanese Buddhism of the past.

The political scientist Ogawara Masamichi 小川原正道 points out that Japanese Buddhists’ often used the terms *suitai* 衰頹 (decline) and *teitai* 停滞 (stagnation) to describe the Buddhism they encountered in other Asian countries.³⁶ Japanese Buddhist criticism of other Asian Buddhisms as formalism dates back to the internal reformist struggles among late Meiji Buddhists to sweep away “Old Buddhism,” which was subsequently applied to denounce Buddhism’s “decline” and “decadence” outside Japan.³⁷ Seijun’s account displays a similar tendency to disregard formalism in the religious practice of other Asian Buddhisms. Despite a lack of historical materials showing Seijun’s exact relationship to the New Buddhist Movement, it is clear that he applied a similar framework, which regarded the precepts as an inessential, formal part of Buddhism, as a means to “other” Korean Buddhism and Korean monks’ practice of the precepts.³⁸ In this way, Korean Buddhism served as a mirror through which to offload criticism directed at his master, Unshō. His “recognition” of decadence and degeneracy in Korean precept practice allowed him to position himself as someone who had overcome these very ills and was now an authentic practitioner of the Buddhist discipline, which reflected Japanese Buddhism’s intertwined understanding of self and other. Seijun sought to transfer oppressive narratives, which for the most part “progressive” Japanese Buddhists used against precept-upholding monks like Unshō, onto the Korean Buddhists. In Seijun’s narrative, adherence to the Buddhist precepts and isolation from the social sphere served as a crucial reference point to identify whether a form of Buddhism is progressive or not. Precept-observation was a recurrent issue also in the Meiji Buddhist world, and Seijun’s critical view of monasticism in Korean Buddhism reflected the newly established self-image of Japanese Buddhism as progressive, open to commoners, closely tied to social engagement, and emancipated from primitive formalism in the Buddhist precepts.

Unshō at Haeinsa: Korean Buddhism and the Monastic Precepts

In this section, I will now consider exchanges that took place between Unshō and Korean priests. As mentioned above, in Japan, Unshō became a symbol of “Old Buddhism,” and bore the brunt of criticism by the New Buddhists that his formalism and asceticism was behind the times. The previous section has shown how his disciple Seijun redirected this critique towards Korean Buddhism in his account of Unshō’s travels on the peninsula. Here I will elaborate on how Unshō’s own understanding of Korean Buddhism took shape through his dialogue with Buddhists on the ground there.

Before reaching Korea and interacting with priests there, Unshō had criticized deficiencies he saw in Korean Buddhism.³⁹ For example, he wrote that “the purpose of this trip to Korea is to choose a key place in Korea to establish a monastic academy, and

³⁶ Ogawara 2010, p. x.

³⁷ Le Xing has pointed to a similar development in her analysis of the Buddhist Asianism of Ōtani Kōzui 大谷光瑞 (1876–1948), who traveled to India and China during the Taishō 大正 period (1912–1926); Le 2019, p. 114.

³⁸ It should be noted that Seijun had attended the Philosophy Academy, a citadel of the New Buddhists.

³⁹ Unshō had been in contact with Korean priests previously. After the First Sino-Japanese War, the Nichiren priest Sano Zenrei brought back nineteen students (including three priests) to study in Japan, and Pak Nangok 朴蘭谷 and Hyeon Sangsun 玄尚順 visited Unshō. See Nakanishi 2013, pp. 98–99.

then, first and foremost, working to wash away the corrupt ways of Buddhist priests with a focus on the precepts.⁴⁰ However, Unshō's perception gradually shifted as he talked with Korean priests on the ground. For example, according to *Rokudai shinpō*'s 六大新報 report on Unshō's July 1906 trip to Tongdosa, he is full of praise for the way in which Korean priests live in separate communities in the mountains apart from society. To his surprise, Unshō found them immersed in serious practice, such as meditation, "absorption in which one chants the name of the Buddha" (*nenbutsu zanmai* 念佛三昧), precept observance, and discussion of traditional Buddhist logic (*rikutsu* 理屈). This led him to reconsider Japanese society's tendency to ridicule and scorn Korean Buddhists as though they were, in his terms, outcasts (*eta* 穢多).⁴¹

While Unshō softened his attitude towards Korean priests through his visits to the mountain communities, he maintained his sense of ethnic hierarchy in speaking about Korean people more generally, and never took issue with Japan's imperial project there. The sermons Unshō delivered to Japanese settlers throughout the Korean Peninsula confirm this. For example, at a ceremony in July 1906 to confer the three sets of purifying precepts (*sanju jōkai* 三聚淨戒), held for approximately one hundred and thirty lay Japanese in Incheon 仁川, Unshō's talk, according to Seijun, emphasized receipt of the precepts as a way to make people "joyfully submit" to "our empire's sphere of influence." Unshō states that despite "receiving the blessings of civilization every day" from Japan, "[Korean people] appear to not joyfully submit and enjoy [Japanese governance], comparatively speaking." Unshō insists that their reluctance is caused by Korean "ignorance and failure to discuss what is reasonable and unreasonable," and that their attitude to Japanese authority depends greatly on the "history of the [Korean] state," and "the public and private virtue of [you] immigrants."⁴² Unshō then states that "I implore you to apply [the precepts] in everyday life. Without doubt, it will help with the imperialization [of Korea]. This is the practice of living bodhisattvas."⁴³

Unshō thus positions the Japanese people newly in receipt of the precepts as bodhisattvas who will save and guide Koreans. Here we find the classic settler-colonialist gaze. Unshō conferred the precepts on Japanese settlers, and exhorted that through their example Koreans should be brought to appreciate the Japanese empire.

As already noted, Unshō and his party stayed at Shin'entei in Yongsan from late June to late October. During this time, he attempted to engage in dialogue with local priests to better understand Buddhism on the ground. Notably, in early August he had conversations at Haeinsa with four Korean priests: Gyeong-myeong 景明, Eungheo 應虛, Yongban 龍般, and Manheo 萬虛. They used written literary Chinese to communicate, and the record of their conversations has survived.

The first conversation with Haeinsa's Gyeong-myeong on 2 August focused entirely on sectarian consciousness and precept practice in Korean Buddhism.⁴⁴ Unshō inquired whether Korean Buddhism held to "the system established by the Buddha's precepts" in

40 Unshō 1914c, p. 87.

41 Shakuo 1906b, p. 5.

42 Tanaka 1907, p. 104.

43 Tanaka 1907, pp. 104–105.

44 Japanese Buddhists proselytizing in China also relied on "sect", central to Japanese Buddhism, to understand Buddhism elsewhere, see Schickelanz 2016, p. 25; Schickelanz 2017, pp. 281–300.

the *Four-Part Vinaya*, an influential *Vinaya* text in the East Asian monastic tradition. In response, Gyeong-myeong replied that Korean Buddhism, comprising of only sutra study, chanting, and meditation “sects” (*shū* 宗), does not have a “precepts sect” (*risshū* 律宗) nor any notions of periods of decline such as *mappō*, and that practitioners of the precepts do not faithfully maintain “the system established by the Buddha’s precepts.”⁴⁵

Gyeong-myeong’s answer seems to have greatly interested Unshō, who then explained that Japanese Buddhism is divided into the sects of Kegon 華嚴, Tendai 天台, Shingon, Hossō 法相, Sanron 三論, and Nenbutsu 念仏, and inquired whether such sects’ tenants were separate or mixed in Korean Buddhism. Gyeong-myeong replied that while some priests adopt Jeondae 天台 (Jp. Tendai) as their teaching, there are others “who adopt mixed teachings.”⁴⁶ This reply shows that the concept of “sect” emphasized by Japanese Buddhists served as a common ground for discussion, which is hardly surprising given that Haeinsa was in the process of becoming a branch of the Ōtani school. Gyeong-myeong’s response indicates an internalization of, or at least an ability to deploy, this sectarian vocabulary. Pointing to the lack of an independent precepts sect, Gyeong-myeong goes on to explain that Korean Buddhism lacks the distinctions of “the system established by the Buddha’s precepts.”⁴⁷

Unshō then asked about the distinction between the ten novice precepts and the two hundred and fifty full monastic precepts. Gyeong-myeong replied: “The precepts proclaim the three activities [of word, thought, and deed] and govern the six senses. The myriads of bodhisattvas are enlightened by them. However, the *Platform Sutra* preaches, ‘With the mind universally [the same], [why] labor to maintain the precepts? With direct practice, what use is it to practice meditation?’”⁴⁸ Thus, while Gyeong-myeong had earlier stated that monks in Korea do not follow the precepts and that he sees this as a sign of degeneration, here he seems to say that outward adherence to the precepts does not matter so much, as the mind is more important. While here there appears to be a gap in their conversation, likely due to linguistic limitations, it is clear that this reply was contrary to Unshō’s expectations. Unshō responded that even if there is no distinction between sentient beings and buddhas in principle (i.e., buddha-nature) in light of “reason” (*ri* 理) as encompassed by “all phenomena of the ten realms” (*jikkai manbō* 十界万法), there is a definite distinction between enlightenment and delusion, and Buddhas and sentient beings, in the dimension of practice and reality (*ji* 事). He added that Gyeong-myeong’s understanding of Buddhist training was not that held by ordinary people and novice practitioners.⁴⁹ Gyeong-myeong’s response was thus to greatly influence Unshō’s perceptions of Korean priests regarding their supposedly degenerate fixation on an original buddha-nature.

This first day of conversation between Unshō and Gyeong-myeong saw Korean priests’ precept adherence became entangled with the concept of “sect,” and the relationship between “mind” and practice. However, the focal point of the following day’s conversation was on how Unshō and the Korean priests could work together and reform contemporary Buddhism in Japan and Korea. Yongban, one of the participants, asked Unshō about

45 Unshō 1914h, pp. 194–195.

46 Unshō 1914h, p. 195.

47 Unshō 1914h, p. 196.

48 McRae 2000, pp. 40–41.

49 Unshō 1914h, p. 196.

the purpose of his visit to Korea. Lamenting “the gradual decay of the true teachings,” Unshō said that if there was a Korean priest who could serve as his teacher—someone who “cultivated, understood, and practiced the three disciplines of precepts, meditation, and wisdom”—he would follow him.⁵⁰ In response, another of the Korean participants, Eungheo, replied that while many Japanese Buddhists “have the ability to attain Buddhahood,” Korean Buddhism “now is declining greatly because it is destitute, and there are none with superior capacities.” Moreover, Eungheo added, even if a “great founder of a school” appeared, the people would not respect him, and he would go into hiding.⁵¹

Overall, the Korean Buddhist priests participating in the dialogue adopted a laudatory attitude toward an increasingly powerful Japanese Buddhism, and disparaged the state of Korean Buddhism. However, Unshō took issue with this characterization. Indeed, he replied that even in “my country,” there is “nothing resembling the venerable custom of respecting the buddhas and the patriarchs.” There was also a lack of suitable human resources, and “only the presumptuous and superficial New Buddhists remain.” Unshō then proposed that Eungheo and the others revive “the Great Dharma” with him to resist the New Buddhists.⁵² However, the Korean priests showed little enthusiasm for his proposal. They apologized for a lack of sufficient capacity to support such an effort, and noted that Unshō should lead such an undertaking. While Unshō’s attempts to create an alliance ostensibly failed, the dialogue between Unshō and the Korean clerics shows how a Japanese domestic conflict also unfolded as a transnational issue.

The dialogue reproduced above demonstrates that Unshō observed Korean Buddhism, engaged in dialogue with its priests, and formed an outline for Buddhism’s reform. After his Haeinsa meetings, he developed a concrete plan to reform Korean Buddhism, which he submitted, along with a petition, to Emperor Kojong. These proposals will be detailed in the next section, but here I want to discuss how Unshō’s conversations at Haeinsa reflect his conceptualization of Korean Buddhism. Unshō traveled in search of an idealized form of Buddhism, but he also envisioned Korean Buddhism as something that needed to be reformed and guided by its Japanese counterparts. Unshō, as a missionary monk of the Japanese Empire, objectified Korean Buddhism and priests by viewing them through this somewhat dissonant set of assumptions. In his petition, Unshō was critical of Korean Buddhists’ failure to observe the precepts, and Gyeong-myeong’s observations appear to have solidified Unshō’s impression of Korean Buddhism. Unshō wrote:

I have often heard Greater Korea’s priests say that with the mind being the precepts and universally [the same], why must one cultivate the practice of meditation? [However] these are the precepts maintained by bodhisattvas on the higher level of the Mahayana precepts and not the precepts maintained by ordinary priests. Therefore, the World-Honored One [Śākyamuni Buddha] instructs and warns that, “These are conceited persons, followers of the Deva-māra.” It must be said that they only know Buddha-nature in part and in principle, and do not yet know Buddha-nature as [acquired through] practice. Furthermore, when it comes to discussing the rules of

50 Unshō 1914h, p. 197.

51 Unshō 1914h, p. 198.

52 Unshō 1914h, p. 198.

receiving the precepts, they thus just barely know the terms of “three categories [of the pure precepts]” and the “full precepts,” and are yet ignorant of there being distinctions of the precepts for [each of] the seven types of Buddhist practitioners.⁵³

In this way, Unshō criticizes Gyeong-myeong’s reduction of precept practice to an issue of the mind, and generalizes this as a common misapprehension among Korean priests.

We should also note that Unshō considered this a problem relevant to all Mahayana Buddhism, and thus one shared by both Korean and Japanese Buddhism. In his “Bukkyō kairyō chakushu junjo shikō” 仏教改良着手順序私考 (“My ideas on procedures for starting to reform Buddhism”), he laments that the true dharma has been weakened due to the “latter [dharma] age’s degenerate custom” of emphasizing the “discipline of practicing wisdom in speech and listening” and the three disciplines (*sangaku* 三学) as being in conflict.⁵⁴ In the same text, he writes as an example of the way people overemphasize original Buddha-nature that, “Buddhism’s essence is cultivating the mind. Therefore, with the mind universally [the same], what use is it to practice meditation? With practice being direct, why labor to maintain the precepts?” Given the context, these statements are clearly based on the words of Gyeong-myeong.⁵⁵ We can see that Unshō understood that Korean and Japanese Buddhism shared similar issues.

Unshō rejected forms of Buddhism that overemphasized the discipline of wisdom, but not necessarily the role of the mind more generally in Buddhism. This is clear elsewhere in this text, where he asks: “Why would one try to do things with people who are ignorant of the [actual nature of] precepts and meditation [and just practice them in form]? Those who study the precepts overemphasize upholding the precepts in deed (*jikai* 事戒), and do not know anything of upholding the precepts in principle (*rikai* 理戒).” According to Unshō, scholars of the *Vinaya*, following the precepts in form only, neglect to uphold them in principle through contemplation, something that is based on an understanding of original Buddha-nature.⁵⁶ Unshō observed that the three disciplines of morality, meditation, and wisdom complement each other, and that while they are centered on the precepts, it is crucial to maintain a balance between them in practice.⁵⁷

As we have seen, Unshō went to Korea shortly after the beginning of Japan’s occupation, and engaged with Buddhist communities on the ground, although his relationship to the colonial missionary activities being undertaken by other Japanese Buddhist institutions is unclear. Tongdosa and Haeinsa, which he visited, were both in the process of being incorporated as branch temples by the Jōdo sect and the Shin sect’s Ōtani school, respectively, but Unshō’s reaction to this process of forced subsumption is not extant in his or his disciples’ writings.

53 Unshō 1914a, pp. 77–78.

54 Unshō 1914e.

55 Unshō 1914e, p. 94.

56 *Jikai* is also referred to as *zuisōgai* 随相戒. This refers to precepts with concrete instructions, such as the five precepts to be observed by laypeople (*gokai* 五戒), the eight precepts to be observed by strict lay Buddhists on certain days (*hassaikai* 八斎戒), the ten novice precepts, and the complete precepts. *Jikai* forms a contrasting set with *rikai*. See Asada 2014, p. 194.

57 Unshō 1914e, p. 94.

Unshō's activities in colonial Korea shared ambitions with those of Seijun. On the one hand, he sought out collaborators to counter New Buddhism's ascendancy in Japan. On the other, as shown in his *Tokan yōshi*, he wanted to simultaneously occupy a leading role in reforming a "declining" Korean Buddhism, which was itself based on his image of the history of Japanese Buddhism. Despite their divergence in assessing the contemporary settings surrounding Japanese Buddhism, both agreed on the fundamental need for a substantial renovation of how Korean Buddhist monks adhered to the precepts.

In the next section, I will delve further into the concept of the "true dharma," which bridged his understanding of what was at stake in Buddhism's history in Japan, the notion of Japanese Buddhism, and the movement to reform Buddhism in colonial Korea.

A Land of the "True Dharma": Shaku Unshō's Views of Korean Buddhist Reform

In this section, I will elaborate on Unshō's views of Korean Buddhist reform. For Unshō, who had dreamed of reforming Japanese Buddhism, devoted his life to the revival of the precepts, and through his efforts become increasingly isolated in the Japanese Buddhist world, the encounter with Korean Buddhism may be regarded as providing renewed impetus to his multi-faceted, reactionary, and ultimately failed attempts to reform Japanese Buddhism. As shown earlier in the article, for Unshō, Japanese Buddhism had been degraded by the New Buddhists. He did not see Buddhism in Japan as providing a model for reform in Korea. Instead, Unshō's idealized view of Buddhism's past in Japan served as the model for religious reform in Japan's increasingly colonized continental "other" of Korea. Unshō connected the two through the discourse of the "true dharma," which offered a framework through which to advocate for the reform of both Japanese and Korean Buddhism.⁵⁸

Previous scholarship has situated Unshō's thought almost exclusively within a nationalist framework. However, closer examination of Unshō's use of the "true dharma," offers a more subtle interpretation of the relationship between his idealized vision of Buddhism and its role in reform. Consider, for example, how this concept is articulated in his *Bukkyō genron* 仏教原論 (Elements of Buddhism),⁵⁹ which Unshō published in the year before his trip to Korea. He remarks that "if the priests of that time [in the age of the latter dharma] committed a transgression, they should be swiftly punished based on the Buddha's rules and royal [secular] law (*butsuritsu ōhō* 仏律王法). Is reviving the Buddha's true dharma—an element of the state's morality—not a duty in which those managing the state and protecting the people should reasonably engage?" In Unshō's view of the "true dharma," the "Buddha's rules" and the "royal law" are one, and priests' transgressions of the precept are addressed in order to maintain the "state's morality." Unshō draws from the *Nirvana Sutra* to argue that "the country's king, ministers, elders, and householders" should "thus correct such transgressions and make the true dharma flourish."⁶⁰

The relationship between the state and Buddhism is thus rendered inseparable through the concept of the "true dharma." Unshō's program for reforming Buddhism in Japan and

58 This section largely draws on Unshō's August 1906 petitions to Korea's Emperor and Prime Minister (Unshō 1914a; 1914b), and several other proposals for Korean Buddhist reform (Unshō 1914d; 1914e; 1914f; 1914g).

59 See Unshō 1905.

60 Unshō 1905, pp. 32–33.

Korea relied on a view of historical decline, where the current era is the latter age (*mappō*) of the dharma. Unshō identified Japanese Buddhism's relationship with the state from the middle ages onwards as having corrupted, and held that the *ritsurō* 律令 state, in which the Buddhist monastic community's transgressions were policed directly by the government, was the model. To this end, he cited *Shakushi kenpō* 釈氏憲法 (known today as apocrypha from the Edo period) and the *Sōnirō* 僧尼令, a set of regulations for monks and nuns laid down in the *ritsurō* of Nara Japan (710–794). He writes, “When the medieval court ignored the records that established the emperor's supreme power and regulations, the Buddhist precept laws and ordinances also declined. This brought about a situation in which priests, while wearing Buddhist robes, did not hesitate to possess swords and join and lead armies.”⁶¹ According to Unshō, later priests neglected the teachings of the *Butsu yuikyōgyō* 仏遺教經 (Sutra of the Buddha's Deathbed Injunctions), in which Śākyamuni taught the need to “take the liberatory precepts (*gedatsu kai* 解脱戒) as your great teacher.” As such, they did not place enough emphasis on the practice of the precepts. These two errors gave rise to ills.

This also explained the decline of Korean Buddhism:

I have heard the following. In ancient times, the true dharma flourished in Great Korea. The country's prestige was strong, and it subjugated the realm far and wide, across the eight directions. However, in the middle ages, wanting to correct the mistakes and disarray of priests' practices, it actually committed the error of doing away with both the good and the bad. Today, throughout the eight regions of the country, there are grand temples. However, they have become entirely the useless possessions of the state. Do they really have any benefit for the people? For as we know, due to the evil world of the latter dharma age, people's minds grow darker and darker, and have much falsity and little that is true. If religion is not adopted to cultivate the mind, then the people will end up beyond saving. This is why the World-Honored One presented the true dharma of the latter age, and had countries' kings and ministers of the future entrust themselves to safeguard it.⁶²

We can see how in Unshō's view of the latter-age dharma, priestly decadence was prophesized by Śākyamuni. In this sense, Unshō's vision for reforming Korean Buddhism was grounded in a particular kind of revivalism oriented towards Buddhist orthodoxy, Śākyamuni, and the ancient Japanese state, which sought to yoke together the survival of the state and the future of Buddhism's resurgence.

Also behind Unshō's ideas on reforming Korean Buddhism was his confidence in 1906 that a new constitution would be promulgated in imperial Korea:

Right now, Great Korea's constitution and legal codes are being compiled and are about to be implemented. It is my wish that the major high officials and persons of great intelligence and ability dictate to people of virtue around the world that the laws and rules of priests and nuns be fashioned in line with the precepts established by the

61 Unshō 1914c, pp. 87–88.

62 Unshō 1914b, pp. 82–83.

Buddha, which were strict laws ordered by the Buddha that should not be violated in any form.⁶³

The ultimate thrust of Unshō's ideas regarding Korea was to make Buddhism the official state religion, thus realizing "true dharma"-based governance. This was a second attempt on his part, following a similar effort for Japan which had failed over two decades prior. When the Constitution of the Empire of Japan was being drafted, Unshō wrote the *Dai Nihon kokkyōron* 大日本国教論 (On the state religion of Greater Japan, 1882) hoping in vain to turn Buddhism into Japan's state religion.⁶⁴ Unshō asserted in his later work that the political situation in imperial Korea resembled that in Japan approximately twenty years earlier. Itō Hirobumi 伊藤博文 (1841–1909), first resident general of Korea, was rapidly promoting legal reforms in order to prepare for negotiations with the United States and European countries to revise the unequal treaties, including the right of foreign powers to consular courts.⁶⁵ However, the only international legislation to emerge as a result of his efforts was the 1907 Court Organization Law, which allowed the appointment of Japanese legal advisors to Korean courts.⁶⁶ Unshō nevertheless understood that imperial Korea was in the process of establishing a new legal regime under the guidance of the Meiji government, and enthusiastically advocated for Buddhism to be deployed in the effort to restructure colonial Korea's legal systems.

In two of his proposals, Unshō called for the creation of a "Department of Religion" within the government. As a preliminary step to establishing a full governmental body, he proposed a "Department of Religious Research" to formulate the overall direction and policy of Buddhist doctrines, morality, the obligations/social status of priests, and the relationship between true, "proper" Buddhism and state interests.⁶⁷ Under the heading of "The Nation's Religion: Course of Action," he argues that the foundation of "the nation's unity" depends on all its members taking refuge in the Buddha, dharma, and sangha. Furthermore, he suggests that primary school children should take the ten virtuous precepts, in order that they might acquire "roots of virtue and faculty of belief" (*tokuhon shinkon* 徳本信根). Then, in accordance with the "degree of [their] power of faith (*shinriki* 信力)," they should receive the "five precepts, eight precepts, bodhisattva precepts, [or] preliminary esoteric initiation (*jumyō kanjō* 受明灌頂)."⁶⁸ Unshō thus applies his precept ideology to general Korean edification in the imperial state alongside his discussion of how Buddhism should be made into the state religion.⁶⁹ As a broader structure of governance, Unshō also proposed that designated "religious representatives" could be charged with the religious edification of specific "counties, towns, major towns, and cities," and could spearhead a crackdown on the "bad, areligious people."⁷⁰

63 Unshō 1914c, p. 88.

64 See Kameyama 2018.

65 Asano 2016.

66 Kim 2012, pp. 98–99.

67 Unshō 1914e, pp. 92–93.

68 Unshō 1914e, p. 97.

69 Unshō 1914g covers topics such as the handling of priests that break the precepts as well as applying the five precepts to laypeople.

70 Unshō 1914e, pp. 92–93.

The above raises issues surrounding freedom of religion, which Unshō addresses in a section on “Confucianism, Religions, Sorcery, and so on: A Course of Action.” He quotes Kūkai’s *Jūjūshinron* 十住心論 (“Treatise on the ten abodes of the mind”) to argue that religions of all types are “sets of teachings within the secret mandala,” and all share “a degree of truth,” despite doctrinal differences regarding, for example, “nihilism, eternalism, and emptiness” (*danjōkū* 断常空). All members of any nation should be “supported” (*kaji* 加持) by the “great compassionate, incomparable power of Dainichi Nyorai 大日如来 (Skt. Mahāvairocana).”⁷¹ We can detect a similar argument here to that found in Unshō’s *Bukkyō genron* (1905). In his later years, Unshō advocated the view that “all morality and teachings in the reality-realm together return [to the same source].” He duly devoted himself to integrating all religions, morality, and fields of academic study, believing that everything is subsumed by the “secret mandala.”⁷² Other than reducing many of these distinctions to an overarching schema of esoteric/exoteric matters based in Shingon discourse, though, there is little other detail on his plans for a reformation of the imperial Korean state organized around Buddhist doctrine or the “true dharma.”

Of course, we know that Unshō’s attempts were ultimately unsuccessful, and he played no role in the subsequent expansion of Japanese settler colonialism in Korea or on the Asian continent. However, the case of Unshō exemplifies the way in which new discourses on the precepts in modern Japan encouraged those engaged in them to look towards the continent and broader global religious discourses for frameworks within which to reinvent their predispositions. Unshō imagined Korea as a stage for the realization of Japanese Buddhism’s ideal, a scheme based on a particular understanding of ancient and contemporary Japan. While relying on the discourse of Korean Buddhism, he conceived of a project of reform that took precept revival as its central tenet and, thanks to his use of the concept of the “true dharma,” was potentially universal in nature. At the same time, though, universalism was insufficient to overcome his prejudices, and like many of his Japanese Buddhist contemporaries, Korean Buddhism was reduced to one of the many modes of Korean life that required intervention on the part of Japanese colonists.

Conclusion

In this article, I have used Unshō and his party’s experiences in Korea to examine encounters between discourses on the precepts in Korean Buddhism, which occurred amid intense competition among Japanese Buddhist organizations to annex the institutions of Korean Buddhism under the branch temple system. Their encounter with Korean Buddhism and its mutually interrelated narratives also highlighted the contested ground of the authenticity of “Buddhism,” revolving around the fundamental precondition for its “resurgence” and “degeneracy” under the influence of Japanese Buddhists. In Unshō and Seijun’s formulation of Korean precept practices as formalist and ascetic, one indicative of an “underdeveloped

71 Unshō 1914e, pp. 98–99.

72 In a sermon given during his tour of Manchuria and Korea, Unshō proposed that of the many religions, Buddhism, Christianity, and “Mahometanism” (*Mahomettokyō* マホメット教; i.e., Islam), Buddhism is the most outstanding, and the Shingon sect is the most venerable within Buddhism. Furthermore, the Shingon sect preaches “without flaw all of the reality realm,” and God, Christ, the Twelve Apostles, and the Holy Mother are all manifestations of Dainichi Nyorai and the workings of the mandala reality realm. See Unshō 1906, pp. 11–12.

psychology,” we can see the contours of a certain Buddhist universalism being shaped by the imperialist logic of the Japanese empire. This evidences the displacement of domestic criticism outwards if we remember that nearly identical criticisms were also being simultaneously directed at priests like Unshō and his followers by the New Buddhist movement.

With the ascendancy of the New Buddhists in Japanese Buddhism, Unshō had become increasingly isolated, but his encounter with Korean priests, who had also been persecuted, gave him a ray of hope. At first he sought to reform Buddhism alongside Korean priests, but he came to see them as lacking knowledge regarding the two hundred fifty precepts, the rules for receiving the precepts, and the seven types of Buddhist practitioners. He also “discovered” a problem, that his interlocutors were fixated too rigidly on the “mind,” while disregarding other traditional Buddhist disciplines such as the precepts and meditation. This he perceived as a longstanding myopia associated with much of Mahayana Buddhism.

Unshō’s “discovery” in turn came to justify his program of “reform,” rooted in a revivalist program of yoking the state to the “true dharma.” In this context, Unshō proposed governmental oversight of monastic practices, making Buddhism into the national religion, and unifying the Korean nation by using the precepts as a means of public moral reform. This attempt sheds important light on Unshō’s ideals. For him, the model was the “true dharma” of the past, lost in the latter dharma age. His position thus differed from that of his disciple Seijun. However, Seijun and Unshō’s views were similar in that they both identified problems in Korean Buddhist precept practice that needed reform.

Unshō and Seijun describe their endeavors as repayment for “the motherland” Korea’s transmission of Buddhism to Japan in ancient times, and called for a guiding role in reforming Korean Buddhism for both Japanese Buddhists and the Japanese government, in order to rescue it from its state of “decline.” Korean Buddhism emerged over the course of Korea’s colonization, and is notable here as a site of increasing Japanese influence, and for providing an imperial project offering a set of terms with which to frame Buddhism’s own revival across Asia. Disaffected by his contemporaries, Unshō proposed an alternative vision for Japanese Buddhism centered on precept adherence, which was largely tangential to modern Buddhism as it developed in Japan. This Buddhism should, in his view, be realized through the mobilization of imperial power (in this case, the Meiji emperor). This vision also represented a return to the vanished past of Japanese Buddhism, which shared common grounds in his eyes with the classic ideal of its Korean counterpart, and still served as a model for the reformation of Korean Buddhism.

The realities of Buddhism in Korea were of little interest to Unshō or Seijun. Rather, Korea served as a blank canvas upon which they were able to project their Japanese Buddhist ideal. Immediately prior to Japan’s formal annexation of Korea, precept-upholding priests from imperial Japan painted a negative picture of Korean priests’ precept practice, a picture which would define Korean Buddhism both during the colonial period, and after the collapse of the Japanese empire.

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Dynamic Scribal Culture in Late Seventeenth-Century Japan: Ihara Saikaku's Engagement with Handscrolls

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This article investigates the characteristics of scribal culture in early modern Japan and its relationship to print culture. I focus on the intersections between the activity of Ihara Saikaku and the representative scribal format of the handscroll. In his artistic production, Saikaku engaged with all aspects of handscrolls: their materiality, production, use, and social significance. I analyze Saikaku's works from two complementary perspectives that structure this study: as meta-textual and visual references to the uses and meanings of scribal formats, and as artifacts with distinct material profiles. The article shows that the meaning and use of early modern texts were intertwined with the materiality, affordance, and social context of text-bearing artifacts. This was a dynamic and palimpsestic process: scribal formats preserved echoes of authority and cultural capital while accommodating contemporary usage. While making full use of the material connotations and established uses of the format, Saikaku negotiated and innovated its meanings. Saikaku can thus be reassessed as an astute practitioner of a range of scribal practices and a versatile producer of scribal artifacts who developed a side practice of commercial publishing. Saikaku's aesthetic identity emerged from within the scribal culture and aesthetic networks of his time. For a better understanding of the dynamics of this process, the history of early modern literature needs to be recentered on the relationship between various media.

Keywords: early modern, scribal, manuscript, *makimono*, affordance, handscroll, materiality

The endurance of scribal culture centuries after the development of commercial print is increasingly acknowledged in the history of literature and of the book.¹ For early

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1 See Scarborough King 2020 for eighteenth-century Europe and Son 2018 for late seventeenth-century Qing China. For an overview of recent developments in the history of the book in East Asia, see Sherif 2017.

modern Japan, Peter Kornicki and Nakano Mitsutoshi have argued that the production of handwritten documents thrived at all social levels, while Linda Chance and Julie Davis have underlined the fact that, both in terms of their production and aesthetics, print and manuscript artifacts were far more contiguous in early modern Japan than in Europe.² But the details of scribal endurance and of its interaction with print culture are still insufficiently understood.³

An alternative approach to the above issues has been developed within the “Material Text Cultures” research project at Heidelberg University. It consists of an analysis of the materiality, the shape and the design of textual artifacts, as well as their practices and conventions of use; in other words, their praxeology. This approach is a form of materialist philology, which privileges the characteristics of the text as an artefact.⁴ A central concept in this analysis is that of affordance, meaning the possibilities of action that emerge out of the relationship between user and artifact.⁵ This allows a reconceptualization of scribal culture as co-constituted by human and artifactual agents. This process is not static—in other words, scribal culture does not include only normative practices but also idiosyncratic and experimental practices that continuously redefine it. In this study, I propose to use the above approach to tackle the following questions: What were the characteristics of scribal culture in early modern Japan, and what was its relationship to print culture? Did manuscript formats undergo a reevaluation amid a rapidly expanding print culture at the time? Rather than a monolithic concept of scribal culture as the background against which print culture emerged, the challenge is to uncover the dynamic nature of the interactions between various textual media, with print being only one of them.

That challenge is addressed through a focus on the activity of Ihara Saikaku 井原西鶴 (1642–1693). In the history of early modern Japanese literature, Saikaku holds a prominent place as a print author of prose writings.⁶ While active in Osaka, his texts were published in all three major urban centers of early modern Japan, and the plots of his stories featured locations throughout the archipelago. Saikaku’s work is therefore considered representative of the urban culture of early modern Japan.⁷ However, an emphasis on print production has led to a “flattening” of the archive.⁸ Saikaku’s output was notably diverse: he started by writing *haikai* 俳諧 (humorous linked verse), and also wrote essays, plays, and actor critiques, all produced in a variety of formats (poem slips, poem cards, bound books, handscrolls). Although a reassessment of this diverse output is ongoing, it has so far sidelined the issues of materiality and scribal culture that this article asserts are central to understanding Saikaku’s activity.⁹

2 Kornicki 2006; Nakano 2011, pp. 86–87; Chance and Davis 2016.

3 In this study the terms “scribal” and “manuscript” are used interchangeably.

4 I borrow the term materialist philology from Friedrich and Schwarke 2016, p. 5.

5 Gibson 1979, pp. 127–143, Talaga 2020, pp. 5–7.

6 For a recent study of the textual genealogy of Saikaku’s prose, see Struve 2021.

7 Moretti (2020) argues for a de-centering of Saikaku from the understanding of early-modern literature by expanding the range of (printed) sources and of the literary production of this period. While I agree with the need to redefine and expand the literary canon, this does not diminish the importance of the study of Saikaku’s output for understanding the urban culture of early modern Japan.

8 I adapt the term from Williams 2019, p. 149.

9 For an example of this burgeoning reassessment, see Nakajima and Shinohara 2016.



Figure 1. The normative materiality of seventeenth-century scribal culture: *fumi* 書 (texts), *e* 畫 (pictures), *hyō* 表 (covers), *chitsu* 帙 (storage cases). Illustration from Nakamura Tekisai, ed., *Kinmō zui* 訓蒙図彙, 1666, vol. 8, 15v. Courtesy of Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, München.

As a window into the significance of Saikaku's diverse scribal output, this study focuses on the intersections between Saikaku's activity and the *makimono* 巻物 (handscroll) format. The reason for choosing this particular format is that since its first use in Japan in the seventh century it had become one of the main carriers of textual and visual content.¹⁰ Moreover, the physical characteristics of the handscroll format are markedly different than those of the *fukurotoji* 袋綴 (pouch binding) codex, the other main format of early modern scribal culture. After 1600, the *fukurotoji*-bound codex also became a format for printed text, unlike the handscroll which remained an almost exclusively manuscript format.¹¹ For that reason, the terms "handscroll" and "scribal format" are used interchangeably throughout this study.

Studies of the handscroll format tend to focus on pre-1600 examples, and particularly on the characteristics of narrative illustrated handscrolls.¹² This leaves the changing significance of this major scribal format from the seventeenth century onwards comparatively under-researched. This study addresses that gap through its investigation of Saikaku's involvement with handscrolls (figure 1).¹³

As detailed below, Saikaku engaged with all aspects of this format: its materiality, production, use, and social significance. I analyze Saikaku's output from two complementary perspectives that structure this study: as meta-textual and visual references to the uses and

¹⁰ Kersey 2020, p. 125.

¹¹ There are a few exceptions: the 1391 *Yūzū nenbutsu engi emaki* 融通念仏縁起絵巻 (Takagishi 2015); the 1767 *Jōkyōshū* 乗興舟 (Impromptu pleasures afloat) by Itō Jakuchū 伊藤若冲 (1716–1800) (Kyoto Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan 2000, cat. 142; Nakano 2011, pp. 113–114; Yamashita 2019, cat. 18); and the 1785 *Edo meisho zue* 江戸名所図会 (Views of the famous places of Edo) by Kitao Masayoshi 北尾政美 (1764–1824) (Smith 1988, p. 9).

¹² Watanabe 2011, pp. 28–42.

¹³ The handscroll was one of two major formats for scribal artifacts given in the 1666 encyclopaedia *Kinmō zui* 訓蒙図彙, which notes under "Texts, writings, books [that] handscrolls, 'rolled texts' are the same as side-scrolls; codices are the same as 'bound texts'" (Original text: 書ふみ本同巻軸今按まきぶみ横巻同冊子今按とちぶみ), vol. 8, 15v. Available from <https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/en/view/bsb11175015?page=319> (Accessed 15 August 2022). See Marquet 2009, p. 84.

meanings of scribal formats; and as artifacts acting as “evolving entities” with distinct material profiles.¹⁴ This two-pronged approach takes into account the recent emphasis on the paratextual as well as material and visual characteristics of text-bearing artifacts as carriers of meaning.¹⁵ Such an approach allows us to analyze Saikaku’s output in order to develop an understanding of early modern scribal culture as a dynamic set of practices that continuously reconfigured its meaning and relevance in interrelationship with technologies of reproduction.

The Normative Profile of Handscrolls

Before discussing the characteristics of Saikaku’s involvement with handscrolls, it is necessary to start with establishing the normative meanings and uses of the handscroll format in early modern Japan. As mentioned above, considerations of the handscroll’s affordances and characteristics as a medium of inscription have been limited to discussions of the genre of *emaki* 絵巻 (illustrated handscrolls) from the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries. Most notably, art historians such as Akiyama Terukazu have proposed a classification of such handscrolls into those with continuous visual compositions and those with alternating sections of text and image, arguing that they developed from two different lineages.¹⁶ A recent study has reassessed this classification and considered the relationship of this format to the flow of time and memorialization.¹⁷ Because of the emphasis on the rise and fall of illustrated handscrolls in the medieval period, it has been argued that the importance of the handscroll diminished in comparison to bound books, whether these were in manuscript or printed form.¹⁸ This understanding, however, is undermined by the comparatively recent recognition of the proliferation of lavish sets of handscrolls produced both by the Kano 狩野 and the Tosa 土佐 schools for elite patrons during the early modern period.¹⁹ And beyond elite circles, too, the manuscript scroll remained a viable alternative, as shown by Saikaku’s production discussed below.

To better comprehend the received meaning of the scroll format in the seventeenth-century, it is necessary to first acknowledge the interrelated terms used to designate it. While illustrated handscrolls were produced from the twelfth century, there was no established term for them: they were called *makie*, *emaki*, or *emakimono*.²⁰ Meanwhile, the term *makimono* was more generic in its designation of any scribal content bound up as a scroll. In one of the first examples of its use in the eleventh-century novel *The Tale of Genji*, it is paired with *sōshi* (codices), the other major scribal format of premodern and early modern

14 For “evolving entities,” see Friedrich and Schwarke 2016.

15 See Williams 2019, p. 148.

16 Akiyama 1989. For a comparison between Chinese and Japanese illustrated handscroll traditions, see Kohara 1991.

17 Kersey 2020.

18 See Kohn 2005, pp. 137–139.

19 For an example from the Kano school, see McCausland and McKelway 2009; for the Tosa school see McCormick 2013, pp. 56–64.

20 *Makie* (scroll pictures) appears for example in the entry for Ōan 応安 2 (1369).2.9 of the fourteenth-century diary *Gogumaiki* 後愚昧記 by the aristocrat Sanjō Kintada 三条公忠 (1324–1383); the later terms *emaki* (picture scroll) and *emakimono* (picture scroll item) are widely used only from the seventeenth-century onward; see Okudaira 1987, pp. 8–23.

Japan.²¹ In another example from the “Suzumushi” 鈴虫 (Bell cricket) chapter of *The Tale of Genji*, the components of a lavishly decorated scroll of a Buddhist sutra are mentioned without using any specific term denoting the scroll itself.²² This implies that the association between Buddhist texts and the scroll format was so intrinsic as to not require a specific mention.

Makimono did not always refer to manuscripts or even to scrolls: in a 1593 edition of *Aesop's Fables* printed with movable type at Amakusa, *makimono* is used to refer to the text of *Aesop's Fables*, despite it being bound as a codex.²³ From this example we can gather that *makimono* could also refer to a textual unit, irrespective of its material properties. However, such examples are few, and while an extensive study of its use before the early modern period is beyond the scope of this article, *makimono* had been established as the most generic and widely used term for the handscroll format prior to the seventeenth-century.

At the same time, from the sixteenth century onward, *makimono* also started to be used as a generic term for a rolled object of any material. The *Sasayaki dake* ささやき竹 (The whispering bamboo), a sixteenth-century tale, uses *makimono* when mentioning a gift of ten bolts of rolled cloth.²⁴ By the end of the seventeenth century, increased levels of trade meant that bolts of cloth had gained prominence in the popular imagination, as seen for example in the 1695 encyclopedia *Kashiragaki zōho Kinmō zui* 頭書増補訓蒙図彙, which illustrates nine types of raw textiles as bolts of cloth.²⁵ In 1688, Saikaku used the compound term *ito makimono* 糸巻物 to refer to such bolts of cloth in the context of trade conducted through Nagasaki harbor, which peaked at the end of the seventeenth century:

Nagasaki, first city of Japan for fabulous treasure, is a busy sight when the autumn shipping calls and bidding starts for the bales of raw silk, rolls of cloth, medicinal herbs, shark skins, aloes wood, and curios of all kinds.²⁶

From Nagasaki, these “rolls” would be shipped to Osaka, Saikaku's home and the main commercial hub of the period, from which they would be redistributed for sale through specialized shops called *karamonoya* 唐物屋 (lit. “seller of Chinese goods”).²⁷ Foreign textiles

21 For example, in the “Umegae” 梅枝 (The plum tree branch) chapter, the protagonist Genji gathers choice manuscripts with fine examples of calligraphy for his daughter: “He placed nothing of base origin in his daughter's book box, and he carefully distinguished the rank of each writer when he asked for a book or a scroll” (SNKZ 22, p. 422; Tyler 2003, p. 555). *Sōshi* are equivalent to the *fukurotoji*-bound codex discussed in the previous section.

22 “There is no need to describe [the scroll's] roller, mounting paper, or box. It rested on an aloeswood stand that stood on the dais with the sacred images.” SNKZ 23, p. 375; Tyler 2003, p. 710.

23 Hamada 2010, p. 60.

24 Kavanagh 1996, p. 231; Saitō 2019, pp. 5, 17. A seventeenth-century illustration of this passage is available from: <http://codh.rois.ac.jp/iiif/iiif-curation-viewer/index.html?pages=200003084&pos=27> (Accessed 1 June 2022).

25 These are *aya* 綾 (twill), *Kaga kinu* 加賀絹 (silk from Kaga province), *birōdo* 絨 (velvet), *donsu* 緞 (damask), *Hachijōjima* 八丈縞 (striped cotton fabric from Hachijō Island), *shuchin* 縐珍 (figured satin), *kōrai ori* 高麗織 (Korean-style weave), *kinu* 絹 (silk), and *shusu* 縐子 (satin). Vol. 7, 22r, 22v, 23r. Available from <https://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/11446233> (Accessed 15 August 2022).

26 Ihara Saikaku, *Nippon Eitaigura* 日本永代蔵, book V, no. 2, in Ihara 2003, p. 195. The English translation is from Ihara 1959, p. 106. An alternative translation of the same passage, along with a discussion of the commercial system it reflects, is found in Chaiklin 2003, pp. 74–76.

27 On *karamonoya*, see Chaiklin 2003, pp. 78–82.

were highly coveted, so *ito makimono* (rolls of cloth) were associated with exoticism and high financial value.

The early modern versatility of the term *makimono* thus meant that it could be applied both to textiles and to text-bearing paper.²⁸ This is evident in a *haikai* sequence of playful verses by Saikaku:

Twill on a roll, the drum's quarrel
Return, return, please, please, the oaths!²⁹

The first verse starts with a reference to unrequited love from the *noh* play *Aya no Tsuzumi* 綾鼓 (The twill drum): there, a gardener beats on a twill-wrapped drum in the vain hope of winning the favor of the Imperial Consort.³⁰ In the next verse, Saikaku grafts that tragic story onto the prostitution quarters of his day, referring with the word *taiko* 太鼓 (drum) to the *taikomochi* 太鼓持 (lit. “drum-holder,” a jester in the prostitution quarters), and invoking love oaths, often written by prostitutes for their clients.³¹ The transition from revered medieval source to vulgar contemporary conversation relies on the polysemy of the word *makimono*, which here also refers to a handscroll resulting from joining together the papers on which the oaths were written. This polysemy of *makimono* is dependent upon the shared material characteristics of the twill-wrapped drum and of the rolled papers. In other words, while text-bearing scrolls differed from rolled-up textiles, they were designated with the same term and shared a similar external appearance, thus allowing for the slippage of meaning that is exploited by Saikaku.

Despite its polysemy, the term *makimono* retained a strong association with scribal culture and with textual sources of authority. Buddhist clerics, for example, were often shown together with scrolls of sutras, as is visible by perusing the first volume of the 1690 encyclopedia, the *Jinrin Kinmō zui* 人倫訓蒙図彙.³² While this reflected actual affordances, practices of ownership, scribal reproduction, and the performative chanting of sutra scrolls, it also visually represented the knowledge and scribal authority of clerical figures.³³ Handscrolls were also a common format for the preservation of documents in a juridical context. This is shown by the inaugural story in Saikaku's 1689 *Honchō ōin hiji* 本朝桜陰比事 (Trials under the shade of cherry trees in our land).³⁴ This features a quarrel between representatives of two neighboring villages over the boundary between them, and particularly over the ownership of a derelict chapel with a statue of the Buddha that lies on that boundary. Each village preserves a record in the form of a *makimono* with the

28 There is a possible connection here to the fact that paper was initially a substitute for silk in East Asia; see Tsuen-Hsuei 2004, p. 169.

29 Original text: 綾の巻物太鼓がくぜつ / 返せ返せ是非非返せ起請文, see Ihara 2007, pp. 600–601. The discussion of these verses is based on Maeda 1987, p. 448.

30 See Tyler 1992, pp. 49–57.

31 For more on these oaths, see Leca 2022.

32 Representatives of the Jōjitsu 成実 (180), Kegon 華嚴 (190), Tendai 天台 (19v) and Hokke 法華 (220) schools are all shown handling or displaying handscrolls; see <https://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/2592439/20> (Accessed 15 August 2022). See also the monk about to buy a handscroll in Asai Ryōi's 1665 *Kyō suzume* 京雀 (The sparrow of the capital), vol. 2, 330.

33 For details of sutra-copying practices, see Kornicki 1998, pp. 87–92; Lowe 2012; O'Neal 2019.

34 Original text: 六代の先祖是を作りたる家業のまき物さしあげしに, see Ihara 2003, pp. 601–604. For the French translation, see Ihara 1990, pp. 35–41.

exact same text proving their right. The case is brought before the court in Kyoto, where a Buddhist sculptor is called in and produces another handscroll where his ancestor had recorded the details of the carving of the statue in question. The scroll record is found to correspond to a folded paper placed by the original sculptor inside the base of the statue, thus settling the dispute. Here, text-bearing scrolls serve both as judicial proof and as materialization of the historical identity of a family or a community.

The use of the handscroll format for the preservation of important documents is also alluded to in a parodic passage from *Saikaku okimiyage* 西鶴置土産 (Saikaku's parting gift). The mistress of a bordello advises one of her girls:

People from the northern provinces, you know, like to boast about letters from you girls when they get home. The notes you dash off mean more to them than something from the brush of Hitomaro or Tsurayuki.³⁵ They hate to see the paper damaged, so they paste something on the back and make them into scrolls.³⁶

The importance given to written artifacts received from afar is expressed through active care for the material preservation and memorialization of the artifacts.³⁷ This consists both of adding an extra layer of backing paper for reinforcement, and of assembling the letters into a handscroll format. The preservation of paper-bound texts was thus one of the affordances of the scroll format, and the material practice of this affordance underscored the value of the particular texts bound in this way.

The examples above testify to the pervasive and multifaceted presence of the text-bearing handscroll, or *makimono*, in late seventeenth-century popular culture. While the two preceding examples feature rural locations, an investigation into the importance of *makimono* in early modern rural Japan is beyond the scope of this study. Saikaku's examples rather suggest that generally, including within urban culture, the handscroll was perceived to be authoritative and commonplace throughout Japan. This is particularly relevant for our argument here, which argues that the handscroll format, as a common format for manuscripts, continued to be associated with a variety of meanings and uses in urban popular culture even as commercial printing took off.

The Manipulation of the Meanings of Handscrolls in Saikaku's Works

We have seen how handscrolls feature in diverse narrative contexts throughout Saikaku's printed texts. This is representative of a larger phenomenon: emerging textual media, such as commercially printed books, incorporated the cultural prestige of celebrated manuscript texts by reproducing them. This is evident in printed versions of calligraphy miscellanies, such as the 1651 *Kohitsu tekagami* 古筆手鑑 (Album of venerable calligraphy),

35 Kakinomoto no Hitomaro 柿本人麻呂 was a revered poet collected in the imperial anthology *Man'yōshū* 万葉集 (*Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves*); Ki no Tsurayuki 紀貫之 was the compiler of the imperial anthology *Kokin wakashū* 古今和歌集 (*Collection of Japanese poems of ancient and modern times*) and the author of *Tosa nikki* 土佐日記 (*Tosa Diary*).

36 Book 3, no. 1, translation from Leutner 1975, p. 378. Original text: 事に北國衆は文を国のひけらかし物に、人丸、貫之の筆より、をのをのさまの書捨ててを、大事にかけ、紙のそんずるをうたてく、裏うちして巻物にし給ふとや, see Ihara 2004, p. 245.

37 Kersey 2020.

which included the following disclaimer in the preface: “I applied myself diligently to the rendering of fine brushwork, the intensity, the angle of the brush and so on. While there may be mistakes in the block printing, the shape of characters should not be doubted at all.”³⁸ This acknowledgement of the limits of the technology of reproduction subordinates the printed book to the manuscripts it renders. In this way, in a predominantly manuscript culture, the shared knowledge of readers will be formed by manuscript texts, and therefore printed media will often incorporate allusions and references to scribal media.

However, Saikaku did more than simply reference the established meanings and pedigree of scribal formats: he also experimented and invented new meanings, mostly for the sake of entertainment. A prominent example of his subversion of the authoritative character of the handscroll is in *Gaijin yashima* 凱陣八島, a libretto written in 1685 for the puppet theater run by Uji Kaga no Jō 宇治加賀掾 (1635–1711).³⁹ As in the case of the *haikai* sequence discussed above, Saikaku starts with a reference to a medieval noh play which would have been familiar to audiences of the time: in the play *Ataka* 安宅, the military commander Minamoto no Yoshitsune 源義経 and his party are disguised as mountain ascetics and need to cross the barrier at Ataka. The barrier commander asks Yoshitsune’s chief retainer, Benkei 弁慶, to prove their credentials by reading out the document authorizing them to collect donations for the rebuilding of Tōdaiji 東大寺 Temple in Nara. Benkei produces a blank scroll and reads it aloud as if the authorization had been written on it (figure 2).⁴⁰ It is a vivid example of the performative relationship between bodies and texts in premodern Japan.

The inclusion of an abbreviated version of this scene in *Gaijin yashima* likely alludes to a similar ‘crowdfunding’ effort for the rebuilding of the same temple, initiated in 1684 by the monk Kōkei 公慶 (1648–1705).⁴¹ In Saikaku’s rewriting, however, Benkei “pulls out an educational scroll, calls it a subscription scroll and reads it out in a loud voice.”⁴² The scroll format could therefore accommodate a wide range of textual content. “Educational” (*ōrai* 往来) works were more casual text artifacts for the instruction of young readers, popularized by the burgeoning commercial print industry that catered to the newly affluent merchant class of late seventeenth-century Japan.⁴³ Saikaku is therefore referring to established tropes of handscroll use, as indicating authority, while at the same time updating those tropes and connecting them to other scribal practices.⁴⁴ This is emblematic of what has been called

38 Original text: 筆勢気曲以下心を尽しうつすといへとももし板刊の誤りもや有へき然とも字形においては毛頭たかふへからず, in Kanai 1989, p. 146. See also Komatsu 1972, pp. 95–102. For a comprehensive list of seventeenth-century printed versions of calligraphy albums, see Komatsu 1972, p. 102.

39 Some scholars have argued that the author was Chikamatsu Monzaemon 近松門左衛門 (1653–1725). I follow the attribution given in Noma 1965, cat. 271.

40 Yasuda 1972, pp. 363–366, 386–388; Smith 2021, pp. 79–80. For later Kanjinchō kabuki versions, see Smith 2021, pp. 87–90.

41 Shinoda 1999, p. 41; Torii 1993, pp. 134–135. Notice that the second character of Benkei’s and Kōkei’s names is identical: 慶. For the rebuilding effort, see Nara Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan 2005.

42 Original text: ううらいのまき物取出し、くはんじん帳と名付、たからかにこそよみあげけれ, see Ihara 2007, p. 1234. The mention of an “educational scroll” (往来の巻物) might be a semi-parodic reference to Yoshitsune’s young age.

43 The category *ōraimono narabi tehon* 往来物並手本 (primers and copybooks) appears in booksellers’ catalogues in the 1660s; see Moretti 2010, p. 315. For a comprehensive study of the development of *ōraimono*, see Ishikawa 1988.

44 This is in line with a general characteristic of Kaga no Jō’s librettos, which frequently update references to noh theatre; see Takusagawa 2012.



Figure 2. “Benkei Reads the Donation Document.” Illustration from Ihara Saikaku, *Gaijin yashima* 凱陣八島, 1685. Courtesy of Osaka University Library.

“an accretionary tendency for redeploying earlier forms and ideas in Tokugawa print and culture.”⁴⁵ But it was not only print that exhibited this accretionary feature: scribal culture also adapted to an expanded audience and to a thriving economy, as shown by Saikaku’s handscroll production discussed in the next section. The relationship to past practices and meanings can be described in terms of Gérard Genette’s concept of hypertextuality, and a recent study has argued in this vein that the character of Benkei can be conceptualized as a palimpsest: perpetually open to reinterpretation while retaining traces of its former configurations.⁴⁶ When considering the text’s materiality and social context in conjunction with Genette’s ideas, it becomes possible to consider the handscroll itself as a palimpsestic format in the urban culture of the period: preserving echoes of authority and cultural capital while adapting to contemporary usage.

Saikaku’s boldest manipulation of the handscroll format is found at the beginning of his second printed prose work, the 1684 *Shoen ōkagami: Kōshoku nidai otoko* 諸艶大鏡 好色二代男 (Great mirror of beauties: Son of an amorous man). A messenger from Nyōgokoku 女護国 (The Land of Women) appears in a dream to Yoden (the son of Yonosuke, the protagonist of Saikaku’s first prose work, *Kōshoku ichidai otoko* 好色一代男, who is currently in the Land of Women). The messenger says, “because of the deep filial

⁴⁵ Goree 2020, p. 114. This parallels McCausland’s observation: “Multiple pasts (such as the supposed historical setting of the drama narrative, the antiquities, traditions of taste, and so on) intermingle with, are etched on or embedded into contemporary objects and spaces of desire.” McCausland 2009, p. 171.

⁴⁶ Smith 2021, pp. 66–68.

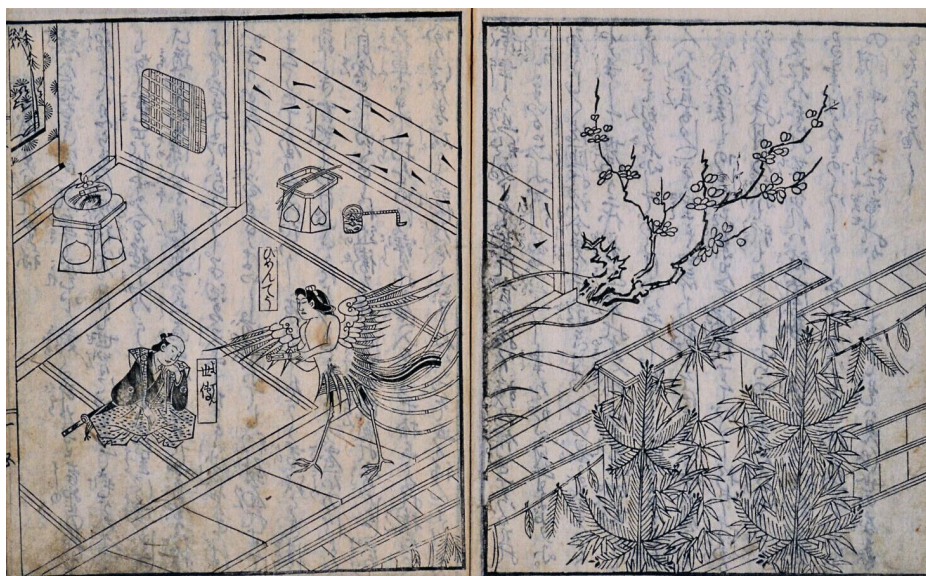


Figure 3. “A Messenger from the Island of Women.” Illustration from vol. 1 of Ihara Saikaku, *Shoen ôkagami: Kôshoku nidai otoko* 諸艶大鏡 好色二代男, 1684. Courtesy of Kyoto University Library.

bond he feels, Yonosuke is bestowing upon you the secret teachings of lovemaking,” and proceeds to slip a scroll into Yoden’s sleeve.⁴⁷ Such a scroll of secret teachings would have reminded contemporary readers of stories about the powers Minamoto no Yoshitsune acquired through reading a *Tora no maki* 虎の巻 (secret scroll) treatise.⁴⁸ The text, as well as Saikaku’s own illustration, capitalize on the multiple affordances of handscrolls within scribal culture: portability, authentication of family inheritance and perpetuation, and transmission of esoteric knowledge and iconography (figure 3).⁴⁹ Just like in *Gaijin yashima*, this example encompasses two concomitant processes: while it appears in a printed book, it shows the enduring relevance of scribal culture in late seventeenth-century urban Japan; at the same time, it reveals the manipulations of the received meanings of scribal formats by seventeenth-century authors such as Saikaku.

Saikaku’s Handscroll Artifacts

Besides referencing and playing with the meanings of the handscroll format in his writings, Saikaku also played an active role in the production of handscroll artifacts. His engagement with the format was linked to his *haikai* activity, and incorporated private and public work

47 Original text: 親子の契りふかく、色道の秘伝譲り給ふと、一つの巻物、左の袂になげ入る, in Ihara 2000, p. 181.

48 The “tiger” character originates in a reference to the Hǔ Tāo 虎韜 (Tiger teaching) chapter of the Chinese military treatise *Liù Tāo* 六韜 (Six secret teachings), translated in Sawyer 1993, pp. 76–88. Thompson 2014 and Kimbrough and Shirane 2018, p. 148, n. 46 both translate this title as “Tiger scroll.” However, *Tora no maki* became a generic term for any secret treatise.

49 The illustration itself is influenced by the oblong visual layout of the handscroll. The visual representation of the messenger draws on the iconography of the *karyôbinga* 迦陵頻伽 (Skr. *kalavinka*) bird of Buddhist paradise. For an expanded discussion of this example, see Leca forthcoming.

conducted both individually and collectively. Below I will discuss three examples that illustrate these aspects in various configurations.

Since the medieval period, the poetic outputs of *renga* 連歌 and then *haikai* sessions had been inscribed on elaborately decorated paper and then often compiled in the format of a handscroll.⁵⁰ From the point of view of material formats, Saikaku's poetry master, Nishiyama Sōin 西山宗因 (1605–1682), is a transitional figure—a revered *renga* master who started to compose *haikai* with unorthodox amateur poets, and helped found the Danrin school 談林派 of *haikai*. In 1674, Sōin produced his hundred-verse solo sequence *Kabashira hyakku* 蚊柱百句 (Swarming mosquitoes: A hundred verses) both as a printed bound book and as a handscroll in his own writing, probably as a present for an elite patron.⁵¹ That solo sequence was an exception, however: as one of the most popular forms of an array of performative practices which have been called *za bungei* 座文芸 (*za* arts), the practice of composing *renga* and *haikai* poetry was inherently collective and collaborative.⁵²

As a prominent member of the Danrin school, Saikaku often composed verses together with fellow poets. One of these occasions resulted in the production of a handscroll as a memento for the poet Nakamura Saikoku 中村西国 (1647–1695) when he moved back to Hita 日田 in 1678 (figure 4). Three poets—Saikaku, Saikoku, and Maekawa Yoshihira 前川由平—took turns in composing what amounted to a three-hundred-verse collection entitled *Haikai dōbone* 俳諧胴骨 (The backbone of *haikai*). The collective composition of *haikai* by trios of poets and its recording on decorative scrolls was a consecrated formula in *renga* poetry, a celebrated example being the 1488 *Minase sangin hyakuin* 水無瀬三吟百韻 (One hundred verses by three poets at Minase).⁵³ This process parallels literati practices in Ming period China, where the handscroll format—or what Richard Vinograd terms the “scroll-complex”—served as a material testimony of a social occasion that enabled a “spirit-communion” among its participants.⁵⁴ The unrolling handscrolls thus reflected the memory and temporal sequence of specific social gatherings.

While the *Haikai dōbone* handscroll was a manuscript production, its postface offers a glimpse into the burgeoning presence of print culture as it mentions that publishing houses in Osaka were interested in printing this text.⁵⁵ Indeed, a printed version is mentioned in booksellers' catalogues, although no copy survives. Furthermore, the material support of

50 Tamamushi 2012, ch. 9. For other examples see the twelve handscrolls reproduced in Tenri Toshokan 2020a, or the 1559 *Fu nanimichi renga* 賦何路連歌 by the leading *renga* poet of the period Tani Sōyō 谷宗養 (1526–1563), written on *torinoko* 鳥子 paper with bird and flower motifs in *kindei* 金泥 (gold paste), bound as a handscroll and preserved in Waseda University Library. For handscrolls in the *haikai* tradition, see for example the work of Nonoguchi Ryūho 野々口立圃 (1595–1669) such as *Eiōkukan* 詠桜句巻 (Scroll of verses in praise of blossoms) in Waseda University Library (Kakimori Bunko 1995, cat. 29) and the nine examples reproduced in Tenri Toshokan 1996 (see also Addiss 2006, p. 217).

51 Iida 1972, pp. 35–36; Tenri Toshokan 1998, cat. 6; Qiu 2005, p. 25; Ushimi 2013. Nishiyama was not the first to print *haikai*; Nonoguchi Ryūho for example also printed a number of works starting with the 1633 *Haikai hokku chō* 俳諧発句帳 and the 1636 *Hanahigusa* はなひ草 (Kakimori bunko 1995, p. 70). See also the handscroll with Sōin's verses in Waseda University Library with the title *Nishiyama Sōin ten "Hana ni yuku" hyakuin* 西山宗因点「花に行」百韻.

52 Hibbett 1961, p. 80; for *za* arts, see Ikegami 2005, pp. 76–101.

53 They were Sōgi 宗祇 (1421–1502), Shōhaku 肖柏 (1443–1527), and Sōchō 宗長 (1448–1532). The handscroll copy in the hand of Sōchō preserved at Ōsaka Aoyama Junior College has underdrawings of flora and Mount Fuji; see Mack Horton 2002, pp. xiii–xvi.

54 “Spirit-communion” is a translation of the Chinese concept of *shen-hui* 神會; see Vinograd 1991, pp. 182–184.

55 Original text: 及大坂判屋望申二付、あつさにちりはむる者成, see Noma 1965, cat. 59.

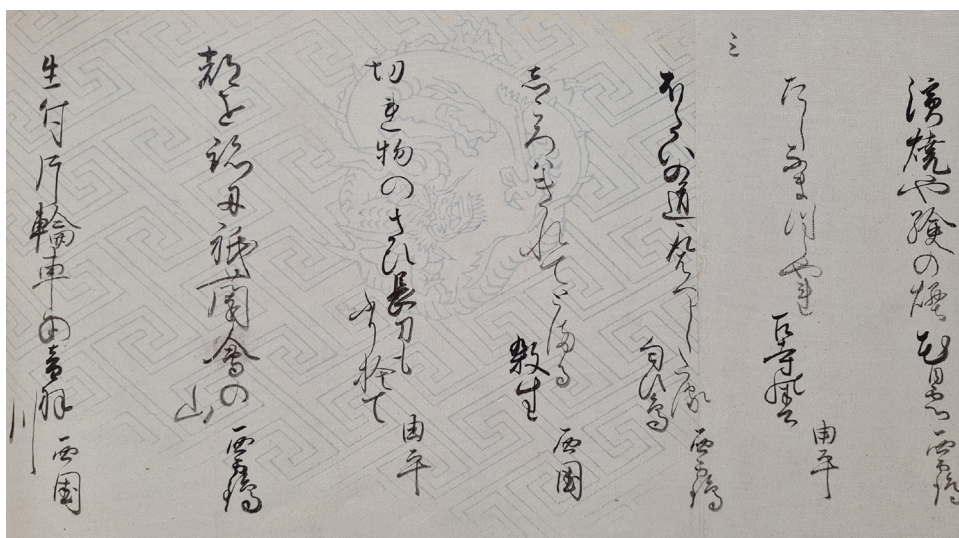


Figure 4. Hand-brushed verses on top of stencilled pattern. From *Haikai dōbone* 俳諧胴骨, 1678. Tenri University Library. Image from Tenri Toshokan 2020b, p. 67.

Haikai dōbone was itself produced through a form of printing: the handscroll was assembled from nineteen sheets of approximately 72.5 cm each, imprinted with an indigo stencil (*kappazuri* 合羽摺) featuring the design of a flying dragon over an interlocking rectangular pattern.⁵⁶ The motif carried material allusions to scrolls of collected poetry written on multicolor printed paper that illustrate an aesthetics of combining local and continental elements (*wa* 和 and *kan* 漢), initially developed in the cultural environment of Zen temples in Kyoto.⁵⁷ While grounded in a preexisting scribal culture, the handscroll's use of stencil printing already makes it a hybrid text-bearing artifact. Moreover, the same flying dragon motif enjoyed a booming popularity as a book cover design among commercial print publishers both in Kyoto and Osaka, and several of Saikaku's *ukiyo-zōshi* 浮世草子 were marketed with such dragon motif covers in the 1680s.⁵⁸

The impetus and context of this handscroll's production were grounded in the aesthetic social network of *haikai* poetry-making. The handscroll has been preserved with, and most likely was originally designed as part of, a material assembly that contained another handscroll with impressions of a trip made by Saikoku, as well as a document in the *orihon* 折本 (accordion) format handwritten by Saikaku, transmitting secret teachings related to *haikai* composition.⁵⁹ This material assembly was meant to sustain social relationships *in absentia*, as was common in East Asia.⁶⁰ It was also part of a larger trend of increased access

56 Bishamon kōshi makiryū moyō 毘沙門格子巻龍模様 (Curling dragon on Bishamon lattice pattern).

57 McCormick 2003, p. 55; McCormick 2018, p. 8. For a local response to such examples, see the work of Hon'ami Kōetsu 本阿弥光悦 (1558–1637) such as the pre-1615 *Selections from the New Collection of Japanese Poems from Ancient and Modern Times (Shinkokin wakashū) with Printed Designs of Plants and Animals*, in the Princeton University Art Museum.

58 See Morita 2013. I would like to thank Morita Masaya 森田雅也 for providing a scan of this article.

59 These are the *Saikoku jihitsu saikai no ki* 西国自筆西海の記 and *Haikai no kuden* 俳諧之口傳, respectively.

60 This parallels the role of the handscroll in the social relationship between the literati Wen Zhengming and Huang Yu in Ming China, discussed in Clunas 2004, pp. 64–65.

to both manuscript and printed texts among the wider population of early modern Japan.⁶¹ In this case, the little collection of manuscript text-bearing artifacts materialized the agency and authority of Saikaku and Yoshihira for the younger Saikoku. More than simply recording the circumstances of production, the handscroll's colophons had a performative role, embodying Saikoku's pedigree as a *haikai* poet.⁶² The mention of a planned printed version serves here, paradoxically, to enhance the value of the manuscript version. This testifies once more to the dynamic nature of scribal culture in this period, which included close and multilayered interactions with print culture.

Another aspect of Saikaku's involvement with the handscroll format in the context of scribal culture is the use of visual imagery: from the end of the 1670s, Saikaku started to brush sets of verse-image combinations (*gasan* 画賛) that expanded his practice as a *haikai* poet. These were eventually structured according to the twelve months of the year, borrowing conventions from poetic anthologies as well as painting practices, and produced in a variety of formats. The earliest of these *gasan* sets was probably no more than a collection of sketches for reference purposes.⁶³ Saikaku assembled these sketches into a handscroll for portability, as was common practice among amateur artists of the time. Then, towards the end of his life, around 1692, Saikaku added verses to the images he had made more than ten years earlier. By the 1690s, Saikaku was a revered *haikai* master and popular prose author, and the value of his calligraphy is testified to through the existence of numerous *shikishi* 色紙 (poem cards), *tanzaku* 短冊 (poem slips), as well as by another handscroll carrying only the brushed text of a selection of poems associated with each month of the year. Thus, inscribing even his early crude sketches with verses in his own hand would have considerably increased their value, and one can imagine Saikaku repurposing these sketches for a gift to a friend or patron.

A few months before his death, Saikaku integrated visual imagery in the production of his most complex handscroll, *Saikaku dokugin hyakuin jichū emaki* 西鶴独吟百韻自註絵巻 (Handscroll with one hundred poems by Saikaku annotated by himself).⁶⁴ The poems had been written during a trip to Kumano 熊野 in 1692, and the annotations were added shortly after, referencing revered poetic themes alongside contemporary events and realities. By this time Saikaku had become a consummate practitioner of the scribal culture of late seventeenth-century Japan. To produce the handscroll, he made use of his knowledge of the material and stylistic affordances of both image and text. The precedent for such a handscroll would have been the *e-nikki* 絵日記 (illustrated travelogues) produced in the handscroll format by Matsuo Bashō 松尾芭蕉 (1644–1694), among others.⁶⁵ However, in contradiction to the conventions of the *e-nikki* genre, neither the context nor the illustrations refer to Saikaku's Kumano trip. Instead, only a few of the poems are illustrated at irregular intervals, alternating text and image in a design akin to the "paragraph

61 See the discussion on the importance of *zōsho* 蔵書 (books in one's own collection) for preserving one's authority in Inoue 2014, pp. 4–7.

62 For the performative role of the colophon, see Williams 2019, pp. 152–154.

63 Printed versions of such sketches had begun to be produced by commercial publishers as *ehon* 絵本. The set is reproduced with the title 書賛草稿十二月 in Noma 1965, cat. 157.

64 This handscroll is 1895.4 cm long and 34.8 cm high. For more on the scroll, see Hibbett 1961, pp. 89–92; Tenri Toshokan 2020b, pp. 9–12.

65 For *e-nikki*, see Plutschow 1982, pp. 101–102; for the relationship between manuscript and print in early modern travelogues, see Itasaka 2014; for Bashō, see O'Mara 2006, p. 202.



Figure 5. Collaborative production of a handscroll: Saikaku's verses are brushed around the completed illustrations. Section of Ihara Saikaku, *Saikaku dokugin hyakuin jichū emaki* 西鶴独吟百韻自註絵巻, 1692. Tenri University Library. Image from Tenri Toshokan 2020b, p. 111.

format” of premodern illustrated handscrolls, but without narrative continuity.⁶⁶ Saikaku's handscroll thus diverges from *e-nikki* conventions to forge its own media configuration: a fusion of the layouts of *haiga* 俳画 (*haikai* drawings), often inscribed on *shikishi*, with the broader compositions, adapted from premodern handscroll examples, of the emerging *ukiyo-e* 浮世絵 (floating world picture) genre.⁶⁷ The combination of *haikai* poetry and images of contemporary scenes had been attempted in the 1671 *Takaragura* 宝蔵 (The treasure house) by Yamaoka Genrin 山岡元隣 (1631–1672) and the 1676 solo hundred-verse sequence by Karoku 可徳 called *Yakko haikai* やつこ俳諧 (Tough haikai), both printed in Edo as illustrated books.⁶⁸ Those precedents seem to support the view that print was a medium that afforded innovation. Saikaku's example, however, shows that exclusively manuscript formats continued to accommodate stylistic experimentation.

To achieve the sophisticated blend of poetry, commentary, and visual illustration of this handscroll, Saikaku provided sketches to a professional artist conversant in *ukiyo-e* as well as in Kano school techniques.⁶⁹ The collaboration was close, as is visible from a section where Saikaku fit his calligraphy around the edge of the illustration (figure 5). This tells us

66 I borrow the translation of *danrakushiki* 段落式 as “paragraph format” from Sano 2009, p. 41.

67 For a more conventional pairing of *haikai* and their illustrations in a handscroll format, see *Fuji no yuki* 不二之雪 (The snows of Fuji) from the late 1670s, brushed by Osaka *haikai* poet Shigeyori 重頼 (1602–1680) and illustrated by Kajiyama Yasutomo 梶山保友 (1644–ca. 1704); see Morikawa 1979, cat. 29.

68 The former is in Nakamura and Morikawa 1970, pp. 579–587 (also Qiu 2005, pp. 19–21); the latter in Morikawa and Inui 1971, pp. 23–83.

69 Asano 2020.

that, at least in this case, the illustration was ready first. A quickly unfolding sequence can be reconstructed: Saikaku composes the verses, draws sketches for the illustrations, shows them to the professional artist who produces the images, then Saikaku writes in the text but miscalculates the length of the commentary in figure 5, forcing him to overlap text and image. Nevertheless, this was an accepted practice within the manuscript handscroll tradition, which often played with the relationship between text and image.⁷⁰ Indeed, such overlaps can also be found in the handscroll production of Saikaku's contemporary Matsuo Bashō, who was also using the expressive possibilities of both manuscript and print formats.⁷¹ By the 1690s, such blends of text and image stood in contrast to the emerging visual layouts of commercial print formats that leaned towards an extensive use of borders and dividers.⁷² Producing a handscroll in this way was therefore a statement by Saikaku of the enduring relevance and appeal of scribal practice.

Conclusions

The meaning and uses of early modern texts were intertwined with the materiality, affordance, and social context of the text-bearing artifact. Both in terms of their production and of their representations in other media, scribal formats such as the handscroll carried a range of meanings that “conditioned its own social reception.”⁷³ This was a dynamic process, which can be described as palimpsestic: scribal formats preserved echoes of authority and cultural capital while accommodating additional layers of contemporary usage. Thus, scribal formats were not passive receptacles of textual content: the meaning of a text co-emerged in conjunction with the physical characteristics and social uses of the scribal artifact, which were themselves in flux.

Saikaku played an active role in the above process in various ways: by including references to the handscroll format in his works, as editor, and as a producer of handscrolls, often in a collaborative context. While making full use of the material connotations and established uses of the format, Saikaku negotiated and innovated its meanings. Moreover, his scribal practice also included visual production. The examples discussed in the second half of this study show him conversant with painting techniques and with the skillful blending of text and image. Saikaku's illustrations for printed works were closely linked to his painting practice and need to be reassessed from this viewpoint in further studies.

70 For references to this phenomenon in the medieval period, see McCormick 2009, pp. 56–57, 211. Seventeenth-century handscroll versions of medieval tales, the *Nara emaki* 奈良絵巻, often overlapped image and text. For an example, see the scan of the handscroll of *Mushi monogatari* 虫物語, available in the Nara Ehon and Emaki Collection section of the Digital Collections of Keio University Libraries: <https://dcollections.lib.keio.ac.jp/en/naraehon/132x-76-1> (Accessed 15 August 2022).

71 Image-text overlaps can be found in *Nozarashi kikō* 野ざらし紀行 (Skeleton in the fields), the poetic travelogue of his journey from Edo to Ōgaki 大垣 in Mino 美濃, Gifu Prefecture. The travelogue also generated its own manuscript lineage through copying during Bashō's lifetime, see Hama 1980; 1982. In the mid-1690s, the *Kasshi ginkō emaki* 甲子吟行絵巻, a handscroll version of the travelogue with illustrations by Bashō's disciple Nakagawa Jokushi 中川濁子, was produced as a present for his Ōgaki disciple Tani Bokuin 谷本因 (1646–1725), see on this Shirane 1998, pp. 176–177; Imoto 1979, p. 103. This tradition was maintained almost a century later in the work of Yosa Buson, see Papavlou 1981, pp. 63–98.

72 For an analysis of this tendency in the work of Saikaku's contemporary, the painter and illustrator Hishikawa Moronobu 菱川師宣, see Watanabe 2007.

73 McCausland 2019, p. 159.

What does the above mean for the way we study early modern art and literature in Japan? We can start applying insights from studies of eighteenth-century literature in Europe that are recognizing the “complementarity, codependence and integration of manuscript and print” after the expansion of commercial print publishing.⁷⁴ We can go further in the case of East Asia, where a print-augmented scribal culture preexisted the seventeenth century, starting with Buddhist texts and enduring into the twentieth century.⁷⁵ Rather than a print-centered author, Saikaku can thus be reassessed as an astute practitioner of a range of scribal practices and a versatile producer of scribal artifacts who was also involved in commercial publishing. Saikaku’s intimate knowledge of the handscroll and of other scribal formats enabled him to reference scribal artifacts in innovative ways in his *ukiyo-zōshi*. But rather than privileging authorial intention as the guiding principle of a history of literature, we need to reassess textual production as emerging from within the scribal culture and aesthetic networks of his time.⁷⁶ While this study has shown the diverse engagement of one producer, Ihara Saikaku, with one scribal format, the *makimono* or handscroll, further studies are needed to expand the investigation—in terms of period, location, producers, and media—to achieve a fuller picture of the relationship between scribal artifacts and printed media in early modern Japan.

We can nevertheless answer affirmatively the question posed at the beginning of this article. Manuscript formats such as the handscroll not only survived the emergence of commercial print, they adapted and thrived alongside print formats, sometimes in symbiotic fashion, as shown by *Haikai dōbone*. Manuscripts would enhance their circulation by being printed, while printed texts would invoke the prestige of manuscript formats. This means that we need to modify existing understandings of print-centered authors in early modern Japan. Virtually all Edo-period authors were also producers of scribal artifacts. Even for a later, and purportedly modern, writer like Natsume Sōseki 夏目漱石 (1867–1916), his scribal practice, combining calligraphy and picture-making, is crucial to understanding printed novels such as *Kusa makura* 草枕 (The three-cornered world), where the production and appreciation of scribal artifacts takes center stage.⁷⁷

This study has shown that considering the materiality, affordance, and social context of scribal production opens up new areas of interpretation for the history of the art and literature of early modern Japan. This was a period during which printing was enmeshed with, and often incorporated within, an evolving scribal culture. The resulting cross-media practices were materialized in a variety of scribal combinations whose complexity and significance is yet to be fully explored. For that purpose, the history of early modern literature needs to be recentered on the “integrated and non-hierarchical” relationship between media.⁷⁸

74 Scarborough King 2020, p. 14.

75 Parallels can be made to China, where woodblock printing started to be used from the late eighth century, but only in the mid-sixteenth century did prints gain ascendance over manuscript, and even then manuscript production did not decline; see McDermott 2006, pp. 43–47.

76 For “aesthetic networks,” see Ikegami 2000; 2005.

77 As shown in Itō 2012, Tokyo Geijutsu Daigaku Daigaku Bijutsukan 2013, and Furuta 2014.

78 Scarborough King 2020, p. 10.

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Remembering and (Re)storing War Memories: The Postwar Fiction of Shimao Toshio

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The tension between remembering and narrating war memories has been a significant theme in the discussion of postwar Japanese literature because it is closely tied to the broader issue of historical consciousness (*rekishi ninshiki mondai*) in postwar Japan. This article focuses on the postwar fiction of Shimao Toshio (1917–1986), whose work was shaped by his *tokkōtai* (special attack force) experience in the Asia-Pacific War. The article argues that the memory of imperial Japan forms an overarching thematic thread in Shimao's postwar fiction. The author engaged with this theme by employing Christian motifs in his work. While his early fiction tends to mask the memory of imperial Japan's violence, his later novels, culminating with his best-known fictional work, *Shi no toge* (*The Sting of Death*, 1977), uses such imagery to deal with the traumatic past, exploring the possibility of a restorative approach in dealing with past failures and their consequences. In this way, Shimao goes beyond the dynamics of victim-victimizer, providing a key illustration of the ways in which the traumatic memory of modern Japan can be transformed into a resource for the regeneration of society.

Keywords: Asia-Pacific War, historical consciousness, *tokkōtai*, Amami Islands, *Shi no toge*, Christian motifs, counternarratives

This article examines the postwar fiction of the war veteran and author, Shimao Toshio 島尾敏雄 (1917–1986). It analyzes how his novels engage with issues of historical consciousness, and their narration of the unresolved tension between Japan's imperialistic past and its postwar present.¹ The article focuses on three novels, written between 1948 and 1977: *Shima no hate* 島の果て (*The Farthest Edge of the Islands*, 1948), *Sono natsu no ima wa* その夏の今は (*This Time That Summer*, 1967), and *Shi no toge* 死の棘 (*The Sting of Death*, 1977, initially published serially 1960–1976). These draw on the author's experiences of the Asia-Pacific War (1937–1945), during which Shimao was a first lieutenant in the Eighteenth *Shin'yōtai* 第十八震洋隊 (Suicide Boat Unit) of the Imperial Japanese Navy (hereafter, IJN)

¹ Whether they consider it a complex, national phenomenon or historical culture, scholars have generally argued that the idea of Japan as a victim in the Asia-Pacific War lies deeply embedded in the Japanese consciousness. For detailed discussions on this topic, see Dower 2012, p. 130; Orr 2001, p. 3; and Igarashi 2000, p. 167. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are the author's own.

stationed in the Amami Islands between December 1944 and September 1945.² Collectively, these three novels form a counternarrative to the dominant discourses of the war in postwar Japan. I argue that Shimao's fiction represents an important critical perspective on the reconstruction of Japan's identity in the aftermath of the war. His imaginative vision transcends normative ways of seeing postwar Japan as either victim or perpetrator in the quest for an alternative means to face this complicated past. The article asserts that Shimao's works narrate postwar remembrance and (re)store memories of violence in a way that differs from mainstream narratives.

Shimao was not the only veteran author who undercut the victim–victimizer dichotomy that structured postwar Japan's understanding of the war. Tensions between remembering and narrating war memories are central to discourses on postwar Japanese literature, and navigating between experiences of war and processes of national reconstruction formed a recurrent motif in postwar Japanese fiction. Ōshiro Tatsuhiro 大城立裕 (1925–2020) and his novella, *Kakuteru pātī* カクテル・パーティー (*The Cocktail Party*, 1967) are particularly relevant here, as the protagonist's determination to fight against injustice is tied to his perceived duty to repent for his wrongdoings in China.³ Describing the struggle of an Imperial Army veteran from Okinawa to charge a U.S. serviceman for the rape of his daughter, the novella defies prevailing notions of Okinawans as victims of U.S. hegemony, highlighting guilt and responsibility for imperial Japan's actions in China: “You were the one who opened my eyes, Mr. Sun. The justice I seek for my daughter is the same you would want for the victims of the Japanese occupation in China.”⁴ The protagonist rejects superficial reconciliation, represented by an international cocktail party, and thus complicates their self-positioning within the victim–victimizer frame.⁵

While his *tokkō* 特攻 mission ended without a battle, Shimao felt guilty about his wartime role—ordering subordinates to their deaths and, worse, exploiting the Amami Islands as a first lieutenant of the IJN. Shimao described his wartime experiences on the islands as a confrontation between Japan's imperialistic tendencies and the historically marginalized status of the Amami Islands, through which the nature of Japan's imperial past could be brought to light.⁶ Using the motif of sin, however, he also explicated how the nation's imperial past could be used to reestablish relationships with its victims.⁷ Shimao's encounter with the Christian faith after the war played a significant role in his understanding of the possibilities for rejuvenation. In effect, he oscillated between his Japanese self and Christian identity—between recognizing his role in imperial Japan's

2 The *shin'yō* units were part of the *tokkōtai* 特攻隊 (special attack forces) of the IJN responsible for ambush attacks with wooden torpedo boats.

3 For further analysis on the issue of the victim–victimizer dichotomy in *The Cocktail Party*, see Kano 1987, pp. 358–369; Okamoto 1996, pp. 128–135.

4 Ōshiro 1989, p. 78.

5 In addition to *The Cocktail Party*, veteran authors using the imperial past to challenge postwar Japan's victim–victimizer dichotomy include Kojima Nobuo 小島信夫 (1915–2006), Ōoka Shōhei 大岡昇平 (1909–1988), Takeda Taijun 武田泰淳 (1912–1976), and Yoshida Mitsuru 吉田満 (1923–1979). For an analysis of these works, see Stahl 2016, Murakami 2020.

6 For details on the history of modern Japan in this regard, see Smits 1999, pp. 143–149; Miyashita 1999, pp. 179–181.

7 Miura Ayako 三浦綾子 (1922–1999) was another writer of Christian persuasion whose use of the motif of sin is inextricably linked with her sense of guilt for being part of the Japanese imperial project, as exemplified by her debut novel, *Hyōten* 氷点 (*Freezing Point*, 1964); for details, see Takano 2001, pp. 131–170.

national project, and his necessity as a believer to gain redemption for his crimes.⁸ The core question in this article is how Shimao's doubly ambiguous identity shapes the counternarrative he developed through his work.

In Amami Ōshima: A Doubly Ambiguous Identity

Shimao's experiences of the Amami Islands 奄美諸島—his ten months as a first lieutenant in the Eighteenth *Shin'yō* unit in Kakeromajima 加計呂麻島 and his nearly twenty years as a resident of Amami Ōshima 奄美大島 after the war—fueled his writing. Earlier, he had published short stories and poems in magazines (such as *Kōro* こおろ, 1939–1944) during his school days. In the year of his graduation from Kyushu Imperial University, Shimao collected these early writings and privately published *Yōnenki* 幼年記 (An account of childhood, 1943). A month after its publication, he volunteered for service in the navy and was later assigned to the *shin'yō* unit.⁹ Stationed on Kakeromajima, where the islanders (including his future wife, Miho ミホ) lionized him as a defender against invaders, he continued writing in his spare time. A story dedicated to Miho was later published as *Hamabe no uta* はまべのうた (Song of the seashore, 1946). Following the rapid demobilization in early September 1945, Shimao returned to Kobe 神戸 and started a magazine, *Kōyō* 光耀 (1946–1947), with his friends. He married Miho in March 1946. Despite this seemingly smooth transition to postwar life, Shimao left mainland Japan within a decade, with his literary career on the rocks and his wife suffering from chronic depression.¹⁰

By the time Shimao moved back to Amami Ōshima in October 1955, the Amami Islands had reverted to Japanese control after a period of U.S. occupation, and were experiencing the rapid reconstruction of industry and infrastructure. As he witnessed cultural erosion amid political upheaval, Shimao began to ponder the situation of the marginalized and disadvantaged Amami Islands, whose plight he had contributed to during the war. In a 1957 newspaper article, Shimao wrote that mainlanders characterized the islands as poor due to their ignorance, and that “the days when I came to this island with military authority for their security (?) cannot be an exception.”¹¹ His desire to investigate the tangled history of Amami culture and politics was strengthened further when he revisited Kuji Bay 久慈湾, where his *shin'yō* unit base camp had been located. Shimao painfully recalled his days as a first lieutenant when one of his companions showed him pictures of *shinyō* boats in a book:

“See, aren't you nostalgic?” Puzzled by his words, I was suddenly shocked to see the picture on the page. It was as if time were playing backward. Oh, isn't it a picture of

8 Other Christian-influenced authors who tried to reconcile their past experiences with their Christian beliefs include Endō Shūsaku 遠藤周作 (1923–1996), see Williams 2003.

9 As a third-generation preparatory student of the IJN, Shimao became a second lieutenant during his military training in May 1944, and was appointed as a commanding officer of the *shin'yō* unit in July. He arrived on the Amami Islands with one hundred eighty-three subordinates in November 1944 and was promoted to first lieutenant in December. In September 1945, he was promoted to captain of the navy and demobilized with his *shin'yō* unit at Sasebo 佐世保. For details about Shimao's military history, see Shimao 2000.

10 For a detailed account of Shimao's return to Kobe and his early postwar years, see Kakehashi 2016, particularly chapters 3 and 4.

11 STZ 16, p. 52, question mark in original.

the *Maruyon-tei* 〇四艇 [a *shin'yō* boat], ambiguously printed like evidence of a violent crime?¹²

Suzuki Naoko 鈴木直子 argues that ambiguity and guilt characterized Shimao's second experience of the Amami Islands, thus exacerbating the uncertainty about his postwar identity. These were also essential for his *Yaponesia* ヤポネシア writings, and the so-called "sick wife" stories (*byōsai mono* 病妻もの, many later published as *The Sting of Death*), penned between the 1960s and the early 1970s.¹³ For Shimao, the sojourn in the Amami Islands meant a return to the islands' history of marginalization during the post-Meiji transition toward modernity and imperialism. His difficult position in that history permeates many of his essays on the history and culture of the Amami Islands and is explored through Shimao's *tokkōtai* protagonists, who are forced to acknowledge their role by islanders who witness their actions. Shimao's representation of wartime experiences can thus be framed as part of his broader artistic concern to facilitate reflections on the unresolved tension between Japan's imperial past and its legacy in the postwar era.

Shimao's use of Christian motifs is also inherently critical. Several of Shimao's works published prior to his return to the Amami Islands, including *Shutsu kotōki* 出孤島記 (Departure from a lonely island, 1949) and *Yoru no nioi* 夜の匂い (The fragrance of the night, 1952), were set in Kakeromajima and drew to varying degrees upon his *tokkōtai* experience. Later novels, such as *Ware fukaki fuchi yori* われ深きふちより (*Out of the Depths*, 1955), *Sugikoshi* 過ぎ越し (Passover, 1965), and *The Sting of Death* employed Christian motifs to symbolically reinscribe his war experiences within postwar daily life. The remembrance of war and violence in Shimao's post-Amami writings was, therefore, an attempt to recreate the war and its influence on the postwar landscape through his religious outlook.

Critics have argued that Shimao's use of Christian motifs confirms his spiritual growth following his conversion to Catholicism in 1956.¹⁴ However, a closer look at Shimao's account of Catholicism suggests that the use of Christian images and metaphors in his work is complex and multifaceted. In his essay, *Shima no katorikku* 島のカトリック (Catholicism in the islands, 1958), he analyzes the rapid spread of Catholicism in Amami Ōshima from the Meiji period to his time in terms of the islands' political dilemma—of how to engage with an external, imperial power. He holds that the initial proliferation of Catholicism reflected the attempts by indigenous political leaders to restore the islanders' pride and dignity, which had been eroded by colonial distortions to their cultural heritage. Shimao's description of the oppressive military censorship imposed on the Catholic community in the Amami Islands during the war supports this thesis:

Reserved soldiers confiscated objects such as the cross, rosaries, and sacred paintings from believers' homes and burned them ... suspicion arose even among believers. The

12 STZ 16, p. 60.

13 Suzuki 2005, pp. 166–167.

14 See Horibe 1992, pp. 79–84; Okuno 2002, pp. 57–58; and Ishii 2020, pp. 189–190.

decline of faith became widespread among all the islands. Items related to Catholicism were removed from the believers' homes.¹⁵

Shimao's focus here is not on his knowledge of Catholic tradition in the islands or his spiritual journey with the Catholic community but the legacy of imperial Japan's management of the religious landscape of the islands. His encounter with Catholicism appears integral to his exploration of the marginalized history of the region, and echoes the sense of ambiguity and guilt that he felt at Kuji Bay.

In later interviews, Shimao mentioned another type of complexity that had come into play after his conversion to Catholicism: a perceived contradiction between his Japanese self and his Christian identity. While he remained notably laconic about his faith and its impact on his writing throughout his career, he openly revealed his sense of alienation from Japanese society as a Christian. In a 1970 interview, he described this dilemma of faith in terms of a historical discontinuity between the Catholic Church and the Japanese historical-cultural context.¹⁶ The perceived gulf between the two remained at the forefront of his concerns. "I am always haunted," said Shimao in another talk in 1973, "by a sense of betrayal: by a feeling that being a believer is incongruent with Japanese society and its history."¹⁷ As he deliberated on this issue, however, Shimao gradually incorporated his ambivalent feelings into his writing as a critical part of his literary creativity.

For many critics, Shimao's use of Christian motifs affirms his personal beliefs. Some even consider their use as an indication of the author's Christian perspective on existential issues, such as interpersonal relations involving responsibility and sin. Takeda Tomoju 武田友寿 was vociferous in this respect, and argued that Shimao's thoughts on sin were linked to his literary consideration of the victim-victimizer dynamics. For Takeda, Shimao sought to overcome the problematic nature of this binary by acknowledging that each side committed transgressions, and endeavored to offer his vision of the salvation of the self:

In Shimao's case, this fundamental act [providing his vision of salvation] can itself be regarded as religious and metaphysical, and he was able to continue it despite being in the depths of despair [*fukaki fuchi* 深きふち]. In this sense, he is a writer sensitive to the eternal despair felt by human beings, beyond the category of postwar literature.¹⁸

Nevertheless, the theme of sin and Shimao's concern with the relationship of the victim-victimizer seem to be inextricably woven into his reflections on the unresolved issue of Japan's imperial past. More specifically, sin relates to his ambivalent position on this historical terrain. My aim here is not to interpret Shimao's use of Christian motifs as a manifestation of his spiritual journey or to universalize it as a representation of existential issues. I wish to examine the extent to which such motifs are incorporated into the fabric of Shimao's counternarratives—stories in which the reader is invited to imagine alternative interpretations of the reality of postwar Japan and of Japan's portrayal of its victimhood in the memory of the Asia-Pacific War—that is distinct from prevalent sensibilities in

15 STZ 16, pp. 416–417.

16 Aeiba 1976, p. 127.

17 Shimao and Kazusa 1973, p. 6.

18 Takeda 1980, pp. 155–156.

postwar Japan. The remainder of this article examines Shimao's novels to explicate how the ambiguity and guilt associated with these wartime experiences result in a corpus of work that provides a counternarrative to the conventional understanding of the Asia-Pacific War in postwar Japan.

Remembering and (Re)storing War Memories

Shimao's writings after demobilization were often populated by islanders at war (see *Kotōmu* 孤島夢 [Island dreams, 1946], *The Farthest Edge of the Islands*, and *Departure from a Lonely Island*). However, in these early works, he tended to exoticize the lives of the islanders by showing how the young and old maintained traditional lifestyles in picturesque landscapes and were indifferent to their suffering during the war. Gradually, this perspective changed, and in his later works, written during his second stint in the Amami Islands, the characters begin to function as symbolic Others, whose gazes serve as stark, problematic reminders of the social and psychological costs associated with Japan's wartime imperialism.¹⁹ In his 1967 novel, *This Time That Summer*, the islanders confront the *tokkōtai* protagonists, prompting reflections on the war and, more critically, Japan's imperial past. In this regard, the novel provides "a starting point where Shimao sought to reencounter his war experiences, and in doing so, to define 'the present' ('now' [*ima* 今]) from which he could continually rewrite his relationship with the southern islands."²⁰

This theme is further explored through the disharmonious relationship between the veteran protagonist, Toshio トシオ, and his island-born wife, Miho, in *The Sting of Death*. Here, family conflict serves as a mini drama, standing in for mainland Japan's complicated relationship with the Amami region. The narrative symbolically reflects the voice of the marginalized community by describing how Miho critiques her husband's past treatment of her. Seen in this light, the prolonged, fierce fights between Toshio and Miho transcend the depiction of everyday life that dominates the *shishōsetsu* 私小説 ("I" novel) genre. Instead, as Marukawa Tetsushi 丸川哲史 suggests, Miho's madness speaks to the collective emotions of the *ryūkyūko* 琉球弧 (Shimao's term for the southern islands, including the Amami Islands and Okinawa), which have been under the control of modern Japan for centuries, and "we are obliged to identify a counternarrative within such madness."²¹

The Sting of Death adds another layer of counternarrative to popular imaginings of postwar Japanese society by employing the motif of sin in its fictional reconstruction of the nation's imperial past. This literary device is clear in the characterization of Toshio, who functions as a metaphor for postwar Japan in the story. From the outset, Toshio seeks to renew his relationship with his wife and pleads for reconciliation. However, the more he engages in this task, the more he deviates from the desired path because the record of his misdeeds is continuously exposed by Miho's persistent accusations. He is troubled by this

19 Shimao's representation of the Other is inextricably associated with his ambiguous identity, which was discussed in the previous section. A corollary to this are the rhetorical images that challenge normative notions concerning the identity of postwar Japan. This type of literary negotiation, which is seen in the representation of the Other, is not necessarily unique to Shimao's novels; it is also present in the works of writers who can be characterized as Internal Others. For more on this, refer to Hutchinson and Williams 2007, pp. 11–13; Sakurai 2022.

20 Adachibara 2016, p. 143.

21 Marukawa 2004, p. 170. While *ryūkyūko* is originally a geographical term, Shimao borrowed and developed it as a key concept in his *Yaponesia* writings. See Takara 2000.

dilemma, and is obliged to acknowledge both the consequences of his transgressions and the profound distress that the reconciliation process entails. In the process, he begins to seek an alternative to rescue their relationship rather than relying on his self-interested pleas.

The narrative here portrays postwar Japan with a complexity that is absent in popular accounts of the nation as merely a victim of the war. On the one hand, it exposes and transcribes the wartime memories of imperial Japan's violence through Miho's accusing gaze—a metaphor for the harm that Japanese militarism inflicted on its Asian victims. On the other hand, the narrative is carefully crafted to avoid any idealization of the marginalized group that would result in a reenactment of the victim-victimizer dynamic. Instead, it offers a standpoint from which the memory of violence can be turned into a means to reconstruct the identity of postwar Japan. This regeneration is shaped by the unresolved tension between Japan's imperial past and its legacies in the postwar era, which is Shimao's way of "remembering and (re)storing war memories."

Camouflaged Tales of War

Following his return from Kakeromajima to Kobe in early September 1946, Shimao wrote about his experiences in several stories and novels published in the 1940s and 1950s. These works explore war memories through interpersonal relationships and have been widely read as an embryonic form of the literary style Shimao would later perfect.²² This reading is seemingly supported at the textual level by the thematic connections between characters from different sets of texts. However, the exotic depictions of the islanders in the early novels mask memories of imperial Japan's violence. At this early stage of his writing, such violence is superseded by martial melodrama.

In *The Farthest Edge of the Islands*, the first novel Shimao wrote after his demobilization, the memory of violence is hidden by a romantic fantasy. The story is set in a southern island called Kagerōjima カゲロウ島, a fictional topos that lies in wartime Japan. It explores the experiences of First Lieutenant Saku 朔中尉 and his interactions with the islanders during the war. Critics have interpreted that the novel's central focus is the romance between Lt. Saku and a female islander called Toë トエ, a fictional doppelganger of Miho. Takasaka Kaoru 高阪薫 argues that the novel "beautifully and tenderly depicts the dilemma of love and death for two characters who experience a harsh fate while struggling between their mission and love."²³ Yoshimoto Takaaki 吉本隆明 has also examined this point with a focus on Toë; his analysis suggests that this female character resembles one of ancient, mythic descent, which supports her folk-romance-esque devotion toward Lt. Saku.²⁴

Toë's mysterious image is a subtle symbol of the colonial tropes of assimilation. It not only conceals wartime Japan's violent past under the guise of romance but also reflects her internalization of the colonial psyche. Here, Shimao seems sympathetic to dominant discourses and narratives that obfuscate imperial Japan's wartime atrocities, and chooses to weave such memories into the fabric of either sentimental or melodramatic representations.²⁵ The southern islander serves as a foil who, instead of acting as a reminder of a heinous past

22 See Satō 1983, p. 127.

23 Takasaka 1997, p. 46.

24 Yoshimoto 1968, p. 187.

25 Furukawa Shigemi 古川成美 (1916–2002) is another veteran author who fits this category. For an analysis of his works, see Narita 2020, pp. 81–83.

and its terrible consequences, conceals harsh memories of violence through the fairytale quality of her romantic attachment to Lt. Saku.

The colonial symbolism of the Amami Islands is conveyed by both Toë's character and the utopian nature of the islands. The story opens with a phrase reminiscent of folklore: "This story takes place long ago" (*mukashi* むかし), and a description of Toë, who "lived among roses" and would "play in her room with all the village children."²⁶ This mythic association of Toë with the islands' nature serves to create an ambiance of fantasy within this colonial landscape. When Lt. Saku, who has the authority to govern Kagerōjima, first approaches Toë's village at night, "It seemed as if the entire village had been created just for Lieutenant Saku to walk around in all by himself," and he feels "enveloped in an indescribably lovely perfume."²⁷ This sense of romance blossoms the moment he encounters Toë: "Someone was lying on the floor. He thought he smelled lilies ... Ah yes, it's Toë, thought the lieutenant."²⁸ Here, Toë is portrayed as someone who is ripe for exploitation by outsiders, a symbolic representation of the Amami Islands' position during wartime.

The image of Toë as an exotic Other is also concerned with the narrative representation of Lt. Saku's emotional distress. The young first lieutenant is introduced as "just as useless as a lamp in broad daylight [*hiruandon mitaina hito* ひるあんどんみtaina 人]," and is constantly described as being distressed by his inability to effectively control his subordinates.²⁹ This is best represented in the scene where they directly complain to him, and Lt. Saku is "plunged unknowingly into the depths of a great sadness."³⁰ Troubled, he takes on the duties initially assigned to his subordinates and works alone through the rainy night. It is at this point that the idea of visiting Toë comes to him. In contrast to the miserable events that preceded, the moment he meets Toë appears as a dream:

Sitting up and putting her hand to the hem of her dress, she said, "I thought you were the moon. I'm sorry. But I wasn't really asleep, you know." Then she rose and walked with a springy step to open wide the sliding doors and beckon to the lieutenant to come in. When Toë stood in front of the candlelight, he could see the outline of her body through her dress. As she replaced the candle, which was about to burn out, Toë glanced at the silver candlestand covered with its shade of figured paper, and her face glowed like a red photo negative.³¹

Ishii Hiroshi 石井洋詩 avers that Lt. Saku is undergoing a process of "recovering an essential self" here. He is reestablishing his lost harmony with nature and regains the balance of his mind through this encounter with Toë.³² However, the exotic and picturesque presentation of Toë clearly disguises the complex political issues surrounding their relationship.

Shimao develops Toë's exotic image to mark her, not merely as the embodiment of nature in the Amami Islands but as symbolically linked with the region's colonial history.

26 Shimao 1985, p. 11.

27 Shimao 1985, p. 19.

28 Shimao 1985, p. 19.

29 Shimao 1985, p. 12.

30 Shimao 1985, p. 17.

31 Shimao 1985, p. 19.

32 Ishii 2017, pp. 156–157.

By doing this, he implicitly contrasts this romantic tryst with the unpleasant reality of island life; Toë's presence camouflages memories of war and violence. A closer analysis of the text reveals that such connections are further highlighted in Toë's changing characterization. Initially, Toë is described as a naïve and privileged islander; however, as the story progresses, she becomes entangled in the realities of war, especially when she discovers Lt. Saku's suicidal mission to defend the islands. At this point, she becomes a young woman who obediently waits for her messianic prince's visit every night. These depictions suggest her internalization of a hegemonic colonial discourse, through which the story shifts its focus from the burdens of war to its melodrama.

At this point, it is interesting to note that Christianity is closely linked to the drastic change in Toë's personality. For Toë, her Christian faith initially offers a safe harbor in times of sadness and trouble; when praying, she "pressed her cheek to the book" her deceased mother had used.³³ However, her faith in God is replaced by her intense love for Lt. Saku, as symbolized by the dagger that the lieutenant offers her. The weapon is delivered by the lieutenant's orderly, together with a letter describing the time and place of what would prove to be their final meeting, before the orderly's visit is abruptly interrupted by enemy attacks. When Lt. Saku receives the order to prepare for battle, Toë is determined to die for her love as well. Wearing "a dark kimono of raw silk," she meets him on the night of the battle.³⁴ Their tryst quickly concludes, and the narrative closes with Toë being left on the shore, watching the presumably inevitable death of Lt. Saku, and holding a dagger to her breast:

Toë had brought with her, wrapped in white cloth, the dagger with the silver carving. This she now held reverently to her breast like a cross. She would wait until daylight. If she were to see something floating in the water, when exactly forty-eight of them had passed through the inlet before her eyes and out toward the open sea, then Toë would fill her kimono sleeves with stones and, clasping the dagger firmly to her breast, walk out into the water.³⁵

The imagery of the cross being associated with the dagger is highly suggestive. On the one hand, it shows the culmination of Toë's romantic relationship with Lt. Saku, the inevitable end of their story. On the other, it indicates that the exploitative nature of imperial power—its sheer violence represented by the dagger—now occupies a central position. The imagery suggests that Toë has come to internalize the settler-colonial violence more deeply than her Christian faith. It highlights her determination and unwavering devotion to Lt. Saku, while simultaneously storing the memory of violence behind such symbols.

The Hostile Islands

The novel, titled *Shuppatsu wa tsuini otozurezu* 出発は遂に訪れず (The departure never came, 1962), and its sequel in the series of *tokkōtai* stories, *This Time That Summer*, represent a shift in Shimao's attitude toward the theme of war memory while continuing the narrative of his earlier works. They focus on the vacillation of the narrator as the order of

33 Shimao 1985, p. 23.

34 Shimao 1985, p. 28.

35 Shimao 1985, p. 29.

the *tokkō* attack never arrives, and his unexpected reprieve as the war ends in Japan's defeat. This time, though, the islanders are not presented as the exotic Other, but as signifiers of their status as victims during the war. They direct animosity toward the narrator because their resources are exploited for the benefit of his troops. Confronted with this reaction, the narrator feels vulnerable and is compelled to engage with the complexities of a wounded, postwar reality. In a 1965 newspaper article, Shimao wrote that he had begun to view the Amami Islands as a place to contemplate the history of modern Japan rather than one of exotic allure.³⁶ This reexamination of Japan through the lens of the southern islands is a central theme in his writings on the Amami Islands. In these novels, one can trace his evolving views on war memory, which resulted in his exploration of postwar Japan's painful past.

The narrative timeframe of *The Departure Never Came* spans two days (14–15 August 1945). As the war draws to a close, the (self-)presentation of Japanese troops as protectors of the Amami Islands collapses, and their presence becomes a cause of resentment. The emotional disjuncture between the narrator's account of his imagined future and the unfolding reality is the primary focus of the narrative. He finds that the bright, new day he sees on the island is "beyond my understanding."³⁷ Simultaneously, the novel details the protagonist's gradual understanding of the islanders' hostility. It is first seen when, despite the hospitality offered by the islanders, the narrator realizes that "the bridge that I felt connected us to the villagers had vanished quickly," and that "an original rupture" exists between them.³⁸ The following day, he also witnesses grievances among some villagers working at a farm during the day, demonstrating that "things were not right."³⁹ These disturbing impressions of the islanders develop within the chronological timeframe of the narrative, and the novel uses them to draw attention to these tensions and the islanders' resistance.

This Time That Summer depicts the days that followed the emperor's announcement of Japan's unconditional surrender on 15 August, and details the narrator's uncertain transition from wartime to postwar. This difficulty is symbolically present at the outset. The morning after the surrender, the narrator finds a villager at the base camp who demands the return of his wooden boats. The man gave "no sign of acknowledgment," and his "gravity and solidity oozed defiance."⁴⁰ This unexpected attitude leads the protagonist to comprehend his responsibility for the war, which would have been left unquestioned if his death had been successfully attained through the suicide mission. He also reflects on his troops now occupying the island without a legal title, and their uncertain future in the postwar political and societal situation. Amid these concerns, the narrator realizes that he has lost his position of privilege. He is brought back to reality by the problems he now views with "a stern countenance toward those who had ignored them."⁴¹

The figure of the islander lays the narrator bare with his piercing stare and reveals the uncertainty and unease of postwar reality. Other characters in the novel also serve

36 STZ 17, p. 40.

37 Shimao 2005, p. 757.

38 Shimao 2005, p. 763.

39 Shimao 2005, p. 770.

40 Shimao 1985, p. 31.

41 Shimao 1985, p. 32.

as foils for the narrator's reflection on his wartime misdeeds. As Adachibara Tatsuharu 安達原達晴 argues, the disorganized state (and loss of discipline) displayed by the narrator's subordinates following the surrender makes him realize that he violated wartime norms by visiting Toë at night.⁴² Moreover, the islanders' characters play a symbolic role: they allude to the exploitative relationship between wartime Japan and the Amami Islands. This image of the marginalized and oppressed islanders comes to the fore in this text. For example, on the same day as that of the boat incident, another islander comes to the base camp at noon, asking for the return of two carp that he had presented to the narrator. Earlier, he had expressed a "dazzling interest" in the protagonist as a commanding officer of the Imperial Navy. Here, he assumes a hostile attitude, as if "he was talking to some young boy unschooled in the ways of the world."⁴³ Overwhelmed by this sudden change in attitude, the unsettled narrator remarks, "I cannot rid myself of a needling dissatisfaction."⁴⁴

As the story proceeds, the challenging gaze of the islanders becomes more evident within the text. This aspect is shown when the narrator visits "O" village to read the Imperial Rescript of Surrender aloud in front of the villagers. He finds that "he did not see any men" in the village, even though they were supposed to have been informed about this event prior to his visit.⁴⁵ Some men appear as the narrator starts reading the Rescript to the women and children, with tears filling his eyes; however, the text only describes their late arrival in the village square. The contrast between the emotional narrator and the taciturn men is sharpened when the former completes his speech. As he feels reluctant to leave the place, deeply moved by his eloquence, "no one seemed inclined to speak to me; they avoided me as they receded."⁴⁶

When viewed alongside Shimao's other novels, particularly those depicting his second experience of the Amami Islands, these islanders demonstrate the author's increased concerns with encountering the Other. Suzuki Naoko has argued that novels such as *Kawa nite* 川にて (At the river, 1959) and *Shima e* 島へ (To the island, 1961) describe the indigenous culture of the Amami Islands as an "absolute Other" to their metropolitan protagonists.⁴⁷ Ishii Hiroshi has recently reexamined this issue by studying Shimao's experiences as a Catholic since his baptism, arguing that the reflective viewpoint of the narrator of *This Time That Summer* is consistent with the author's religious outlook.⁴⁸ However, as I have suggested above, there is another layer to this story—the ghost of imperialism that suffuses the landscape of postwar Japan. Here, the gaze of the islander Others reveals the suppressed memories of Japan's imperialistic management of the islands. The novel is, in essence, a text about remembering issues of exploitation, marginalization, and violence, as well as the war that restored the memory of these problems to history.

These concerns are also mirrored in the characterization of Toë. Unlike Shimao's earlier stories, she no longer fits the depiction of an exotic Other, but emerges as indifferent or even spiteful toward the narrator. This change is seen when the protagonist visits her

42 Adachibara 2016, pp. 138–139.

43 Shimao 1985, p. 36.

44 Shimao 1985, p. 36.

45 Shimao 1985, p. 38.

46 Shimao 1985, p. 42.

47 Suzuki 1997, p. 49.

48 Ishii 2020, p. 190.

house after reading the Rescript, where her father comes back from the shelter. In contrast to this old man, whose “countenance was serene,” now that he was free from the fear of air raids, Toë refrains from voicing her thoughts regarding the end of the war:

Sitting behind and to the side of her father, as if to hide in his shadow, she had kept an unobtrusive eye on me without looking at me directly. Her long, deepest eyes gave off a pure and somehow helpless impression. I had not seen her since yesterday’s news of the surrender; we had many things to talk about, but I did not feel the usual sense of urgency that it must be tonight ... After a brief exchange of casual conversation with her father, I felt better, and when I got up to leave, he did not protest. Toë looked off into the distance, and what her thoughts were I could not tell from her eyes.⁴⁹

Toë’s sunken, helpless eyes are indicative of the toll of war, reflecting the sentiments of the islanders in general. She encounters a postwar reality in which the idealized image of the young lieutenant is absent. Along with this disillusionment, there is an awareness that there are “many things to talk about,” which carries over into Shimao’s other stories, culminating in *The Sting of Death*.

Beyond the Dynamics of Victim-Victimizer

The Sting of Death is often read as the culmination of Shimao’s “sick wife” stories (*byōsai mono*), praised for its portrayal of the author’s torment while his wife was suffering from a psychogenetic reaction.⁵⁰ However, viewed outside of this conventional understanding, the novel has much in common with his *tokkōtai* stories. For example, its two protagonists—Toshio, a mainland novelist who served in the IJN in the southern islands during the war, and his wife Miho, who comes from the southern islands of Japan—resemble Lt. Saku and Toë from the earlier novels. In addition, while the story is set in the context of daily life in postwar Tokyo, Toshio’s emotional struggles and vulnerabilities are described as a comparison to his *tokkōtai* experiences. This juxtaposition between the mundane present and wartime realities runs throughout the novel; it is further reinforced through images of Miho’s madness concerning Toshio’s affair with another woman, called “Ano onna” (that woman) in the story.

Nevertheless, Toshio is more complex than Shimao’s earlier *tokkōtai* protagonists. He reenacts the original sin of his earlier betrayal—engaging in the exploitation of the islanders in the name of liberating them from the enemy—and, in the process, punishes himself for his sin. In this sense, *The Sting of Death* is a critical example of Shimao’s representation of war experiences; it describes how the experience of daily postwar life can be used to cope with the lingering memories of war. As he completed the full version of *The Sting of Death*, Shimao commented on the continuing sense of the war in his life. In an interview with Yoshida Mitsuru, he observed:

I have been compelled to dwell on it [the memory of the Asia-Pacific War]. In my mind, however, it is not something to be treasured and preserved, but the war has

49 Shimao 1985, p. 42.

50 See Kokubo 2002; Shigematsu 2002; Kobayashi 2002, pp. 215–229.

always been present in my experience and that of others. On a superficial level, we should assume that war takes place when it does; but on a deeper level, would it not be a similar thing [for someone who has experienced the war]?⁵¹

The confusion of Shimao's *tokkōtai* protagonists in the face of complex postwar reality is also present in *The Departure Never Came* and *This Time That Summer*. However, *The Sting of Death* delves deeply into the complexity of this reality. Viewed in this light, the intense, frenzied marital dispute over Miho's accusations about Toshio's infidelity appears as a metaphor for the Amami Islands' rebellion against the domination of imperial Japan. Miho's madness represents her role as the Other responding to the cumulative hardships experienced by these islands, thereby highlighting the imperial continuities in modern Japan's exercise of control over the islands in the postwar era.

The Sting of Death, with its title taken from the Bible, 1 Corinthians 15:16 ("The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law" [New International Version]), suggests that the story is more than a mere remembrance of Japan's imperialism. It also explores how such a past would translate into the reconfiguration of postwar Japan's identity. This theme revolves around the characterization of Toshio. He first attempts to shift Miho's attention away from his troubled past by asking her to forget about it. However, as he attempts to reestablish a bond with Miho, he is forced to acknowledge the necessity of unlearning his privilege and listening to her voice. This recognition pushes him, albeit via a slow and painful process, to ultimately face and take responsibility for his past, in order to live with Miho in the present.

Shimao strategically uses the motif of sin to describe the journey undertaken by Toshio to seek reconciliation with his wife, as he symbolically portrays postwar Japan's relationship with its marginalized territories. Thus, the author goes beyond the victim-victimizer dynamics that form a large part of the discourse on postwar memory politics by introducing both a sense of failure and a renewed sense of self to Japan's postwar image. Shimao's effort provides a counternarrative of war memories and the nation's identity. *The Sting of Death* is, therefore, both about remembering and (re)storing Japan's past and present in the postwar era.

The first of these aspects, remembering, is shown in the way bodies are referenced during Miho's accusations regarding Toshio's marital infidelity. From the outset, Miho expresses resentment by focusing on how her body has been granted little attention over the years. She asks: "You don't need me, do you? Over the past ten years, you have treated me like that. I can't tolerate this anymore ... Look, I am becoming skinny, like a skeleton."⁵² As her anger intensifies, Miho contrasts her ardent devotion to Toshio with his frigidity: "I have built and taken care of these [Toshio's] arms and legs. If I hadn't paid attention to your nutrition, you would have died a long time ago ... But you have abandoned me, being selfish for not one or two months, but for over ten years."⁵³

Critics have focused on the depictions of Miho's body as a rhetorical trope that describes the problems and hurdles faced by women in postwar Japanese society. Philip

51 Shimao and Yoshida 2014, p. 149.

52 STZ 8, p. 8.

53 STZ 8, p. 70.

Gabriel, in his critique of scholars who view Miho merely as representative of modern women, argues that her madness reveals the systemic gender-based structural inequality in postwar Japan.⁵⁴ However, viewed in the context of Shimao's war experience, this contrast highlights the unresolved tension between the Amami Islands and mainland Japan in the postwar era. Here, Miho's outrage against Toshio's infidelity hints at the burden of involvement in the imperial management of the islands under modern Japan. The poor state of her body becomes a metaphor for the marginalized role of the islands, where they appear to be of merely strategic value for the nation, while their voices and experiences are neglected. This struggle is symbolically represented by Miho's questions regarding Toshio's perception of her sexuality: "In fact, you aren't interested in my *body*, are you?"⁵⁵ Miho is no longer an object of exotic longing but serves as a problematic Other to Toshio.

Toshio's initial responses to Miho's madness aim at channeling her attention away from his unpleasant past. To this end, Toshio attempts various actions: he swears that he will never lie again, shows his willingness to commit suicide, acts like a fool, and turns to self-harm.⁵⁶ These responses are motivated by Toshio's desire to attain the advantage on this particular battlefield, as the memory of his misdeeds disrupts his identity. Thus, Toshio says: "I am content not to be forgiven, but [Miho's] endless interrogations are meaningless."⁵⁷ A corollary here is his emphasis on the necessity for reconciliation, albeit grounded in a call to dismiss the past as irrelevant. Toshio explicitly suggests it after several fights with Miho:

I'm sorry. I was wrong. If you and I and the children don't learn to live happily together, I don't know what I'll do. Who'll take care of us? Let's stop this stupid fighting ... Now I want you to forget all about the past. I'm not trying to play the good boy. No matter how deep you go into a past based on lies, all you'll come up with is more stale lies. From now on, I won't ever lie to you, even about the most trivial matters. So please—I'm asking you to stop digging up the past and concentrate on the future.⁵⁸

Toshio's pleading with Miho to stop complaining about his past has led critics to argue that he has come to realize his victimizer's position and to begin to accept the challenging demands of his wife.⁵⁹ However, a closer analysis of the text reveals that the Toshio-Miho relationship is still oriented around the husband's needs alone. For example, despite Miho's reluctance to undertake a trip to rural Fukushima where Toshio's relatives live, he unilaterally decides to "artificially cut the strings of the past."⁶⁰ When this attempt fails, Toshio takes her to a psychiatric hospital, with the intention that "whatever the future, if its immediate anguish can be smothered, I am determined to do anything possible."⁶¹ Moreover, when her madness abates, Miho sometimes plays a submissive role: she buys an

54 Gabriel 1999, pp. 134–141.

55 STZ 8, p. 138, emphasis added.

56 STZ 8, pp. 13–19, 83, 101, 145, 146–147, 153, 166, 182, and 192.

57 STZ 8, p. 13.

58 Shimao 1985, p. 92.

59 Awazu 2002, p. 148; Takeda 2002, pp. 37–41.

60 STZ 8, p. 201.

61 STZ 8, p. 293.

expensive fountain pen to celebrate Toshio's turning over a new leaf after their first fight, encourages him to work, and follows him around as he moves from one relative to another in Fukushima.⁶² As in the novels discussed earlier, the structural hierarchy between Toshio and Miho is left intact in *The Sting of Death*: the reader deciphers a pattern similar to the relationship of Lt. Saku and Toë.

In contrast, the reality of guilt and responsibility associated with the Toshio-Miho relationship marks the narrative as something more than another tale of Shimao's war experiences. This reality constitutes the second theme of the story: (re)storing war memories. As he confronts Miho about his past, Toshio is led to ponder on his relationship with her, thus recognizing himself as a perpetrator who deceives her about his connection with another woman.⁶³ This goes beyond the current love affair and involves a series of deceptions made in the past: "The fleshy odor of secrets from my past unexpectedly rose to the surface, like foam on the polluted water of a canal."⁶⁴ These struggles lead Toshio to an impasse, where he feels powerless against Miho's constant accusations and cries out:

"Help me!" When I could not help but shout, Miho said, "To whom are you asking for help? Who can hear your loud voice here? Oh, I see, you want that woman to hear your voice. Oh, yes, you have asked her for help, haven't you? Where did you ask for help? Tell me..." I wonder if my words, which I shouted unconsciously, really meant to ask somebody for help. I may want someone to help me. But at the bottom of my heart, I know no one would help me due to my character, and my hopes have perished. I envision myself somehow managing this situation and living a different life devoid of sting (*mō hitotsu no toge no nai jinsei* もうひとつのとげのない人生), but when my wife becomes angry and starts to expose my past, I cannot tolerate it anymore.⁶⁵

The life that Toshio desires is juxtaposed with their conflict and evokes an ironic representation of his fate. On the one hand, he desperately desires a reconciled relationship with Miho. On the other, his past misdeeds—a love affair with another woman and, more fundamentally, his wartime actions in the southern islands—disqualify him from being in a position to direct this process of reconciliation. Toshio must begin this trajectory as the one who must be reconciled, with a painful awareness of his own guilt. This protagonist seems caught in a vicious cycle—what Kazusa Hideo 上総英郎 describes as "a hell-like repeating life over nine months, in which dawn breaks with [Miho's] endless accusations of the past, and the day ends with heavy unrefreshing sleep."⁶⁶ Underneath this battle lies Toshio's compulsive attempts to perform penance for his sins, albeit at the expense of his relationship with Miho.

Equally important, however, are Toshio's gradual changes in response to this dilemma, especially in his approach to Miho's madness. As Toshio repeatedly fails in his attempts to divert Miho's attention from his past faults, he realizes that the deeper desire behind her relentless accusations is not merely to expose his unfaithful past, but rather to focus,

62 STZ 8, pp. 20, 124, 226, and 234.

63 STZ 8, p. 51.

64 Shimao 1985, p. 74.

65 STZ 8, p. 107.

66 Kazusa 2002, p. 157.

“on how accurate they [the facts of betrayal] are.”⁶⁷ Here, Toshio appears to be standing at a distance from himself, seemingly listening to Miho’s outburst. Sensing that Miho holds a fundamentally opposing attitude toward the same issue, Toshio begins to envision alternative paths to deal with her. Equally importantly, he addresses his past faults that are brought to the surface by Miho’s candid explorations of his infidelity.

An early indication of this transformation is evident in Toshio’s determination to remain present and listen to Miho’s pain regarding his past betrayal, albeit at the cost of his own pain. He begins to view the wounds he suffered during the confrontation with Miho as “a telltale sign of not forgetting [his unfaithful] past.”⁶⁸ Toshio’s transformation here is contrasted with the doctors, who regard Miho as a mere object of observation. Despite Toshio’s eagerness to learn about Miho’s condition, they use her as an object to teach their trainees. In addition, when treatment is interrupted because Miho escapes from the hospital, her primary doctor dismisses her madness as a typical case of hysteria: “This is not an issue of medical treatment but one of interpersonal relationships between husband and wife. This is your [Toshio’s] problem. When you bring your wife under your control, her illness will be healed.”⁶⁹

While this is also Toshio’s attitude at the beginning of Miho’s madness, he eventually overcomes it with a more hopeful vision of their future. Therefore, when he recalls the doctor’s advice after Miho meets “Ano onna” for the first time and behaves violently toward her, Toshio interprets the suggestion in his own way: “If [Miho’s recovery depends on Toshio’s attitude], I cannot expect her to be restored to her former state unless *my* personality drastically changes.”⁷⁰ Despite this renewed awareness, Toshio once again falls into the vicious cycle: the more he strives to accept Miho’s madness, the more he senses his inability to do so. However, the difference compared to the earlier attempts is critical. The predicament in which Toshio finds himself at this juncture does not involve forgetting the past but entails its exploration as a component of their current lives. In other words, while Toshio still seeks reconciliation with Miho, his understanding of that work is now different. His current struggle stems from a determination to stay with Miho—and the memory of his past faults—at any cost.

The evolved Toshio is clearly shown in the last scene of the narrative. When he leaves Miho in a psychiatric hospital and goes out to prepare for her hospitalization, Toshio feels free from the accusations of his wife, “as if my body lifted and flew off.”⁷¹ Simultaneously, however, he finds himself caught by Miho, frightened at being alone in a solitary cell:

My body, which wishes to fly away, has been caught by a remnant of my wife. My wife, who relies on me and yet is deceived by me, falls into the abyss of loneliness, and her remnant grabs my soul. My wife is waiting for my return to a mental hospital. I could not think of anything other than living with Miho in the hospital room.⁷²

67 STZ 8, p. 265.

68 STZ 8, p. 348.

69 STZ 8, p. 363.

70 STZ 8, p. 468, emphasis added.

71 STZ 8, p. 519.

72 STZ 8, p. 519.

While this conclusion represents the ambivalence in Toshio's mind, it marks a pivotal movement in his attitude toward Miho. The desire to dismiss past failures as irrelevant to their present lives is replaced by the recognition of a relationship that brings Toshio a new vision of reconciliation. He appears to relinquish his grip on his life and make himself vulnerable, willing to endure distress in the process of reestablishing relations with Miho. The novel ends on a hopeful note, echoing this sentiment and hinting at the change in Toshio's attitude towards the future: "And I came to think that if we are in the hospital, a locked space detached from the rest of the world, we could start a new life."⁷³ Toshio is not entirely free of ambiguity, but he certainly glimpses the possibility of a renewal—of a new beginning that redeems past sins, even while keeping memories of those events alive.

As mentioned earlier, many critics analyze *The Sting of Death* as representing the author's most compelling expression of his domestic experience, while others consider the motif of sin as symbolic of the existential problem of human life. Tamaoki Kunio 玉置邦雄 argues that the novel reflects Shimao's deeper thoughts on the discovery of the Otherness, which stemmed from his traumatic recollections of his wife:

Namely, [Shimao] considered Miho as "the Other" due to his unfaithful behavior. From this point of view, the issue of sin, a fundamental problem of human existence, comes to the fore. The essence of *The Sting of Death* is the depiction of human sin.⁷⁴

When viewed in connection with Shimao's *tokkōtai* stories, however, the function of the motif of sin lends extra depth and resonance to the narration. Through the complex representation of a veteran mainland protagonist, Shimao portrays a postwar Japan struggling for harmony with postcolonial Others while acknowledging the complexity and distress involved in the process. Shimao, thus, offers a counternarrative to the mainstream discourses about the war and depicts a penitent Japan responding to the marginalized voices in the imperialistic history of the nation. This view of the past, which goes beyond victim-victimizer dynamics, bears witness to an alternative approach of coping with war memories. The violence of war and empire is incorporated into the process of reconciliation and is itself dependent on the possibility of remembering and (re)storing war memories.

Conclusion

In his essay *Ushiro muki no sengo* うしろ向きの戦後 (A backward-looking postwar, 1974), Shimao reveals his ambivalent attitude toward the postwar era. On the one hand, he acknowledges that, "It has been almost thirty years since I was freed from the war," and recognizes his sense of relief and freedom at the beginning of his postwar life.⁷⁵ On the other, Shimao also describes himself as not being entirely free from memories of the war, as "I sometimes wonder if I have not been demobilized yet."⁷⁶ Here, the author hints at the complexity of the task before him—to reconcile his present self with his history during the Asia-Pacific War. This concern remained throughout his life and led him to immerse

⁷³ STZ 8, p. 520.

⁷⁴ Tamaoki 1977, p. 147.

⁷⁵ STZ 15, p. 166.

⁷⁶ STZ 15, p. 172.

himself in his past. Shimao asks himself: “For what purpose had I fought? Are the two feelings [relief and freedom] truly the ones I felt right after the defeat? Have I possibly modified these in nearly thirty years? What did I feel toward the nation’s defeat?”⁷⁷

The answer to the last question can be found in his posthumous and unfinished novel (*Fukuin*) *kuni yaburete* (復員)国破れて ([Demobilization] After defeat, 1987). It serves as a sequel to *This Time That Summer*, but the narrative is thirty years after the demobilization. This gap between events and actions allows the narrator-protagonist to reflect on his experiences during the demobilization. This is clearest in the last scene, where the narrator is on his way to Sasebo with his *tokkōtai* subordinates. He becomes aware of a large American seaplane over his troopship, which takes some photos and flies away:

The roaring noise [of the seaplane] went through my entire body and barely disappeared. “Oh, we are defeated,” I strongly sensed. The airship probably took detailed photos of us. I felt I was being captured by inescapable black hands.⁷⁸

The image of the black hands (*nogareyō no nai kuroi te* 脱れようのない黒い手) suggests the nation’s defeat, requiring the narrator—and Shimao himself—to be held accountable for his war crimes throughout his postwar life.

However, as I have suggested in this discussion, Shimao’s efforts can be understood as an attempt to (re)store war memories and transform the past into a narrative that reimagines the future of postwar Japan. A sense of guilt embedded in his ambiguous postwar identity, both as a first lieutenant in his *shin’yō* unit and as a Christian, led Shimao to engage in this literary pursuit. In this sense, his devotion to narrating his wartime and demobilization (*fukuin* 復員) experiences can be attributed to his desire to bring good news (*fukuin* 福音) to a defeated nation—of the possibility that remembering and deciphering the past could be a source of renewing the future. This vision of the past echoes Isaiah in the Bible, where he envisions a transition from swords to plowshares. Here, the reader can see how Shimao’s doubly ambiguous identity provided him a synthesis, one which enabled him to respond to the dominant cultural discourses in postwar Japan.

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⁷⁷ STZ 15, p. 167.

⁷⁸ Shimao 2012, p. 129.

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***Tōkyō Shitaya Negishi Oyobi Kinbō-zu* and the Symbolism of Community Mapping in the Late Meiji Period**

Mengfei PAN*

This article examines a case of community mapping in the late Meiji period to illustrate how a cartographic work represented a symbolic community centered around the neighborhood of Negishi in Tokyo. It focuses on the *Tōkyō Shitaya Negishi oyobi kinbō-zu*, a map compiled by the Negishi Club in 1900, and investigates the symbolic community surrounding it. The Negishi Club was a group of local residents established by the lexicographer and linguist Ōtsuki Fumihiko in 1899. Previous studies of historical cartography have paid attention to how maps served political authorities or helped forge the nation. This case is useful in illuminating the dynamic production of place at another scale, that of the community itself.

The article argues that the mapping conducted by these mapmakers-cum-residents not only reflected their interest in local history, but also their cognitive and sentimental images of the Negishi community and alternative social values. During the course of their community mapping, a symbolic community took form, and a local place became the symbolic referent. It thus shows how the symbolism of community mapping contributed to the reinvention of the local place and the identity of its members. The article adds to our understanding of the production of place in Japan in the late Meiji period. More broadly, it refines the concept of community mapping by elucidating the symbolic aspects of community and its historical validity.

Keywords: Negishi Club, Ōtsuki Fumihiko, Ozawa Keijirō, Nakane Kōtei, Meiji Japan, symbolic community, cartography, sociology

This article examines a case of community mapping in the late Meiji 明治 period (1868–1912), and illustrates how its production demonstrates an emergent “symbolic community” centered on the neighborhood of Negishi in Tokyo. The process of community mapping resulted in the *Tōkyō* (or *Tōkei*) *Shitaya Negishi oyobi kinbō-zu* 東京下谷根岸及近隣圖 (hereafter, *Negishi kinbō-zu*), compiled by the Negishi Club (Negishi Kurabu 根岸俱樂部)

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in 1900.¹ The Negishi Club was a group of Negishi residents established in 1899 by the lexicographer and linguist Ōtsuki Fumihiko 大槻文彦 (1847–1928), whose members gathered to seek both knowledge and entertainment.²

The mapping conducted by these mapmakers-cum-residents not only reflected their interest in local history, but engaged with their symbolic community.³ The *Negishi kinbō-zu* and its accompanying text documents the cognitive and sentimental image its makers shared regarding Negishi, as well as an overt opposition to railway construction in the area. The residential cluster, the imagining of place, and the formation and development of a symbolic community are thus closely linked, and the map reflects the investment of a social group in a specific geographic place, and the group's valorization of and "symbolic identification with community."⁴

The role and importance of maps in the emergence and representation of symbolic communities has long been recognized, but recent studies of historical cartography have largely focused on how the production of maps served the aims of political authorities, or aided the forging of the nation.⁵ The case of the *Negishi kinbō-zu* illuminates the production of place occurring at another scale, that of the community itself. It thus helps us to answer a question raised by Kären Wigen: whether cartographic theories developed for analyzing mapping conducted at the national or provincial scale are also applicable to geographic areas within walking distance or, more precisely, a neighborhood.⁶

The article examines the *Negishi kinbō-zu* as a cartographic product able to accommodate and sustain a symbolic community. Through analyzing the production of this map, the article will delineate the relationships between mapping, community, and place; elucidate the symbolic aspects of community and their historical validity; and contribute to our understanding of the production of place in late-Meiji Japan as well as to the notion of community mapping more broadly.⁷ The first section of the article details the research questions and methods, and introduces the article's theoretical framework. This draws on the critical cartography associated with Denis Wood, John Fels, and J.B. Harley, which sought to recontextualize maps as embodying power-knowledge.⁸ This article will demonstrate that cartographic products can have a more complicated relationship with power than mere conformity. It argues that the case reviewed here should be understood as community mapping that offers space for alternative social values.⁹

1 Pronounced "Tōkyō" or "Tōkei," 東京 was used interchangeably with 東京 at the time. See Ogi 1979. This article uses old Chinese characters (*kyūjitai* 旧字体) where appropriate.

2 *Yomiuri Shinbun*, 13 December 1899.

3 On symbolic community, see Hunter 1974.

4 Hunter 1974, p. 116.

5 See Joyce 2003, pp. 35–61, and Winichakul 1994 for discussions on the relationships between maps and governance, and between mapping and nation. See Wigen 2010 and Boyle 2018 for discussions on the roles of maps in a Japanese context.

6 Wigen 2010, p. 122.

7 For more detailed discussion on the distinguishing features and context of the late Meiji period, see Gluck 1985.

8 Wood and Fels 1986, Wood 1992, Harley 2002. See Yamada 2000 and Wigen 2010, p. 38, for examples of such an analysis in a Japanese context. Unno 1994 also offers a comprehensive study of Japanese cartography prior to the modern era.

9 Parker 2006, Perkins 2007.

The article then focuses on the *Negishi kinbō-zu* as a case study. It initially contextualizes its production through an exploration of the Negishi area and the Negishi Club, before moving on to analyze the map and other materials in order to reveal how residents of Negishi, particularly Ōtsuki, the Negishi Club's founder, the *haiku* poet Masaoka Shiki 正岡子規 (1867–1902), and garden designer Ozawa Keijirō 小澤圭次郎 (1842–1932), conceptualized Negishi through the production of this map. It details how these three, and many others, practiced a community mapping that reflected alternative social values and a particular symbolic community. The article demonstrates that this cartographic work sheds light on the symbolism of mapping at a particular scale, that of the neighborhood, through which a symbolic community took form, and local place became a symbolic referent. It thus shows how the symbolism of community mapping contributed to the representation of place and the identity of its residents.

Community Mapping and Symbolic Community

This article treats the *Negishi kinbō-zu* as an emergent product of community mapping that engaged with a symbolic community in Negishi, a neighborhood located northeast of Ueno. “Community mapping” and “symbolic community” are key concepts for analyzing the production of the *Negishi kinbō-zu*, and the relationship it displays between mapmakers-cum-residents and place. The concept of community mapping was developed through research into popular mapping practices and cultures in the first decade of the twenty-first century, and helped to shift attention away from previous iterations of critical cartography, which largely adopted a Foucauldian perspective of maps as forms of “power-knowledge” that took part in “creating a spatial panopticon.”¹⁰ Brenda Parker offered an early definition for community mapping that by contrast stressed its non-elitist profile and empowering effects.¹¹ This article adopts Chris Perkins's more encompassing conceptualization, which emphasizes that community mapping is “local mapping, produced collaboratively, by local people and often incorporating alternative local knowledge.”¹² There is clear potential in Perkins's notion to analyze mapping practices carried out by a community positioned in a complicated relationship with the dominant power.

However, both Parker and Perkins use the term “community” in community mapping rather uncritically. Parker sees community as “a group of people who share geographic space.”¹³ Perkins takes the existence of communities involved in “community mapping” for granted.¹⁴ They therefore fail to engage with the importance of the symbolic aspect of community. This article asserts that we should turn to theories of symbolic community in order to understand how the community exists in relation to both a place and its members. As Albert Hunter has argued, local communities are “collective representations,” “symbolic ‘objects’ of orientations,” and “‘situations’ of action requiring definition by local residents.”¹⁵

10 The development of digital tools such as participatory Geographic Information Systems has also fueled community mapping practices. On critical cartography, see Harley 2002, pp. 153–165.

11 Parker 2006, p. 472.

12 Perkins 2007, p. 127.

13 Parker 2006, p. 471. Parker's encompassing concept of community was intentional in order to see the internal conflicts and struggles among the diverse residents.

14 Perkins 2007.

15 Hunter 1974, p. 179.

Adopting a symbolic-cultural approach, he identified two important dimensions for understanding symbolic communities: cognitive definition of and sentiments toward the community. Cognitive definition refers to “residents’ ability to name and bound their local areas” and sentiments to “attachment and evaluation” towards the local community.¹⁶

These cognitive and sentimental dimensions reveal two of the layers that substantiate a symbolic community, what Hunter refers to as “symbolic identification of communities” and “symbolic identification with communities.”¹⁷ As Hunter argues, the symbolic community operates as a “mechanism for identifying individuals in physical and social space.”¹⁸ A later study by Anthony P. Cohen focused on the symbolism of community and its internal functions, further elucidating how the community establishes its symbolic boundaries and provides meaning and identity.¹⁹ Peter Hamilton notes that Cohen’s work looks to establish community as “a system of values, norms, and moral codes which provides a sense of identity within a bounded whole to its members.”²⁰

This article will demonstrate how an analysis of a single cartographic work can aid our understanding of the role of mapping in the symbolic construction of community. The article shows how the *Negishi kinbō-zu*, and evaluations of it, are characterized by a dense intertextuality, or extensive cross-referencing to other writings, revealing a vibrant social network among the intellectuals involved in its production. The article integrates an analysis of the map with studies of primary and secondary materials, including geographic records of this area, newspaper articles and literary works of the time, as well as biographical studies and social studies of modern Japan, in order to fully contextualize both this cartographic work and the community engaged in the map-making.

The article contends that the community mapping of *Negishi kinbō-zu* gave rise to and underpinned a specific image of Negishi, which resulted in a further strengthening of its community. The case sheds light on the dynamic relationship between people and place. It shows us how community is constructed and consolidated symbolically through its mapping, resulting in the emergence of a place able to stand as a symbolic referent, connecting the past with the present and providing a sense of belonging and identity to its members. The scale of the map, representing a single neighborhood, means that it does not operate in the same way as the provincial maps of Shinano, which Kären Wigen analyzed as contributing to nation-building.²¹ Instead, the *Negishi kinbō-zu*’s creation of a symbolic community revealed its creators’ distance from political authority and employment of Negishi to symbolize the social values they valorized. As such, while the map adopted and adapted the cartographic practices of the modern Meiji state, its makers showed their distance from that same state, a divide represented through their invocation of the symbolic community of Negishi itself.

16 Hunter 1974, pp. 95, 110.

17 Hunter 1974, p. 116.

18 Hunter 1974, p. 195.

19 Cohen 1989.

20 Hamilton 1989, p. 9.

21 Wigen 2010.

Negishi: A Reclusive Edo Suburb

The area of Negishi featured in the *Negishi kinbō-zu* is distinguished by its social and historical characteristics, many of which relate back to the geography of the region. Topographically sprawling in a wider lowland called Shitaya 下谷, northeast of the Ueno Highland (Ueno daichi 上野台地), Negishi was located a few kilometers from the city center of Edo, the de facto capital of Japan between 1603 and 1868. It enjoyed geographical proximity to two particularly important places in Edo's political and cultural geography: the temple of Kan'eiji 寛永寺 to its southwest, and the popular Yoshiwara 吉原 pleasure quarter to its east.

Kan'eiji Temple was founded in 1625 on Ueno Hill (Ueno no yama 上野の山), at the southern tip of the Ueno Highland. The temple was modeled after Enryakuji 延暦寺 atop Mount Hiei 比叡山 to the northeast of Kyoto, and, on the basis of the belief that evil enters from the northeast, was built in Ueno as it sits northeast of Edo Castle. The temple held the funeral of the third shogun, Tokugawa Iemitsu 徳川家光 (1604–1651), and entombed six out of fifteen Tokugawa shoguns.²² Owing to its close association with the shogunate, Kan'eiji served as a symbol of political authority. Negishi soon accommodated a group of intellectual monks of Kan'eiji.²³ The head priests, Rinnōji-no-miya 輪王寺宮, from the emperor's extended family, were central figures here, and constructed their retreat, Goinden 御隠殿, in Negishi in the mid-eighteenth century.²⁴

Yoshiwara, the only official red-light district (*yūkaku* 遊郭) in Edo, was first built in 1617 at Ningyōchō in Nihonbashi 日本橋人形町, and was relocated to Nihonzutsumi in Asakusa 浅草日本堤 in the mid-seventeenth century.²⁵ Yoshiwara was an economic booster for the surrounding area and also produced a social world within which the Tokugawa's strict class stratification weakened.²⁶ In addition, it served as a kind of cultural salon, cultivating literature and art.²⁷ Wealthy merchants from Yoshiwara built villas in Negishi to accommodate their families, mistresses, and convalescing *yūjo* courtesans.²⁸

Edo tourist guides offer some clues to the typical life of Negishi dwellers. The *Edo meisho zue* 江戸名所図会 (Guide to famous places of Edo), published in the mid-1830s, describes Negishi as a place of elegance in the shade of Ueno Hill, where many residents led a reclusive life.²⁹ The *Edo yūran hana goyomi* 江戸遊覧花暦 (Edo sightseeing flower calendar) of 1837 mentions that the *bunjin bōkkaku* 文人墨客 (literati and artists) who were resident in Negishi would visit their friends in the neighborhood, where they produced poems, sang songs, and enjoyed *haikai* poetry and tea (figure 1).³⁰

Among these *bunjin bōkkaku* were the Confucian scholar and calligrapher Kameda Bōsai 亀田鵬斎 (1752–1826), from a merchant family, and Sakai Hōitsu 酒井抱一 (1761–1829) of the powerful Himeji domain. One of the “Five Demons of Kansei” (Kansei no gōki 寛政の五鬼), Kameda had opposed the bakufu's Kansei Edict (Kansei igaku no kin 寛政

22 Urai 1983, p. 106. The rest were buried at the Nikkō Tōshōgū Shrine and Zōjōji Temple.

23 Kawai 1967, p. 3.

24 Meiji Kyōikusha 1914, pp. 99–100.

25 Ishii 1967, pp. 10, 25.

26 Screech 2017, p. 269.

27 Tanaka 2008, pp. 19–24.

28 Brecher 2009, p. 11.

29 Saitō 1836.

30 Oka 1837.

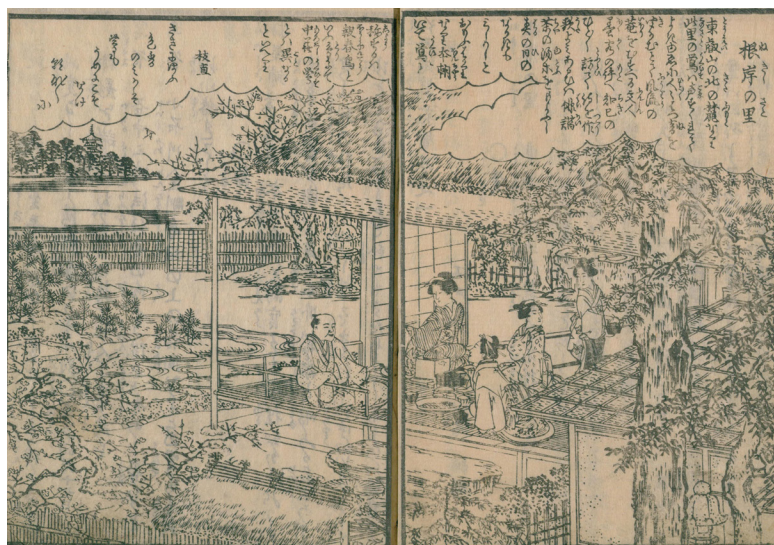


Figure 1. This Edo calendar depicts Negishi as a place famous for warblers' singing in spring, and for its literati residents who enjoyed a variety of cultural activities with their neighbors. Hasegawa Settan 長谷川雪旦, "Negishi no sato," in Oka 1837. Courtesy of the National Diet Library, Japan.

異学の禁) that established Neo-Confucianism as the only legitimate curriculum. After failing to persuade the bakufu to reverse this policy, Kameda withdrew from politics and retreated from the city center to Negishi.³¹ Sakai also distanced himself from society, giving up his hereditary social status and bureaucratic ties before converting to Buddhism. In 1809, Sakai moved to a house near Kameda's, whom he befriended. It was speculated that Sakai chose this place because he knew that it was an artist's retreat.³²

Residents like these, through their combination of distinguished artistic talents and resistance to political commitment, as well as their depictions in popular print media, established an image of Negishi as a place for those disinterested in social status and economic gain. These residents constructed and exemplified the community's reclusive image and invented suburban Negishi as a place of "aesthetic reclusion"; Negishi also helped liberate them "from the constraints that accompanied status and official obligations" and "opened an array of opportunities and relationships impossible within the city proper."³³ This image would continue to be eulogized in the new age.

Dwelling in and Celebrating a Changing Negishi

Negishi's vicissitudes in the mid- and late nineteenth century were inextricably linked to political transformations and transitions in the Ueno area. During the civil war in 1868, the grand edifice of Kan'eiji was burnt to ashes and almost obliterated. Five years after the Meiji Restoration in 1868, when Edo was renamed Tokyo and established as the new

31 Addiss 1984, pp. 27, 30.

32 Brecher 2009, p. 31.

33 Brecher 2009, pp. 1, 18, 29.

capital, these newly-vacant lands on Ueno Hill became one of the earliest public parks in the country, and subsequently saw a succession of modern institutions established within its bounds. These included three industrial exhibitions in 1877, 1881, and 1890; the Education Museum, opened in 1877; the National Museum and Zoo in 1882; and the Tokyo School of Fine Arts in 1889. Having symbolized political and spiritual authority under the Tokugawa, Ueno was transformed into a stage for the new government to showcase and perform its own modernity.

The development of public transportation also fueled the urbanization of Ueno. In 1883, Ueno Railway Station was constructed at the foot of Ueno Hill, connecting Ueno with Kumagaya in the north. Utilizing the area's topography, the railway line cut directly between Ueno Hill and the lowland to its northeast, including Negishi. Connections—such as a freight line between Ueno and Akihabara in 1890 and electrified trams—would continue to develop into the early twentieth century.

In this rapidly changing city, Negishi became favored by professors, writers, and artists.³⁴ A few privileged residents consolidated Negishi's image: Maeda Nariyasu 前田 齊泰 (1811–1884), the twelfth feudal lord of the Kaga domain; Masuda Katsunori 益田 克徳 (1852–1903), the younger brother of the founder of Mitsui Bussan, Masuda Takashi 益田 孝 (1848–1938); Kawai Tatsutarō 河合辰太郎 (1862–1952), founder of Toppan Printing; the painter Asai Chū 浅井忠 (1856–1907); and the painter and calligrapher Nakamura Fusetsu 中村不折 (1866–1943). These industrial and cultural figures established literary and artistic groups, such as Negishitō 根岸党 and Negishi Tankakai 根岸短歌会.³⁵ Their activities were not necessarily artistic in nature, and included traveling, hunting, fishing, watching kabuki plays, drinking, and playing *igo* chess. Associations like these sprang up one after another in “the season of salons” in the 1880s and 1890s, and gave Negishi an image as a nest of idiosyncratic fun-seekers.³⁶

Amid this profusion of gentlemen's clubs, Ōtsuki Fumihiko, remembered today as the compiler of the earliest modern dictionary in Japan, *Genkai* 言海, founded the Negishi Club in December 1899.³⁷ The *Yomiuri Shinbun* 読売新聞 reported that the club was founded for entertainment and the exchange of knowledge.³⁸ The family names of the fifteen founding members are listed in a later article on 16 December, and included Hirasaka Kō 平坂関 and Ōta Kin 太田謹 (1842–1925), both subsequently listed as being involved in the creation of *Negishi kinbō-zu*. Other founders included Shino Jōgorō 篠常五郎 (1860–1917), who ran an *omoto* 万年青 (*rohoe japonica*, a popular plant among horticulturalists) shop

34 Seidensticker 1983, p. 211.

35 The Negishitō was active mainly in the late 1880s and 1890s, and its core members included renowned writers and scholars like Kōdō Tokuchi 幸堂得知 (1843–1913), Takahashi Kenzō 高橋健三 (1855–1898), Okakura Tenshin 岡倉天心 (1863–1913), and Kōda Rohan 幸田露伴 (1867–1947), see Deguchi 2011, pp. 30–31. The Negishitō is sometimes also referred to as the Negishiha (Negishi School 根岸派). It is a different group from the Negishi Club founded by Ōtsuki in 1899. The Negishi Tankakai emerged around the figure of Masaoka and was active between 1899 and the Taishō period.

36 Hashizume 1987, p. 39; Miyoshi 1993, p. 9.

37 Ōtsuki lived in Negishi from 1884 until his death, except for a few years spent in northeastern Japan. *Genkai* had been commissioned by the Ministry of Education in 1875 and was eventually published privately between 1889 and 1891.

38 “Goraku no aida ni chishiki o kōkan” 娯楽の間に知識を交換, *Yomiuri Shinbun*, 13 December 1899. The final newspaper article mentioning the club was dated 3 June 1904 (*Yomiuri Shinbun*). It remains unknown when and why the club disbanded.

in Negishi; sculptor Kanō Tessai 加納鉄斎 (1845–1925); art theorist Imaizumi Yūsaku 今泉雄作 (1850–1931); and the aforementioned Asai Chū and Kawai Tatsutarō.³⁹ The same article also mentions that the club restricted its membership to those with certain skills, and set a limit of fifty members.⁴⁰ Their activities included the production of souvenirs such as silver cups, art exhibitions, dance, and chess, and was thus more culturally oriented than Negishitō.⁴¹ The requirement for a skill, the limit on membership, and presence of renowned scholars established an elitist profile for the group. The similarity in the member's social disposition also offered the group an opportunity to build identification among themselves, thus creating a symbolic community. The *Negishi kinbō-zu* offers testimony to their communal efforts and achievements.

Mapping with Western Cartography

The *Negishi kinbō-zu* was created by this community of gentlemen, and is preserved in multiple copies today. This article's analysis is based on six originals, held in public libraries, archives, and a local temple, as well as ten reproductions or adaptations in circulation after 1980.⁴² Appendix 1 presents a list of the formats and major features of each of these copies of the map. Despite differences in the inscriptions near the bottom left, handwritten remarks, and preservation states, the originals are all monochrome maps of the same size.⁴³ Based on the creases on the original maps held at the Tokyo Metropolitan Library and Tokyo Metropolitan Archives, they were folded to one-eighth of their original size to make them easier to transport.

Figure 2 shows the *Negishi kinbō-zu* in the collection of the Tokyo Metropolitan Library. It is dominated by the map in the center, with text occupying almost all the space surrounding the map, and an inscription outside the frame near the bottom left. The text font and size vary, with smaller words at the top, larger ones in the bottom right, and what appears to be Ōtsuki's handwriting at the bottom left. Hereafter the article will differentiate "the map" from "*Negishi kinbō-zu*," with the former referring solely to the central map, excluding its surrounding texts, while the latter refers to the cartographic product as a whole, and the set of practices that went into its creation.

Despite some variations in the inscriptions among the six originals, they all display the following: Negishi Club (publisher); Hirasaka Kō at Kami-Negishimachi 上根岸町 (author and issuer); Koshiba Hideji 小柴英侍 in Kanda Ward (printer); Hayashi Heijirō 林平次郎 in

39 The fifteen names listed in the article are Hirasaka 平坂, Shino 篠, Miyagi 宮木, Asai 浅井, Kobayashi 小林, Maruyama 丸山, Yamada 山田, Kanō 加納, Kawai 河合, Ōtsuki 大槻, Ōta 太田, Nishida 西田, Iida 飯田, Imaizumi 今泉, and Fukuhara 福原. Asai was likely not involved in making the map as he was away in France between February 1900 and August 1902. One article in the *Yomiuri Shinbun* on 23 May 1900 mentions that due to the high expense of the club and one important member's plan to go to France, their activities had been suspended.

40 *Yomiuri Shinbun*, 16 December 1899.

41 *Yomiuri Shinbun*, 13 December 1899; 13 June 1901; 28 August 1901.

42 It has been pointed out that there existed multiple copies; see Ichikawa 1981.

43 The framed area is approximately 40.3 cm long and 56 cm wide.

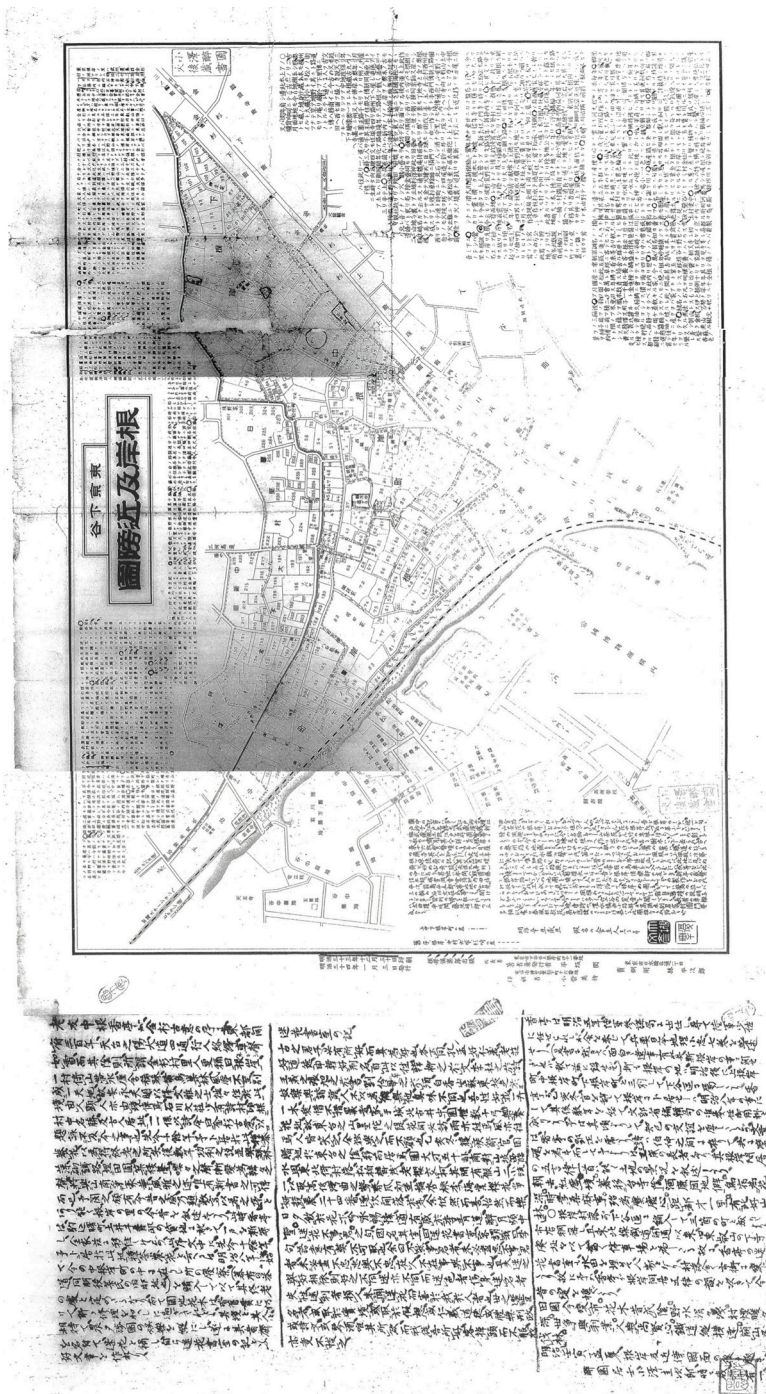


Figure 2. Negishi Club, *Tokyo Shitaya Negishi oyobi kinbō-zu*, 1901. Reproduced with permission of the Tokyo Metropolitan Central Library Special Collections Room.

Nihonbashi Ward (*urisabakijo* 売捌所 retailer).⁴⁴ The map also indicates a 1/2345 scale with north located at the top, and notes 30 December Meiji 33 (1900) as the date it was printed, and 3 January Meiji 34 (1901) as the date it was issued.⁴⁵ The two versions at the Musashino Public Library and Tokyo Metropolitan Archives include an additional *hatsubaimoto* 發賣元 (sales agent) in the bottom left.⁴⁶

The map offers a graphic understanding of Negishi, revealing its makers' mastery of modern cartographic conventions. The railways, trees, and cliffs of Ueno Hill are reduced to lines or symbols. The abstraction of streets and major buildings resembles the 1880 *Jinsoku sokuzu* 迅速測図, the earliest modern map for military use commissioned by the Meiji government. Its symbols for railroad and graves follow those mandated by the 1/5000: *Tōkyō-zu sokuryō genzu* 五千分一東京図測量原図, published by the Army Land Survey Office in 1883. Abstraction, numbering, and the representation of divisions adhering to the reformed urban administration districts lend the map a modern look.

The map employs recently introduced administrative divisions, and uses dash-dot lines to delineate the triangular Negishi area and the boundaries of three units: Upper Negishi (Kami-Negishimachi), closest to Ueno Hill; Central Negishi (Naka-Negishimachi 中根岸町); and Lower Negishi (Shimo-Negishimachi 下根岸町), furthest from Ueno Hill. The surrounding neighborhoods included in the map are as follows: Nippori-mura 日暮里村, on the other side of Shakujii waterway 石神井用水, along with Kanasugi-kamichō 金杉上町, Sakamotochō 坂本町, Sakuragichō 桜木町, and Iriyachō 入谷町 to the south of Negishi. These units, which were established by the two urban administrative reforms in 1889 and 1891, are delineated by thinner dashed lines. Only the three smaller units of Negishi and the immediately adjacent Nippori-mura and Sakuragichō are provided with detailed numerical divisions of *banchi* addresses, increasing the map's utility as a navigation tool. Local businesses and facilities, like confectionery shops, fishmongers, flower shops, barbers, public baths, hospitals, kindergartens, and schools, which residents may routinely use, are marked.

This rich locational information could serve both Negishi residents and visitors. On Ueno Hill, the new Meiji institutions and destinations, such as the museum, library, art school, and music school, are shown, while the Tokugawa cemetery and the remaining temples of Kan'ei are also displayed. The map thus offers two visions of Ueno Hill—one associated with memories of the Edo era, and the other defined by its new role as a

44 As the exact roles of Ōtsuki and Hirasaka have not been confirmed, the Negishi Club is considered the producer of the map. Koshiba ran a lithography business (*sekiban insatsugyō* 石版印刷業, see Makino 1899, p. 448), and later served as a lecturer at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo bijutsu gakkō 東京美術学校). Hayashi (1861–1931) was a renowned publisher who helped Ōtsuki publish *Genkai*, and published other maps, including Alexander Keith Johnston's *World Map* (*Sekai daichizu* 世界大地圖) in 1895.

45 The actual scale of the *Negishi kinbō-zu* is close to 1/2345. The mapmakers may have prioritized this scale, reflecting their sense of humor, when designing the map.

46 The roles of the *urisabakijo* and *hatsubaimoto*, and the reason that some were stamped with the additional *hatsubaimoto*, remain unclear. The Musashino Public Library version has “Negishi Konomi-an” 根ざしこのミ庵 as a *hatsubaimoto*, while the Tokyo Metropolitan Archives notes “Konomi-an” このミ庵 only. Both are followed by a stamp of Fujisawa 藤澤. Fujisawa owned a preserved food shop in Negishi. In the map's text (sections 3 and 4), Fujisawa is also mentioned, but with simplified characters 藤沢.

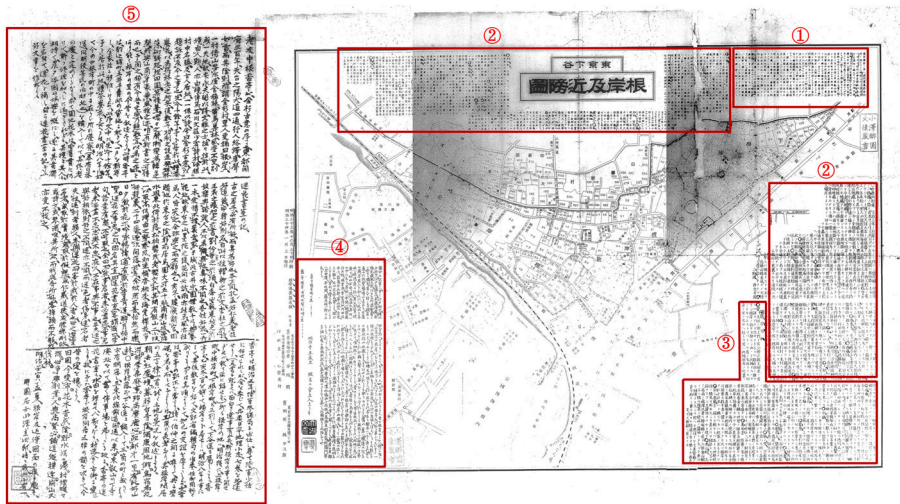


Figure 3. The *Tōkyō Shitaya Negishi oyobi kinbō-zu* with content marked. Section 1: overview of the Negishi area; Section 2: introductions to local places; Section 3: “Negishi meibutsu” 根岸名物 (local specialties); Section 4: Ōtsuki Fumihiko’s writing; Section 5: Ozawa Keijirō’s *shikigo*, dated 1902. Reproduced with permission of the Tokyo Metropolitan Central Library Special Collections Room.

“showcase.”⁴⁷ Although the map follows the Meiji state’s official cartographic projects in adopting European conventions and delineating administrative boundaries, however, it is not merely a mirror of modernity. The *Negishi kinbō-zu* is also significant for illuminating the symbolic importance attached to a particular place layered up on the map.

The texts surrounding the map offer further details of Negishi’s history, revealing a similar concern with local knowledge as that displayed by gazetteers and maps prior to the Meiji period.⁴⁸ The content can be divided into the following four sections, as illustrated in figure 3 (section 5 is Ozawa Keijirō’s *shikigo*, see below). The text at the top (section 1) starts with the origin of the place’s name, its past, and its development in the Meiji era. It uses Muromachi 室町 (1336–1573) documents to claim that “Negishi” gets its name from its location, at the border (*kishi* 岸) of the foot (*ne* 根) of Ueno Hill. The text then details the villa construction boom in the first half of the nineteenth century, followed by the disruptions of the Tenpō Reforms and the great fire of the 1840s, when the area rapidly depopulated.⁴⁹ This was reversed over subsequent decades as powerful families (*gōzoku* 豪族), literati (*bunjin* 文人), and diverse artisans and craftsmen (*hyappan gigeika* 百般技芸家) moved in. Although its “tranquil charm” (*yūsei no omomuki* 幽静の趣) lay in the past, Negishi in 1901 remained secluded away from “the mundane” (*zokusei* 俗世) in its own “little world” (*shōtenchi* 小天地).

47 Although Smith refers mainly to Ginza, his notion of “showcase” also applies to the role of Ueno Hill in displaying the Meiji government’s determination to introduce Western architecture and institutions. See Smith 1978.

48 For discussions on a provincial case of Shinano located in central Japan, see Wigen 2010.

49 The Tenpō Reforms forbade samurai, merchants, and artisans from living on farmers’ lands, leading to depopulation in areas like Negishi.

The second and third sections offer details about twenty-eight local spots (section 2) and twelve local specialties (section 3), following the convention of *meisho* 名所 (famous places) publications in the Edo period. Both sections highlight historical connections with privileged former residents, mainly the aforementioned *hyappan gigeika*: the sculptor Hamano Noriyuki 浜野矩随 (1771–1852); scholars Hirata Atsutane 平田篤胤 (1776–1843) and Maeno Ryōtaku 前野良沢 (1723–1803); Kameda, Sakai, and Sakai's disciple Suzuki Ki'itsu 鈴木其一 (1795–1858); *makie* 蒔絵 lacquer master Hara Yōyūsai 原羊幽齋 (1769–1846); the *ukiyo-e* 浮世絵 painters Kitao Shigemasa 北尾重政 (1739–1820) and Yanagawa Shigenobu 柳川重信 (1787–1833); the essayist Yamazaki Yoshishige 山崎義重 (1796–1856); and Confucian scholar Terakado Seiken 寺門静軒 (1796–1868). The former sites of Kameda, Sakai, and Terakado's residences are labeled in the map. In some ways, these texts resemble the Western maps criticized by J.B. Harley as frequently personifying “those of nobles, bishops, wealthy merchants, and gentry,” and thus pronouncing the “language of power.”⁵⁰ The powerful figures being invoked by *Negishi kinbō-zu*, however, all belong to the Edo past. Their contemporary equivalents, such as the Maeda family, are labeled on the map but are not mentioned in the text. This was arguably intentional, in order to stress a continuity with these Edo cultural figures as the defining markers of Negishi as a symbolic community.

In section 4, an essay at the bottom left with Ōtsuki's seal explains the aims and sources of the *Negishi kinbō-zu*. The first paragraph states that in addition to a dozen Edo documents, the information relied on interviews with the *konochi no korō* 此地の古老 (senior residents), including Honma Hachirō 本間八郎, Saitō Shintarō 斎藤信太郎, Kōdō Tokuchi, Zui Sekko 瑞雪湖, Uchida Saheiji 内田佐平次, Maejima Heigorō 前島平五郎, as well as Ishikawa Bunsō 石川文莊 in Minowa 三ノ輪, to the east to Negishi. The section also mentions the contributions of Ōta, Hirasaka, and Fujisawa Seki'ichirō 藤沢碩一郎.

The second paragraph offers further information about the map's intended use and the reasons for including the texts. *Negishi kinbō-zu* is said to be intended as a New Year's gift for distribution as a guide, so that people would not get lost in the maze-like streets of Negishi. Ōtsuki inserted historical information to lend elegance to the *Negishi kinbō-zu*, writing that if only the map were displayed, it would appear “Western and worldly, and the bush warblers might burst into tears.”⁵¹ This discontent with modern cartography was one shared with the writer Nagai Kafū 永井荷風 (1879–1959), who noted in his 1914 essay *Hiyorigeta* 日和下駄 (*Fairweather Clogs*) that although the map of Tokyo made by the Army Land Survey Office was highly accurate, he preferred strolling the city with the more visual *Edo ezū*, the colorful illustrations of which evoked the scenery.⁵² In the case of *Negishi kinbō-zu*, though, it was the explanatory texts which would conjure up Negishi's scenic beauty.

Narrating Local History and Opposing the Railroads

The importance of such texts to the meaning of *Negishi kinbō-zu* lay in narrating the symbolic significance of the community represented on the map. This process may also be seen in the cartographic production and novels of the military surgeon, and one-time

50 Harley 2002, pp. 75, 79.

51 Original text: 繪成りて見れば、あまりに洋俗にて、根岸の圖もかくてハ鶯の泣くばかりなる, see Negishi Club 1901.

52 Nagai 1957, pp. 31–32.

Negishi resident, Mori Ōgai 森鷗外 (1862–1922). Published in 1909, less than a decade after the *Negishi kinbō-zu*, Mori's *Tōkyō hōgan-zu* 東京方眼図 (Tokyo grid map) is also a product of the encounter with modern cartographic conventions (see figure 4). In addition to administrative boundaries, the map divides the city into homogenized blocks, eight sections vertically and eleven horizontally. Mori's map resonates with governmental cartographic projects, and "redirected territorial solidarities towards the rationalized administrative grids."⁵³ With its industrial design, *Tōkyō hōgan-zu* appears ripe for Foucauldian analysis, ordering space and subjecting it to governance and control.⁵⁴ Compared with the *Negishi kinbō-zu*, the *Hōgan-zu* appears a more obvious product of state ideology and power mediated through the capital, Tokyo.

Mori's literary works, however, indicate a more complicated relationship with the city. As Chiba Shunji and Christophe Thouny argue, although the grid map was based on modern cartographic conventions, Mori's writings, such as *Seinen* 青年 (Youth), published in 1910, and *Gan* 雁 (Goose) in 1911, cast doubt on the rational, ordered modernity represented on his map.⁵⁵ In their minute descriptions of the city of Tokyo, Mori's cartographic novels address the bodily cognitions and mythical imagination excluded by modern cartography.⁵⁶ It is through thinking about his novels in relation to the map that Mori's worldview becomes complete.

While in Mori's case the texts that reconfigure the putative rationality of the map were published separately, for the *Negishi kinbō-zu* they appear on the map itself. Rather than stressing the irrationality of modern perspectives, they temper it by imbuing them with historical depth. The representation of Negishi as an elegant, historical place is emphasized throughout the text. Quotations from Edo poems about camellia flowers in the area, for instance, signal appreciation for an old, tranquil Negishi. Concern about the threat posed to this elegance by railways is a consistent theme. The introduction to the *Sakura-gawa* 桜川 laments that its clear water vanished under them, while the local *kuina* 水鶏 (water rails) used to sing noisily, but disappeared after the railway's introduction. Ōtsuki's essay also blames the railway for shaking the warblers' nests down, and its whistles for erasing their sounds.

This opposition to railways was widely shared. Throughout the latter half of the Meiji period, Japan's railways grew considerably, with their length nearly tripling in the 1890s.⁵⁷ The noise caused by trains became an urban problem.⁵⁸ Nakano Ryōzui 中野了随, in his 1890 *Tōkyō meisho zue* 東京名所図絵 (Guide to Tokyo's famous places) description of "Negishi no sato," had already suggested that the railway extension led to the removal of Goinden and damaging of Negishi's elegance.⁵⁹ In *Sanshirō* 三四郎 (1908), by Natsume Soseki 夏目漱石 (1867–1916), trains are used to signify "both new social spaces and physical reminders of the adverse psychological effects that rapid historical change often has on the

53 Wigen 2010, pp. 100–101. See Wigen 1999, p. 1196, for a discussion on the Meiji government's investment in cartography to reorganize and (re-)produce the space.

54 Mori might have observed this style during his studies in Germany; see Chiba 1989, p. 137.

55 Chiba 1989; Thouny 2014, p. 293.

56 Chiba 1989, p. 146.

57 Ericson 1996, p. 28.

58 Freedman 2011, pp. 100–101.

59 Nakano 1890, pp. 168–169.



Figure 4. Mori Ōgai, *Tōkyō Hōgan-zu*, Shunyōdō, 1909. The grid map offers a modern vision of Tokyo. Courtesy of the Mori Ōgai Memorial Museum.

individual.”⁶⁰ In expressing local opposition toward the railroads, *Negishi kinbō-zu* evidences its makers’ psychological reaction to societal changes. Rather than outspoken opposition to dominant political power, it sought to secure a community space and establish a Negishi meaningful to its members.

The meaning of Negishi was symbolic, created through a division drawn between the community and others. By looking back to the past and expressing collective sentiments—affection for the tranquility of Negishi and opposition to the railroad—the makers of the *Negishi kinbō-zu* emphasized the continuity of the neighborhood as a community of the reclusive. They also achieved the reproduction of Negishi and themselves in the late Meiji period.

Mapping Negishi Symbolically: Reinventing Negishi and the Self

Negishi kinbō-zu’s actual purpose remains unclear. The distribution of the map as a New Year’s gift resembles the exchange of *ukiyo-e* calendars among elites in the Edo period. On the other hand, as Ōtsuki’s writing suggests, it was also intended for visitors. The design, a modern look with scholarly texts focusing on Edo history, suggests two kinds of audience, one using it as a guide, and the other curious about local history. As Chris Perkins points out, there is no single “correct use” for a map, but a multiple and often synchronous set of motivations at play.⁶¹ The following section examines the individual figures engaged in the compilation and production of the *Negishi kinbō-zu*, including Ōtsuki Fumihiko, Masaoka Shiki, and Ozawa Keijirō. Biographical study and consideration of their activities help deepen our understanding of the *Negishi kinbō-zu* and the reasons why it was made.

As already noted, Ōtsuki Fumihiko was an important member of the community and likely the main compiler of the map.⁶² He was born into a prominent Sendai domain samurai family in Edo. His grandfather, Ōtsuki Gentaku 大槻玄沢 or Bansui 盤水 (1757–1827), was a *rangaku* (Western studies) scholar, his father Bankei 磐溪 (1801–1878) a sinologist, and his elder brother Shūji 修二 or Joden 如電 (1845–1931) a scholar and author.⁶³ Father and sons had joined the Ōuetsu Reppan Dōmei 奥羽越列藩同盟 military coalition against the new Meiji government, for which Bankei was imprisoned. Fumihiko used every means to save his father’s life, and later described the period as one of “great difficulty” (*dainanji* 大難事).⁶⁴

Ōtsuki had studied at the bakufu’s official school and later at the Daigaku Nankō 大学南校, a branch of the university established by the Meiji government, but was unable to gain access to university after the mid-Meiji era, and felt he had been born too late to receive a modern education. While involved in important dictionary, textbook, and map projects at the Ministry of Education, he was frequently sent to work in Miyagi and Iwate prefectures, indicating his marginal status. In his autobiography, he noted that since he was always

⁶⁰ Freedman 2011, p. 69.

⁶¹ Perkins 2008, p. 151.

⁶² Although the inscription near the bottom left mentions Hirasaka as author and issuer, an article in the *Yomiuri Shinbun* on 12 December 1900 reports that Ōtsuki received a commission from the club to compile the map. The section 4 text also corroborates Ōtsuki’s central role.

⁶³ Joden moved into Negishi after the 1923 Great Kanto earthquake, and composed the lyrics of a song titled *Negishi hakkei* 根岸八景 (Eight scenes of Negishi), depicting Negishi as a place blessed with birdsong and beautiful natural scenery. See *Negishi hakkei* 1937.

⁶⁴ Ōtsuki (1909) 1928, p. 41.

working stealthily within piles of scrap papers, the politicians and industrialists must have seen him as a “rat.”⁶⁵ His essay in *Negishi kinbō-zu* also implied that he was a mere *kyūsodai* 窮措大 (poor scholar).

This map was not his only geographical work. Ōtsuki’s series of regional studies of the “borderlands”—Hokkaido, Ryūkyū, and the Ogasawara Islands—in the first years of Meiji demonstrate his passion for investigating national geography.⁶⁶ Such works offer a concrete and detailed image of the nation.⁶⁷ A series of blank maps published in 1874, the *Nihon ansha chizu* 日本暗射地図, demonstrate his proficiency in modern cartography.

Other works, though, speak to an interest in his place of residence.⁶⁸ Ōtsuki lived in Negishi for more than thirty years, between 1884 and 1892, and then from 1900 until his death in 1928. Other Negishi works include those related to an old pine tree in Negishi called *Ogyō no matsu* 御行の松 (Pine tree commemorating Rinnōji-no-miya’s Buddhist deeds), which he named his house, the *Ushō-ken* 雨松軒 (House of rain and pine), after. A later article, published in 1912, investigates the origin of its name, revealing Ōtsuki’s ongoing interest in researching local history.⁶⁹

When living in Negishi, Ōtsuki was surrounded by friends who appreciated the area. Among them were Masaoka Shiki, who had moved to Negishi in 1892. Masaoka developed a social network in the neighborhood, and composed a *kanshi* poem titled *Negishi kyōkyo shiji zatsuei* 根岸僑居四時雜詠 (Miscellaneous poem on living in Negishi in four seasons). The autumn piece depicts Negishi as a tranquil place.

The Big Dipper hangs above the frosted forest
The city is separated by the eastern highlands
Visitors are few
Autumnal sounds come from afar

霜林懸北斗	Sōrin hokuto o kake
城市隔東臺	Jōshi tōdai o hedatsu
人籟寥々絶	Jinrai ryōryō to shite tae
秋声自遠来	Shūsei tooki yori kitaru ⁷⁰

Two weeks after the publication of *Negishi kinbō-zu*, Masaoka published a short article about the map in his *Bokujū itteki* 墨汁一滴 (One drop of ink), serially released in *Nippon* in the first half of 1901.

The map of Negishi published by the Negishi Club was produced by Dr. Ōtsuki (Ōtsuki *hakase* 大槻博士); based on careful investigation, it is reliable and geographically

65 Ōtsuki 1938, p. 237.

66 Tanaka 1990.

67 Yasuda 2018, p. 32.

68 Between 1878 and 1880, he published a series of articles in the *Kagetsu shinshi* 花月新誌 entitled *Koseiko kawa* 小西湖佳話 (Beautiful stories of the little west lake), about his two years living near Shinobazu Pond 不忍池 in Hongō-Kinsukechō 本郷金助町.

69 Ōtsuki 1912.

70 Inoguchi 1980, p. 443–444.

precise. It is also an interesting piece for us Negishi people (*warera Negishi-jin* われら根岸人). The place where we live is now called Uguisu-yokochō, but in the old days it was called Tanuki-yokochō ... [direct quotations from Ōtsuki's text on the map about Negishi's elegance being threatened by the railways] ... Uguisu-yokochō is particularly a difficult place with winding and bending streets. Failing in finding their way, some visitors have to give up and leave in vain (18 January 1901).⁷¹

This piece not only reveals Masaoka's appreciation of *Negishi kinbō-zu* and Ōtsuki's efforts but also conveys a strong sense of the *Negishi-jin* community. Sharing the geographical literacy and an interest in finding the old names, Masaoka showed his identification of and *with* this community.

The processual role of the map in symbolizing the community is shown by the adaptations made by another figure, Ozawa Keijirō, who kept a version of the map with *shikigo* 識語 notes attached.⁷² Born into a medical doctor's family serving the Kuwana 桑名 domain, which fought on the side of the defeated Tokugawa, Ozawa is remembered for his research in garden design. He amassed maps and pictures of gardens from around the country, many hand-copied and festooned with *shikigo* detailing his personal appraisals. One print of the *Negishi kinbō-zu* was in his private collection and attached with a *shikigo* to its left (section 5 in figure 3). Unlike Masaoka's essay, which was published, Ozawa's *shikigo* were not widely accessible at the time.

Ozawa knew the area well. He attended private schools in Negishi and Okachimachi 御徒町 in southern Shitaya in the 1850s.⁷³ Ozawa and Ōtsuki used to work at the private school of Mitsukuri Shūhei 箕作秋坪 (1826–1886), the Sansa Gakusha 三叉学舎. Ozawa also worked with Ōtsuki's brother Joden on the dictionary projects commissioned by the Ministry of Education in the first years of Meiji.⁷⁴

Dated April 1902, Ozawa's *shikigo* was handwritten and around one thousand characters long, and focuses on another Negishi resident, the sinologist and essayist Nakane Kōtei 中根香亭 (1839–1913) whom Ozawa refers to as his "old friend." Nakane served the bakufu and later the Meiji government. He quit his post at the Meiji government's Army Ministry in 1875, citing health reasons, and then returned as an editorial officer for the Ministry of Education (Monbushō Sōnin Henshūkan 文部省奏任編輯官) around 1880.⁷⁵ However, a few years later, Nakane resigned and never served in the government again. Ozawa's commission for the Ministry of Education also ended in 1886, and their simultaneous departure from government service may have strengthened their friendship.

The *shikigo* comprises three parts, and a large proportion is devoted to quoting Nakane's works. The first and second parts quote two essays, the foreword to *Kanasugi koi* 金杉古意 (Ancient feelings of Kanasugi), Ishikawa Bunsō's poetry anthology about Negishi's historical sites, and a piece titled *Meika shoshitsu no ki* 迷花書室の記 (Note about the Alluring Flower Study Room), respectively. As noted earlier, Ishikawa was also involved

⁷¹ Masaoka 1927.

⁷² *Shikigo* are notes attached to books, manuscripts, or, in this case, maps, explaining their provenance or reproduction.

⁷³ Yoshikawa 1994.

⁷⁴ Nakano 1986.

⁷⁵ Ogasawara 1933, pp. 183–184, citing Nakane's autobiography.

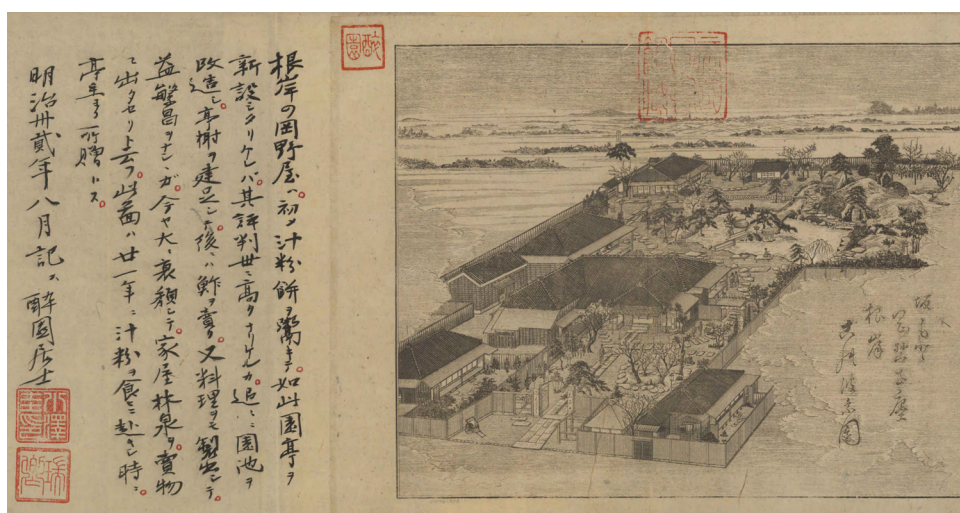


Figure 5. Ozawa Keijirō, *shikigo* (left) attached to the *Negishi konohanaen-zu*, 1899. Ozawa added the *shikigo* to this illustration, initially produced sometime before 1888. Courtesy of the National Diet Library, Japan.

in the production of *Negishi kinbō-zu*, and was enthusiastic about the history of this local area as a source of poetic inspiration. The *Kanasugi koi* reflects this passion.⁷⁶ From 1889, the *Kanasugi koi* was circulated in the community before its publication in 1925.⁷⁷ Nakane's foreword praises Ishikawa's poem and describes his relocation to Negishi. The second part of Ozawa's *shikigo*, from the *Meika shoshitsu no ki*, offers more details about Nakane's move to Negishi and how he named his study room "Meika shoshitsu."⁷⁸ The third part adds Ozawa's explanation of their friendship, Nakane's poem about his Negishi home, and changes in Negishi.

Ozawa interweaves Nakane's essays and biography into a description of changes in the late Meiji period. After quitting the Army Ministry, Nakane found a house in the shade of Ueno Hill blessed with nature, old trees, and flowers.⁷⁹ Noting that many *bunga no shi* 文雅之士 (culturally sophisticated people) had lived there in the late eighteenth century, Nakane purchased an abandoned samurai residence in 1875 and grew flowers there.⁸⁰ Nakane repeatedly mentions that although others might laugh at him, he is satisfied. However, the grace of the area is under threat, for as the final lines of the *shikigo* note, "people are losing their respect for virtuosity; railways are expanding; hills are being removed, and trees cut

76 Ishikawa learned from the poet Ōnuma Chinzan 大沼枕山 (1818–1891) and became a renowned sinologist, teaching Chinese studies at his private school in Minowa (Minowa Chōshi Hensankai 1968, pp. 135–136). He was also the founder of the Sōtai-kai 掃苔会 (Group of Grave Hunters), a group devoted to the discovery and cleaning of ancient relics and tombs.

77 With an introduction from Ōnuma, titled *Jo* 序 and dated 1889, as well as Nakane, titled *Jo* 叙 and dated 1890, see Ishikawa 1925, p. 17.

78 This piece can also be confirmed in *Kōtei zōsō*; see Nakane 1914.

79 Nakane 1914.

80 Ozawa 1902.

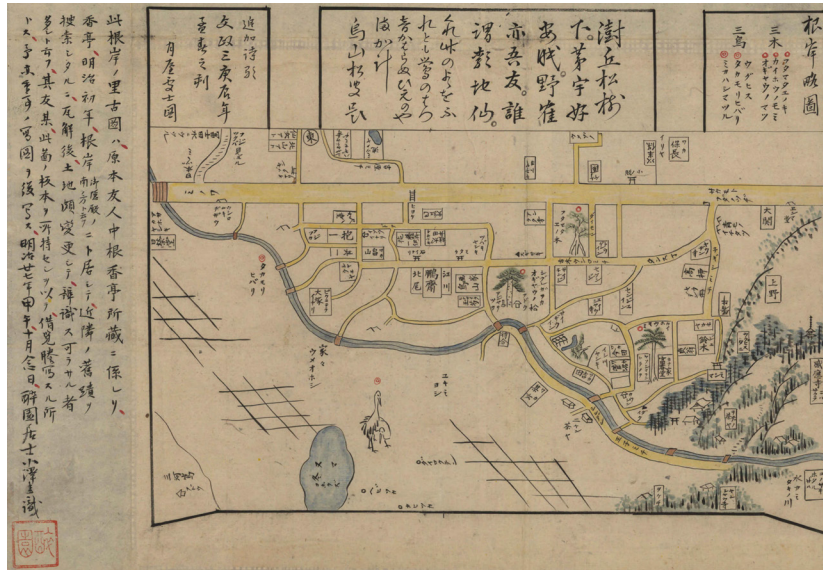


Figure 6. Ozawa Keijirō, *Negishi ryaku-zu*, 1894. Both Nakane and Ozawa copied this 1820 map, attesting to a communal interest in this area and the material map. Courtesy of the National Diet Library, Japan.

down.” Indeed, Nakane moved from Negishi to Okitsumachi 興津町, Shizuoka Prefecture, in 1909, where he spent his final years.⁸¹

Two other works reflecting Ozawa’s interest in Negishi are the *Negishi konohanaen-zu* 根岸此花園図 (Picture of the Negishi Konohanaen restaurant) and *Negishi ryaku-zu* 根岸略図 (A rough map of Negishi). The acquisition of these maps is also explained through Ozawa’s *shikigo*. The former was a present from the owner of a prosperous local restaurant, Konohanaen 此花園, when Ozawa dined there in 1888 (figure 5). According to an article in the *Yomiuri Shinbun*, Konohanaen was subsequently a base of the club’s activities.⁸² In 1899, when Ozawa wrote this *shikigo*, he heard that Konohanaen’s buildings and gardens were on sale. Adding the comments about the splendid edifice and garden to the picture eleven years later seems to reflect Ozawa’s lamentation over the vicissitude of the restaurant and Negishi as a whole.

The latter, with the *shikigo* dated 1894, is said to have been copied by Ozawa from Nakane’s collections (figure 6). Ozawa’s copy of the *Negishi ryaku-zu* and its connection with *Negishi kinbō-zu* attest to an intellectual network of map collecting and copying.⁸³ With illustrations of houses, birds, trees, and the use of multiple colors, *Negishi ryaku-zu* visually resembles a *Edo kiriezu* 江戸切絵図, offering information such as “this place is suitable to see snow” and “the families here dry plums.” As the *shikigo* explains, Nakane happened to know a friend who held an old printed woodblock map by Getsugai 月崖, dated to Bunsei 文政 3 (1820). Nakane borrowed and copied it, and it was later copied by Ozawa.

81 Kimura 1914, p. 6.

82 *Yomiuri Shinbun*, 16 December 1899.

83 For the intellectual networks centering on maps in eighteenth-century Japan, see Uesugi 2010.

This 1820 map was well known in the community, and Ōtsuki mentioned it as a resource for the *Negishi kinbō-zu* (section 4).⁸⁴

The two maps of *Negishi ryaku-zu* and *Negishi kinbō-zu* not only reveal the community's interest in cartographic materials and methods; they also partake in consolidating Negishi's image as a scenic place of historical interest. Borrowing from Kären Wigen, in the hands of the *Negishi kinbō-zu* makers, Negishi "metamorphosed into an object of affection, attachment, and curiosity for the people who dwelled there."⁸⁵ Yet while the *Negishi ryaku-zu* foregrounded Negishi's beauty, and reflected Nakane and Ozawa's historical interests, the *Negishi kinbō-zu* was more complex, embodying a symbolic community struggling with its symbols.

The materialization of this struggle in the *Negishi kinbō-zu* reflected the complicated relations of its makers with the state and power. Ōtsuki, Ozawa, and Nakane all experienced 1868 as a political turning point, and were members of the "defeated" (*haisha* 敗者) group that survived the Meiji Restoration.⁸⁶ This group, formerly aligned with the bakufu, was stigmatized during Japan's subsequent modernization.⁸⁷ Henry D. Smith II has argued that the *haisha* had less sense of being actually "defeated" than of sharing an "eagerness to opt out of the values of the new Meiji state and its emphasis on centralization, bureaucratization, hierarchy, and patriotic loyalty," remaining "'unrepentant outsiders' who preferred to rely on their own private networks of mutual interest and support."⁸⁸ For those who survived the Restoration as young adults, encountered the rapid societal changes, and exhibited uniformity with the updated ideologies and cultural conventions, defeat was not merely a personal experience but a lingering mental state, associated with reclusion. This reflected the Chinese artistic idea that reclusion represented a private space "always intended to be shared," which "invited commentary within a like-minded community," best demonstrated by the celebrated "remnants" or "leftover people" of the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) who failed to recognize their replacement by the Qing (1644–1912).⁸⁹ The *Negishi kinbō-zu* shows, at a smaller scale, a community's ongoing valorization of a past that existed before their reclusion. It is a communal product by these *haisha* in late Meiji Japan, who kept their distance from the locus of political power, created a space of aesthetic reclusion for themselves, and sought to symbolically demarcate it.

One illuminating sentence in Ōtsuki's essay implies this, drawing a distinction between two kinds of people. It suggests that while the *kyūsodai* might be satisfied with the narrow streets, the wealthy and influential families (*gōzoku*) would find it unsuitable for living.⁹⁰ As John Urry notes, it is part of "the culture of those living in a given geographical area to draw a distinction between those who are local, 'people like us,' and those who are nonlocal, 'outsiders'; and further that "this binary opposition may be set up and reproduced in relation with people's sense of belonging to a given 'community.'"⁹¹ The wealthy, who

84 Negishi Club 1901; Ishikawa (1925, p. 2) also mentions in his *Kanasugi koi* that he saw the map at the place of his uncle, the seal engraver Nakai Keisho 中井敬所 (1831–1909).

85 Wigen 2010, p. 226.

86 Yamaguchi 1995.

87 Brecher 2012.

88 Smith 2012.

89 Sturman 2012, pp. 14–15.

90 Negishi Club 1901.

91 Urry 1987, p. 443.

are not suited to living in Negishi, and those that Nakane thought would laugh at him, are constructed as others to consolidate the uniformity of the symbolic community of “*warera Negishi-jin*.” Yet Ōtsuki’s efforts to symbolically affirm the place of Negishi as rightfully belonging to its contemporary *kyūsodai* were tentative, and at the end of his text he asks if “Admiring the reclusion of the men of noble character (*kōshi insei no shi sama nao shitawaru* 高士隠棲の士さまなお慕はる)” makes “this map graceful or worldly (*ga nariya zoku nariya* 雅なりや俗なりや)?”⁹² As with Negishi itself, so with *Negishi kinbō-zu*. Place and cartographic narrative nevertheless took shape, tying together a symbolic community through the aesthetics of defeat and reclusion.

The community mapping of *Negishi kinbō-zu* works at a local scale. During the process of mapmaking, both “Negishi” and the identity of its members was being reconfirmed. To borrow Anthony Cohen’s words, the place of Negishi, with its Edo relics and memory, served their historical interests and preferred way of life well, and became the “compass of individual identity, responding to their need to delimit the bounds of similarity.”⁹³ The *Negishi kinbō-zu* is historically-situated, not offering the kind of “malleability” that could find a role in the grander nation-building project identified by Kären Wigen.⁹⁴ It is by and for “*warera Negishi-jin*,” who collaborative produced this cartographic “little world” and, in doing so, reproduced themselves.

The *Negishi kinbō-zu* thus offers a communal and symbolic alternative to the dominance represented by the victorious Meiji state. This alternative builds upon collective sentiments, including pride in local history, opposition to the railways, and identification with neighbors. The set of practices surrounding this map echo the definition of community mapping: “Local mapping, produced collaboratively, by local people and often incorporating alternative local knowledge.”⁹⁵ What demands our attention is the symbolism of this community mapping, which both materialized the *Negishi kinbō-zu* and sustained the community.

Conclusion

The *Tōkyō Shitaya Negishi oyobi kinbō-zu* offers a nativist image of Negishi and shows how a symbolic community took form and consolidated itself through a project of community mapping in the late Meiji period. Rather than the material instrumentality of governance and political authority, the map reveals the mapmaker-cum-residents’ attachment to place as well as their opposition to some aspects of modernity. Through mapping Negishi, they produced a narrative of community and place, dismissing the value of railroads and eulogizing aesthetic reclusion and tranquility of Negishi. In so doing, they re-affirmed their symbolic community. This specific case illuminates the role of maps and mapping in late Meiji Japan at the scale of a neighborhood. The *Negishi kinbō-zu* carried significance within its community. It interweaved social networks with place, and invigorated and strengthened the community as a source of identity. It is through the process of mapping that a dynamic symbolic community emerged, and a local place became a symbolic referent.

⁹² Negishi Club 1901.

⁹³ Cohen 1989, p. 110.

⁹⁴ Wigen 2010.

⁹⁵ Perkins 2007, p. 127.

This symbolism was maintained in subsequent decades, as Ōtsuki and the *Negishi kinbō-zu* remain a means of representing Negishi today. After the Meiji period, Negishi continued to be depicted as “another world” attracting people of grace. The street where Ōtsuki lived received the name Ōtsuki Yokochō 大槻横丁 (Ōtsuki alley), and since the 1980s, the *Negishi kinbō-zu* has been reprinted by diverse groups, revealing the public-private partnerships, or “entrepreneurialism” that David Harvey identifies, in the ongoing symbolic identification of community.⁹⁶ While no longer accurately representing the contemporary geography of Negishi, this late Meiji map continues to provoke ideas on the relationship between mapping, place, and community in the present.

96 Harvey 1989. The players included the local authority of Taitō Ward, university study groups, the revived Negishi Club, and writers. The revived club was founded by Ichikawa Jinzō 市川任三 (1918–1999), a historian, literary studies scholar, and resident of Negishi in the early 1980s. See the Appendix for recent reproductions and uses of the map, as well as Wigen’s discussion on the reprints of the eighteenth-century maps of Shinano after the Meiji period (2010, pp. 221–230).

APPENDIX

	INSTITUTION / PUBLICATION	FORMAT
1	National Diet Library, Japan	Black cloth cover, inscribed “Teikoku Toshokan” 帝國圖書館 (Imperial Library), mounted on cloth. “Bound (<i>seibon</i> 製本) on 12 March, thirty-fourth year of Meiji (1901)” stamped near the bottom right, map marked in red.
2	Tokyo Metropolitan Library (Tokyo Metropolitan Central Library Special Collections Room)	Ozawa Keijiro’s <i>shikigo</i> attached to the left and punctuation marks in red (figures 2 & 3).
3	Musashino Public Library	Framed as a hanging scroll (size: 80 cm x 70 cm).
4	Tokyo Metropolitan Archives	With a brown-colored cover.
5	Meiji Shinbun Zasshi Bunko, University of Tokyo	With red handwritten marks and “Presented by Fujisawa Seki’ichirō on 5 February, fifth year of Taishō (1916)” in the left margin. Later donated to the Meiji Shinbun Zasshi Bunko, established in 1927.
6	Anrakuji 安楽寺 Temple in Negishi	Framed and with traces of restoration.
<u>The following are reproductions</u>		
RR1	Taito City Library, Tokyo	A copy (46 cm x 63.5 cm) mounted on a vinyl sheet with a stamp saying “donated to Taitō Toshokan (Taito Library) on 30 June, fiftieth year of Shōwa (1975)” on the back, and some handwritten <i>banchi</i> addresses on the map.
RR2	<i>Tokyo Shitaya Negishi oyobi kinbō</i> (1981) [magazine]	A full-sized reproduction (45 cm x 61 cm) attached to the magazine.
RR3	Jinnai and Itakura, <i>Tōkyō no machi o yomu</i> (1981) [book]	A reduced reproduction (B5) inserted on p. 36.
RR4	Sakai, <i>Ueno, Okachimachi, Yanaka, Iriya, Negishi (Tōkyō rojō saiken)</i> (1988) [book]	Part of map inserted on p. 266, caption explains the map was in the collection of Ichikawa Jinzō.
RR5	Yanesen Kōbō (Ōgi, Mori, Yamazaki), “Shiki no shiki” (1999) [magazine article]	Part of RR2 inserted at pp. 18–19, introducing Masaoka and other local residents and places.
RR6	Matsubara, <i>Tonari no haka</i> (2001) [book]	Part of map inserted with Masaoka’s and Kuga’s homes marked (no pagination).
RR7	Akaiwa, “Meiji kochizu de aruku Negishi no sato” (2005) [magazine article]	Illustration of RR2 with additional captions introducing local sites inserted on pp. 44–45.
RR8	Mabuchi, <i>Uta no sōshun</i> (2006) [book]	A copy of RR2 spanning two B6-sized book pages (pp. 320–321).
RR9	Distributed by Negishi-kai in 2009 [single-sheet map]	One printed sheet (46 cm x 63.5 cm), copy of R2. Visible on the Stroly Inc. website (https://stroly.com/viewer/1506462596 , accessed 11 August 2022).
RR10	Mori, <i>Shiki no oto</i> (2017) [book]	Used for the inner cover. Map described along with discussions of Masaoka (pp. 356–361).

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TRANSLATION

Narrating the Spread of Shinto and Shugendō in the Eighteenth Century: An Introduction to and Translation of the *Shugen Ichijitsu Reisō Shintō mikki*

Caleb CARTER*

The *Shugen Ichijitsu Reisō Shintō mikki* is an origin account for a religious lineage constructed at Mount Togakushi (present-day Nagano Prefecture) in the early eighteenth century. In addition to providing a fascinating glimpse into thought, practice, and politics at this site at the time, the account offers a lucid example of four contingent features of religious culture in early modern Japan. The first, and well-known among scholars, is the hybrid nature of religious life before the Meiji era, evident in the text's indulgent synthesis of Shinto, Shugendō, and Buddhism. At a time when nativist (*kokugaku*) doctrines were on the rise, this work reveals that combinatory discourse remained alive and well. Second is the rapid growth of Shinto and Shugendō into new regions during the Edo period—a geographical development that belies modern, nation-centered assumptions about either. Third, this spread was enabled through site-based narratives that wove imported trends into local histories, thereby legitimizing their presence at these new places. Finally, such narratives reflect a growing appetite among the lay public to visit and mingle with the intoxicating mix of gods, mythological imprints, and legendary figures reported in them.

Keywords: Japanese religions, Shugendō, Shinto, Tendai Buddhism, Edo period, Tokugawa Ieyasu, sacred mountains

The *Shugen Ichijitsu Reisō Shintō mikki* 修驗一實靈宗神道密記 (Secret Record of *Shugen* Single-Reality Numinous Shinto, hereafter *Secret Record*) is an origin account of a lineage constructed in the early eighteenth century by the Tendai 天台 Buddhist priest Jōin 乗因 (1682–1739). Tendai Buddhism was established in the Sui dynasty (where it was pronounced Tiantai) by Zhiyi 智顗 (538–597) and flourished in Japan after its transmission by Saichō 最澄 (767–822). As suggested by the name, however, *Shugen Ichijitsu Reisō Shintō* was an amalgamation of multiple religious systems that included two forms of Shinto, Shugendō,

* I would like to thank William Bodiford, who mentored me through the initial stage of translation. Referees Stefan Köck and William Fleming, who waived their anonymity following the review process, graciously offered valuable suggestions for improvement on the introduction and the translation itself.

Buddhist thought, and even a shade of Daoist ritual. The account lays out a history—albeit fictive—that deftly weaves these strands together into a single lineage that drew from Jōin’s elite ecclesiastical background as well as the religious culture of Mount Togakushi 戸隠山, where he served as chief administrator (*bettō* 別當) from 1727 to 1738.

Jōin is a fascinating, if not enigmatic, figure. In the final years of his tenure at Togakushi, he initiated policies that radically deviated from the norms of his time. His efforts at reform provoked heated opposition from his fellow clerics, and led to his ousting from Togakushi by the shogunate’s Commissioner of Temples and Shrines (*jisha bugyō* 寺社奉行), and subsequent exile to a remote island south of Edo. The end of Jōin’s tenure also signaled the rejection of his reforms, and meant his efforts at synthesis were destined to be short-lived, rather than the beginnings of a new religious system.

Jōin’s thought, as revealed by the *Secret Record* and subsequent reforms he implemented at Mount Togakushi, is indicative of the religious hybridity—popular and elite—characteristic of the Edo period. Much of this hybridity was constructed through narrative. Amid a sustained rise in travel, pilgrimage, and religious confraternities (*kō* 講), the most successful religious figures of Jōin’s time were storytellers, retelling the origins (*engi* 縁起) of their temples through a matrix of powerful deities, extraordinary events, and patriarchs from the past. In elite settings, the construction of theologies through the medium of historical narrative was not unusual at the time. Jōin’s Tendai predecessor Tenkai 天海 (1536–1643) had done so a century earlier when he invented a Shinto lineage that apotheosized Tokugawa Ieyasu 徳川家康 (1543–1616), and Jōin took direct inspiration from Tenkai in this matter. Similarly, Hayashi Razan 林羅山 (1583–1657) wrote origin accounts of religious sites around the country that reinterpreted them through a Shinto paradigm.¹ Motoori Norinaga 本居宣長 (1730–1801) and other nativist scholars (*kokugakusha* 国学者) would later imagine an ancient past that provided a foundational mythohistory in the service of Japan’s divine status.

This list of religious storytellers grows exponentially when we bring in clerics who constructed new lineages (divine and human) tailored to their own temples and shrines. One could argue that storytelling was the principal act of religion-making, whether practitioners were expanding their own sites or creating new systems. The *Secret Record* offers a case in point.

Overview of the *Secret Record*

The majority of this article consists of an annotated translation of the *Secret Record*.² In this introduction, I will summarize several key elements in Jōin’s text before highlighting two interlocking features of religion in the Edo period: the rapid spread of Shinto and Shugendō, and the key role of narrative in that process.

The primary purpose of the *Secret Record* was to establish a stable lineage for Jōin’s new school of Shugen Ichijitsu Reisō Shintō, and to situate it within Mount Togakushi’s

1 In the *Honchō jinja kō* 本朝神社考 (around 1640).

2 This discussion and the annotated translation of the *Secret Record* complements an earlier article detailing the text’s unification of disparate religious strands as well as its role in a common mode of early modern place-making; see Carter 2017. Other studies on Jōin’s life and thought include Bodiford 2006; and Sonehara 2017 (which collects several decades of articles about Jōin into a single monograph). I further explore Jōin’s treatment of Shugendō in Carter 2022, chapter 10.

religious culture. Jōin's construction of a lineage performed two tasks. First, it shifted the cult of the Tōshō Daigongen away from the early modern centers of the Tendai institution (Nikkō 日光 and Kan'eiji 寛永寺) and relocated it to Togakushi. During the medieval period, the Tendai temples at Mount Hiei 比叡山 unified the deities of the mountain with translocal buddhas into a combinatory cultic system known as Sannō Shintō 山王神道 (divine way of the mountain kings).³ Shortly after the death of Tokugawa Ieyasu, the high priest Tenkai, architect of the early modern Tendai institution and close advisor to Ieyasu, appropriated this system from Hiei and moved it to Kan'eiji, a temple complex he erected in Ueno (on the northeastern outskirts of Edo) to serve as the new administrative center of the Tendai institution. Tenkai added ichijitsu, or "single reality," a term he most likely drew from medieval Tendai discourse, but in this new context served as an allusion to the true nature (ichijitsu) of the mountain deities as manifestations of buddhas.⁴ In the early seventeenth century, Tenkai would formulate an origin account entitled the Tōshō daigongen engi 東照大權現縁起, which deified Ieyasu as the Tōshō Daigongen (Great Avatar of Eastern Radiance), placed the Daigongen at the center of a new divine pantheon, and enshrined him at Nikkō. Popular worship of the Daigongen spread throughout the country, but the cult's *raison d'être* was to preserve the rule of the Tokugawa shoguns. Sannō Ichijitsu Shintō was maintained by an elite line of initiated Tendai priests, which eventually included Jōin.

Second, Jōin developed a historical narrative that merged Sannō Ichijitsu Shintō with the religious culture of Togakushi. Two of these components are evident in the title: Shugendō and Reisō Shintō. Shugendō was most likely transmitted to the site in the 1520s by a scholarly ascetic known as Akyūbō Sokuden 阿吸房即傳, a prolific writer and producer of Shugendō ritual texts based at Mount Hiko 英彦山 in northern Kyushu. Despite the relatively recent transmission of Shugendō to Togakushi, Jōin sought to strengthen the tradition's place in the mountain's origins. His insertion of Shugendō's semi-legendary seventh-century founder En no Gyōja 役行者 and other Shugendō references into the *Secret Record's* narrative are evidence of this vision.

Jōin also incorporated a recent form of Shinto known as Reisō 霊宗 (numinous) into his lineage. Reisō Shintō emerged in the mid-seventeenth century at Izawanomiyama 伊雑宮, an auxiliary shrine of the Inner Shrine of Ise. The school was expounded in a text known as the *Sendai kuji hongī taisei kyō* 先代舊事本紀大成經 (hereafter, *Taisei kyō*), purportedly a lost version of the ancient *Sendai kuji hongī*. Although the government deemed the *Taisei kyō* apocryphal and banned it just two years after its appearance in 1679 (Enpō 延宝 7), Reisō Shintō continued to circulate. It gained traction at Togakushi when one of the *Taisei kyō's* authors, Chōon Dōkai 潮音道海 (1628–1695), visited the site in 1686 (Jōkyō 貞享 3) to venerate two of Japan's mythological *kami* there: Omoikane no Mikoto and Omoikane's divine son Tajikarao no Mikoto. Records of these deities at Togakushi are scant prior to this time, suggesting that their veneration may have been a recent accretion to the mountain's ritual culture.

3 This pairing is indicative of *bonji suijaku* 本地垂迹 logic, whereby a local deity was thought to be a "trace manifestation" (*suijaku*) of Buddhist "origins" (*bonji*), typically a buddha or bodhisattva. This doctrine prevailed through most of Japan's medieval and early modern history before its suppression by the modern Meiji government.

4 Sugahara 1996, pp. 65–69; Bodiford 2006, pp. 234–235.

In fact, it is in the *Taisei kyō* where we find the first explicit mention of their enshrinement at Togakushi. The divine connection is explained in the text through an embellishment to the famous cave myth of Amaterasu: when Tajikarao throws the boulder blocking the sun goddess's cave, it lands in the world and—novelly—creates the mountain of Togakushi.⁵ Jōin repeats this detail in the opening lines of the *Secret Record*, a move that reaffirms the existence of the myth's *kami* at the site and inspires subsequent variations of the account, visual iconography, and worship. In addition to Tajikarao's pivotal boulder toss, Omoikane was relevant to Dōkai for several reasons. First, it was Omoikane who summoned the deities to effectively draw out Amaterasu from the cave in which she had secluded herself. Second, Omoikane established Reisō Shintō, according to the *Taisei kyō*. Finally, Omoikane seems to have been enshrined at Togakushi around this time (Jōin elaborates on this reason in the *Secret Record*). Given these connections, the journey to Togakushi would have been highly meaningful for Dōkai.

Beyond Shugendō and Reisō Shintō, three additional elements are noteworthy in the *Secret Record*. First is the Buddhist doctrine of the *cakravartin* (*tenrin jōō* 轉輪聖王). This Sanskrit term refers to the ideal of a “sage king who turns the wheel” of the dharma, in other words, a universal ruler who abides by the teachings of the Buddha. In the *Secret Record*, Jōin goes to great lengths to argue that *cakravartin* rule has been historically central to Japan and infers that Ieyasu accords with *cakravartin* principles in his posthumous apotheosis. Jōin must have known the case was weak. That Ieyasu was a military leader (shogun) and not a “sovereign who rules all under heaven” (*tennō*) is a technicality Jōin looks past. To bolster his argument, he recalls the Ming court's designation of Ashikaga Yoshimitsu 足利義満 (1358–1408)—a powerful shogun like Ieyasu—as king, thus suggesting a precedent for shoguns to operate as kings. Yet here too Jōin glosses over the historical reality of the subservient position of kings within the Chinese tributary system.⁶

The second additional element in Shugen Ichijitsu Reisō Shintō is Daoism, evident in scattered references to rituals and scriptures throughout the *Secret Record*. No evidence of Daoism has appeared in connection with Togakushi or within Sannō Ichijitsu Shintō, making its origins in Jōin's thought unclear. Nevertheless, his references to Daoist literature and rituals point to a textual influence. References to early Daoist history also appear in another origin account he authored titled the *Togakushisan daigongen engi* 戸隠山大権現縁起 (Origin account of the great avatar of Mount Togakushi, ca. 1736), with the *daigongen* here being a reference to the mountain's central deity, the nine-headed dragon Kuzuryū 九頭龍. In that work, Jōin correlates Shugendō with the earliest form of institutionalized Daoism, Tianshi dao 天師道 (Way of Celestial Masters), through a series of connections he develops between the two—these include an early Daoist patriarch becoming a “shugen practitioner” (*shugen no gyōja* 修験の行者) and the conflation of a prominent Daoist temple with a shrine at Togakushi.⁷

Finally, Jōin brings in Togakushi's medieval etiology, relying on the *Togakushisan Kenkōji ruki* 戸隠山顯光寺流記 (1458). The *Kenkōji ruki* was the site's authoritative

5 *Jingi hongī* chapter (下), *Taisei kyō*. See <https://miko.org/~uraki/kuon/furu/text/sendaiukuji/taisei.htm> (Accessed 11 November 2021).

6 Chinese emperors (*huangdi* 皇帝) granted the title king (*wang* 王) to the heads of states who paid tribute to the court.

7 *Togakushisan daigongen engi*, ZST 24, *Jinja hen*, *Togakushi* 1, pp. 213, 228; Carter 2022, pp. 159–161.

origin account (an earlier account also appears in the thirteenth-century Tendai ritual compendium *Asaba shō* 阿婆縛抄).⁸ To this history, he adds more recent events where useful to his narrative, for instance, emphasizing Ieyasu's role in rebuilding the site's temples and conferring estates after its destruction in warfare. The restoration was, in fact, initiated by other warlords in the mid-1590s and later completed by Ieyasu in 1611.⁹ Yet for Jōin, it was Ieyasu's stewardship that prefigured the subsequent unification between the shogun's posthumous form, the Tōshō Daigongen, and Mount Togakushi.

In the final pages of the *Secret Record*, Jōin abruptly digresses into a stern defense of the position of chief administrator, perhaps a reflection of internal resistance at Togakushi that ultimately led to the successful repudiation of his administration. In a formal letter of complaint sent to the Commissioner of Temples and Shrines on 1738.9.19 (Genbun 元文 3), a majority of the mountain's clerics would accuse Jōin of radically departing from the customs and conventions of the site and replacing them with a framework of Shugendō. While some clerics and *yamabushi* 山伏 (mountain ascetics) found the new structure appealing, as evidenced by Jōin's following of about half a dozen disciples, such a seismic shift went against the institutional interests of most of the mountain's Tendai clergy.¹⁰ After investigating, the commissioner rendered a decision in favor of the clerics. Jōin was stripped of his position in the first month of 1739 (Genbun 4) and was subsequently exiled to an island south of Edo in the ninth month of that same year.¹¹ Kan'eiji, moreover, ordered the complete removal of his policies, writings, and even material traces (including stone inscriptions of his name) from the site.¹² Given this unyielding response, it is a wonder Jōin's works from Togakushi (at least eight) survived at all.

Jōin's downfall had broader implications for the Tendai institution and the Tokugawa shoguns. With his exile, Sannō Ichijitsu Shintō was tarnished and its transmission irreparably damaged. This is evident from later attempts by Tendai clerics to restore it, several of whom directly pinned the blame for its discontinuation on Jōin. An elite cleric named Jitō 慈等 (d. 1819), for instance, faulted Jōin's heretical (*itan* 異端) teachings as the cause of its demise.¹³ Toward the end of the Edo period, another cleric named Kengyō 賢曉 cited a letter (non-extant) from the abbot of Kan'eiji addressed to Jōin during the latter's tenure at Togakushi. The letter laments Jōin's failure to transmit Sannō Ichijitsu Shintō to a successor.¹⁴

Jōin's dismissal, nevertheless, leaves us with a puzzle regarding the *Secret Record*: for whom was it intended? The title may provide one clue: a "secret record" (*mikki*) would

8 The account from the *Asaba shō*, titled *Togakushiji ryakki* 戸隠寺略記, is reprinted in ST 59, *Jinja hen* 24, pp. 372–374.

9 Furukawa 1997, pp. 53–59.

10 Sonehara 2017, chapter 4.

11 Separate sources mention both Miyakejima 三宅島 and Hachijōjima 八丈島 (Sonehara 2010, pp. 33, 41).

12 Kobayashi 1934a, p. 222.

13 Hazama 1969, p. 262.

14 *Wakō saiki* 和光再暉, 427a. Kengyō lived into the Meiji period, although his exact dates are unknown (Hazama 1969, p. 262; Carter 2017, pp. 309–310). Relevant texts for further investigation into the demise of Sannō Ichijitsu Shintō and attempts to restore it include Jitō's *Sannō Ichijitsu Shintō gen* 山王一實神道原 (Origins of Sannō Ichijitsu Shintō), *Saiten kafuku shō* 祭典開覆章 (Essay on restoring the rituals and doctrines, 1806), and Kengyō's *Wakō saiki* (Restoring the softened light, late Edo period)—all of which are reprinted in TZ, vol. 12—and Jihon's 慈本 (1795–1868) four-fascicle *Ichijitsu Shintō ki* 一實神道記 (ca. 1820s; published by the Tendai central office in 1900).

suggest exclusive transmission, not unwarranted given Jōin's repositioning of the Tōshō Daigongen toward Togakushi and away from Nikkō and the orthodox line of Sannō Ichijitsu Shintō he had received. The consequences of this change were grave, and as indicated above, Sannō Ichijitsu Shintō never recovered. At the same time, the title may have simply been a rhetorical nod to medieval esoteric *mikki* as a way to elevate its own mystique and historical authority. To this effect, references to the past—textual, historical, and mythohistorical—are replete throughout the work as modes of legitimation.

Most telling, however, is how Jōin's *Secret Record* reads in complementary fashion with his *Togakushisan daigongen engi*. Indicative of early modern origin accounts (*engi*), the latter was most likely intended for confraternities and potential visitors to the site, or at least to serve as a narrative template for *yamabushi* promoting Togakushi. In contrast, Jōin probably composed the *Secret Record* for internal purposes. The work situated the religious community's mountain at the center of Shugen Ichijitsu Reisō Shintō, a placement its members would have enjoyed had the lineage been successful. It also elevated the stature of the chief administrator—Jōin at the time—by directly linking the position to the lineage. Most revealing, its final pages sent a stern warning to respect his authority as chief administrator of the site.

The original manuscript (or only known copy) of the *Secret Record* was lost in 1942 when a fire burned down the home of the Hisayama family, descendants of the site's last chief administrator.¹⁵ Its survival in modern print is owed to the prewar Shinto scholar Kobayashi Kenzō 小林健三, who transcribed it while researching Jōin in the 1930s. According to Kobayashi, who probably relied on a colophon, Jōin completed the *Secret Record* on the seventh day of the ninth month of 1731 (Kyōhō 享保 16).¹⁶ Extensive glosses retained in Kobayashi's transcription suggest frequent use at one or more points in its history. Sonehara Satoshi reprinted and introduced the *Secret Record* as part of a two-volume set of works that were either composed by Jōin at Togakushi or influential in his construction of Shugen Ichijitsu Reisō Shintō.¹⁷

Narratives in the Early Modern Spread of Shinto and Shugendō

The *Secret Record* points to a notable trend in the Edo period: the localization of Shugendō and Shinto through regional and site-based origin accounts. These narratives helped fuel the spread of both religious systems. Shugendō, which initially took shape in the late medieval environs of the Kii Peninsula, Kyoto, and Mount Hiko (northern Kyushu), advanced into rural and urban areas alike in the seventeenth century. On an institutional level, it was propelled by the two main branches of Honzan 本山 (Tendai-affiliated) and Tōzan 当山 (Shingon-affiliated). The two gained official recognition under Tokugawa Ieyasu's Shugendō regulations issued in 1613 (Keichō 慶長 18). In addition to the Honzan and Tōzan, Shugendō branches were established at several Tendai-administered mountains: Haguro

15 Similar to many religious mountains at the start of the Meiji period, the Togakushi temples were compelled to eradicate all traces of Buddhism (Tendai) and Shugendō and transform the site into a cluster of Shinto shrines. The last chief administrator Jikei 慈谿, who began his tenure in 1858, would convert to Shinto, take the name Hisayama Ayaosa 久山理安, and oversee the mountain's transition to Shinto as its head priest (*kannushi* 神主).

16 Kobayashi 1934b, p. 25.

17 ZST 24–25, *Jinja hen*, *Togakushi* 1–2.

羽黒, Hiko, and Togakushi. Regional mountain-based confraternities—either affiliated with or influenced by Shugendō—also emerged in many parts of the country, contributing to a broad-based devotion to sacred mountains during this time.¹⁸

Shinto likewise underwent rapid growth in the Edo period. Systems like Sannō Ichijitsu Shintō and Miwa Shintō 三輪神道—named after the ancient shrine in the Yamato region where it originated—had medieval roots but were given new linguistic and ideological form as Shinto lineages within Buddhist confines.¹⁹ Others were conceived through Neo-Confucian influences by figures such as Yamazaki Ansai 山崎闇斎 (1619–1682) and Hayashi Razan.²⁰ Amid national and domainal regulatory reforms in the 1660s, Shinto gained new legitimacy alongside the traditional Buddhist sects. The immediate beneficiary of these regulations was Yoshida Shintō 吉田神道, which had been separated from Buddhism by Yoshida Kanetomo 吉田兼俱 (1435–1511) centuries earlier.²¹ Nonetheless, official recognition accelerated the growth of Shinto from that point forward. Through political intervention, a number of powerful daimyo also reformulated Buddhist sites in their territories as strictly Shinto.²² These developments would foreshadow nativist trends in the eighteenth century and the eventual disassociation of Shinto from Buddhism (*shinbutsu bunri* 神仏分離) in the Meiji era.

Until recently, much of this expansion in the Edo period was overlooked by scholars.²³ This can be attributed in part to nationalizing efforts in the twentieth century that emphasized a collective past for Shinto and Shugendō rooted in ancient and medieval history. Each tradition has been subjected to modern ideological treatment in slightly different terms: Shugendō as an ancient folk religion that preceded, and then underlay, Buddhist superstructures that were imported and thus presumed non-indigenous; and Shinto as synonymous with national identity, nature worship, imperial worship, and mythology.²⁴ Investigation into the genealogies of early modern lineages and pantheons at regional sites throws these assumptions into doubt. In other words, that which was presumed ancient at many sites may have in fact taken shape much later. At Mount Togakushi, for example, references to Shugendō begin appearing in the mid-sixteenth century—far later than previous scholars assumed.

Early modern figures like Jōin preceded, and arguably fostered, modern processes of nationalization by producing localized stories across the country. The *Secret Record* demonstrates how this was achieved at one site. The mythological deities he invokes in the text's opening pages were recent entities at the site, ushered in with Reisō Shintō. Likewise, an alleged visit to Togakushi by En no Gyōja is introduced here and elsewhere in Jōin's writing. These narrative incisions subsequently played a major role in embedding the new

18 For studies on early modern confraternities, see Ambros 2008 and Miyamoto 2010.

19 For the transformation of medieval Sannō Shintō to early modern Sannō Ichijitsu Shintō, see Sugahara 1996. For the case of Miwa Shintō, see Andreeva 2017.

20 On Yamazaki Ansai, see Ooms 1985, chapters 6–7; on Hayashi Razan, see Boot 1992.

21 On the origins of Yoshida Shintō, see Grapard 1992a; Grapard 1992b; Scheid 2001.

22 Antoni 2016, pp. 74–76; Teeuwen 2021.

23 A robust corner of scholarship on Shinto in the Edo period addresses intellectual history (for an overview, see Antoni 2016, chapter 2), but less has been done on ritual, institution, and popular worship.

24 The view that Shugendō is fundamentally a Japanese folk religion was pursued by prominent Shugendō scholars such as Miyake Hitoshi 宮家準, Gorai Shigeru 五来重, and Hori Ichirō 堀一郎, all of whom were greatly influenced by Yanagita Kunio 柳田國男, forefather of folklore studies (*minzokugaku* 民俗学) in Japan.

gods into Togakushi's pantheon by affirming their ancient history at the site. Despite Jōin's removal, the gods and the patriarch of Shugendō lived on in the narratives, and thus worship, of the site. Jōin was not alone in this work. Religious specialists at temples and shrines across the country devised similar embellishments.²⁵ The result was to populate the country with *kami*, Buddhist deities, and religious founding figures who were previously confined to particular places and regions. Now they were everywhere, and that ubiquity gave their surrounding religions national contours.

At the same time, this mode of storytelling was key to the localization of Shugendō and Shinto in the Edo period. While scholars have made significant advancements in the study of medieval *engi*, less attention has been paid to their impact in later times.²⁶ In the eighteenth century in particular, many of the old *engi* were resuscitated. Beyond simply reiterating former tales, their authors incorporated evolving worship trends. The revamped narratives targeted regional patrons and distant travelers amid a steady growth in confraternities, pilgrimage, and travel. By placing gods and putative founders in the geographically proximate but temporally distant past, these texts grounded their divine actors into the immediate milieu and wedded new systems to old ones. As such, they provide important clues for religious and cultural historians as to when and how Shugendō and Shinto took shape.

A final note can be made on the textual nature of these narratives. Although many undoubtedly flourished through oral transmission, written origin accounts were composed within a vibrant print culture that flourished from the latter half of the seventeenth century. As a result, significant intertextuality occurred across sites, time periods, and genres through these accounts. In total, Jōin cites roughly twenty texts sourced from Shinto, Japanese official histories, temple and shrine records, the Buddhist canon, the Daoist canon, and documents from Togakushi. He quotes passages from Tenkai's *Tōshō daigongen engi*, the *Golden Light Sutra* (*Konkōmyō kyō* 金光明經; Skt. *Suvarṇa-prabhāṣottama-sūtra*), the *Flower Garland Sutra* (*Kegon kyō* 華嚴經; Skt. *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*), and the *Mahāvairocana-sūtra* (*Dainichi kyō* 大日經).²⁷ His exposition on the Buddhist concept of *cakravartin* rule alone draws on passages from the *Abhidharmakośa* (*Kusha ron* 俱舍論), Falin's 法琳 (572–640) *Bianzheng lun* 辯正論 (Treatise on Discerning Correctness), the Song-period *Daoist Canon* (*Daozang jing* 道藏經), and the Kamakura-era *Shūgaishō* 拾芥抄 and *Genkō shaku sho* 元亨釋書. Other influences go uncited, and include Yoshida Kanetomo's *Yuiitsu Shintō myōbō yōshū* 唯一神道名法要集, *Kogo shūi* 古語拾遺 (ca. 807), and the apocryphal *Taisei kyō* noted earlier in this Introduction. Throughout the *Secret Record*, Jōin draws upon these works to historically legitimize his school and the presence of new religious systems at Togakushi. In short, the abundance of published works gave priests like Jōin a plethora of

25 For another example, see Miyazaki and Williams 2001 (pp. 405–413) on early eighteenth-century accounts at Mount Osore 恐山 that ushered the bodhisattva Jizō and the Tendai monk Ennin 円仁 (794–864) into the mountain's history; Tsutsumi (2008) likewise writes on temples in Edo that constructed fictive visits by founders such as Hōnen 法然, Shinran 親鸞, and Nichiren 日蓮 in the hopes of attracting more visitors.

26 Scholars working with medieval *engi* include Allan Grapard, Abe Yasurō 阿部泰郎, Kawasaki Tsuyoshi 川崎剛志, and Heather Blair.

27 I forego consistency in the translations of titles (English, Japanese, Chinese, or the original Sanskrit) in favor of scholarly conventions for each text.

cultural reference points with which to embed religious systems like Shugendō and Shinto into their own historically reimagined landscapes.

All it took from that point forward was a bit of narrative flair, which Jōin displayed in abundance.

Secret Record of *Shugen Ichijitsu Reisō Shintō* (*Shugen Ichijitsu Reisō Shintō mikki* 修験一實靈宗神道密記)²⁸

Jōin 乗因 (1682–1739), 1731

Located in the Minochi 水内 district of Shinano Province, Mount Togakushi exists as the chief site (*honzan* 本山) of Shugen Ichijitsu Reisō Shintō. In the beginning, when heaven and earth first separated, Amaterasu Ōmikami entered a heavenly cave and blocked the entrance with a boulder. Because of her seclusion, the Central Kingdom of Bountiful Reed Plains descended into utter darkness. The myriad gods gathered to discuss how to remedy the situation. After serious consideration, Ame no Omoikane no Mikoto 天思兼尊, esteemed son of Takami Musubi no Mikoto 高皇產靈尊, devised a plan. Tajikarao no Mikoto 手力雄命, esteemed son [of Omoikane], lay await in the shadows outside of the cave as Ame no Koyane no Mikoto 天兒屋根命 and Ame no Futodama no Mikoto 天太玉命 lit torches and staged a performance. Just as Amaterasu Ōmikami nudged the boulder to have a peek, Tajikarao no Mikoto seized it and hurled it into the sky. The radiance of the sun goddess saturated the cosmos, and that very boulder plummeted downward, forming the mountain of Togakushi. From this event in the Central Kingdom of Bountiful Reed Plains, the divine land of the origin of the sun (*hi no moto no shinkoku* 日ノ本ノ神國) came into existence.

Later, during the reign of Emperor Kōgen, Ame no Omoikane no Mikoto and Tajikarao no Mikoto descended from the sky to the land of Shinano.²⁹ Tajikarao no Mikoto took residence as the great avatar (*daigongen* 大権現) of Okunoin 奥院, overseeing the mountain crags as their guardian. Omoikane no Mikoto, having established the shrine of Achi 阿知, made his abode as the great avatar of Chūin 中院.³⁰ Following the decree of Takami Musubi no Mikoto, Tajikarao no Mikoto's brother, Uwaru no Mikoto 表春命, became the guardian deity of the land of Shinano and the great avatar of Hōkōin 寶光院. Because Takami Musubi no Mikoto is the divine ancestor of the avatars of the three shrines, he became the guardian of Mount Takatsuma 高妻山, the highest of the Togakushi range, and is thus referred to as the luminous deity (*myōjin* 明神) of Takatsuma. Amaterasu Ōmikami, as Dainichi 大日 [Skt. Mahāvairocana] of the two-realm Womb and Diamond [*maṇḍalas*], revealed herself at the peak of Ototsuma 乙妻山. For this reason, Takatsuma and Ototsuma are referred to as the two-realm mountains (*ryōkaizan* 兩界山). The luminous deity Iizuna 飯縄 relies on the benefits of their softened light (*wakō*) and stands atop the peak of Iizuna 飯縄山.³¹ These are the great divine kings of our mountains.

28 Reprinted in ZST 24, *Jinja hen, Togakushi* 1, pp. 91–106. Edited by Sonehara Satoshi.

29 Emperor Kōgen 孝元 (214?–158? BCE).

30 This is more commonly written as Achi 阿智 Shrine and is located in southern Nagano Prefecture. The site played a prominent role in Jōin's formulation, most likely because the *Taisei kyō* refers to it as the site where Omoikane (founding deity of Reisō Shintō and Jōin's lineage) descended from heaven (Kobayashi 1934a, p. 231; Sonehara 2017, p. 59).

31 The term *wakō* alludes to the *honji suijaku* concept of *wakō dōjin* 和光同塵, or those who “soften their radiance to mingle with the dust.” Typically, buddhas or bodhisattvas represent divinities who “soften their radiance” and the kami of the world represent the “dust.” Notably, Jōin extends the former category to mythological *kami*. In the final paragraph, he does so again to the Tōshō Daigongen.

The divine way (*shintō* 神道) of Togakushi is known as Shugen Ichijitsu Reisō Shintō and is one of three types of Shinto in this sacred land.³² The first, Sōgen 宗源 Shintō, was transmitted by Ame no Koyane no Mikoto.³³ It is mentioned in the *Nihon shoki* in the statement, “Ame no Koyane no Mikoto holds the origin (*sōgen*) of divine affairs in his palm.” Hiraoka 平岡 Shrine of Kawachi 河内 serves as its head shrine.³⁴ The second, Saigen 齋元 Shintō, was transmitted by Futodama no Mikoto. Its name refers back to its divine founding by the Inbe 齋部 clan.³⁵ Awa 安房 Shrine is its head shrine.³⁶ The *Kujiki* 舊事紀 [the *Sendai kuji hongī*] reveals that the shrine of Futodama no Mikoto is the Awa Shrine.³⁷ The third, Reisō Shintō, was transmitted by Ame no Omoikane no Mikoto. It is called Reisō [Numinous] because as the *Kujiki* states, “Ame no Omoikane no Mikoto descended from Heaven down to the land of Shinano,” and that “Ame no Omoikane no Mikoto transmitted the Numinous way.”³⁸ Today, Mount Togakushi is the head shrine of Achi Shrine.

In the Hakuho 白鳳 era [673–686], Master En no Gyōja climbed this mountain and restored Reisō Shintō. Master En received the profound and ultimate secrets of both exoteric and esoteric (*kenmitsu* 顯密) affairs from the *taishokkan* 大織冠, Lord Kamatari.³⁹ On this basis, he named it Shugen Ichijitsu Reisō Shintō and transmitted it to Gakumon Gyōja 學門行者.⁴⁰ Gakumon Gyōja received the authorization of the avatars of the three shrines and revived the shrines. This initiated the position of chief administrator of our mountain, which is passed down through blood lineage (*kechimiyaku* 血脈) and represents the uninterrupted transmission of the divine way.

When the agricultural estates of our divine territory were ransacked amid medieval warfare, our divine way hung by a thread. In the year of Keichō 8 [1603], however, the Great God of Eastern Radiance (Tōshō Daijin 東光大神) was appointed as barbarian-expelling-general (*seii-tai-shōgun* 征夷大將軍, or shogun).⁴¹ He donated the divine territory of one thousand *koku* in estates to our mountain, thereby reviving and expanding it beyond its former state.⁴² As the forty-fifth successor to Gakumon Gyōja, the chief administrator

32 This triple classification of Shinto appears in the second preface of the *Taisei kyō*, attributed to the legendary sixth-century Hata no Kawakatsu 秦河勝.

33 This is another name for Yoshida Shintō, used by Yoshida Kanetomo in his *Yuiitsu Shintō myōbō yōshū* 唯一神道名法要集. For a translation, see Grapard 1992b.

34 Kawachi is located in the eastern part of present-day Osaka Prefecture. Hiraoka Shrine, now written as 枚岡, constituted an important shrine of the imperial cult of Yamato and was managed by the Nakatomi 中臣 clan. Ame no Koyane no Mikoto is regarded as one of its four founding deities.

35 The Inbe clan served alongside the Nakatomi clan as ritualists for the Yamato court.

36 Located in present-day Chiba Prefecture. As Jōin states, Awa Shrine was the family shrine of the Inbe clan. Futodama was considered the founding deity of the shrine.

37 *Sendai kuji hongī*, fasc. 7.

38 The first passage appears in the *Sendai kuji hongī*, fasc. 1 (*Jinnō hongī* 神皇本紀) under the seventh generation of gods. The second passage appears in the second preface of the *Taisei kyō*.

39 Fujiwara no Kamatari 藤原鎌足 (614–669). Exoteric (*ken*) and esoteric (*mitsu*) refer to the term *kenmitsu*, the central paradigm of ritual knowledge in premodern Japanese Buddhism: *ken* as exemplified by the teachings of the *Lotus Sutra* and *mitsu* as esoteric Buddhist rituals and lineage transmissions.

40 Gakumon is the legendary founder of the temples of Togakushi.

41 Jōin refers here to Tokugawa Ieyasu by his posthumous apotheosis (more commonly Tōshō Daigongen 東照大権現).

42 One *koku* represented the amount of rice consumed by one man in a year.

Ken'ei 賢榮 received this territory.⁴³ The forty-sixth-generation chief administrator Eison 榮尊 received the [accompanying] vermilion seal in the seventeenth year of that era [1612].⁴⁴ As a result, Togakushi became a site off-limits to the provincial constable and one that would offer prayers for the eternal stability of the realm under heaven. The mountain came under the supervision of chief administrator Eison, who managed the shrine priests (*shasō* 社僧) and shrine families (*shake* 社家). Its divine territory provided income for the temples.

Furthermore, shrine attendants (*hafuribe* 祝部) of Reisō Shintō from Achi have striven to ensure the utmost security of the state (*kokka* 國家) by presenting ritual scrolls every year.⁴⁵ At this time, they declare in reverence, “The gracious merit of the Great God [of Eastern Radiance] extends as high as the mountains and as deep as the sea. Our mountain truly serves as a paragon of the avatar [of Eastern Radiance’s] divine treasure.”

Reisō Shintō is not only revered in our country as the way of our divine land but also by the people of other countries. Luminous rulers and sage kings who have ushered in periods of historic restoration (*chūkō* 中興) have employed this divine way to govern their countries under heaven. This is what is meant by the following passage from the *I jing*: “When the sage employs the divine way (*shendao* 神道) to establish the way, all under heaven submit.”⁴⁶ Because Japan is the land of the gods (*shinkoku* 神國), the ways of China and India resemble leaves and branches, while our divine way constitutes the trunk and roots. This is the ultimate meaning of [Shugen] Ichijitsu [Reisō] Shintō. As such, the *Origin Account of the Great Avatar of Eastern Radiance* states:

It has been transmitted that long ago, three disks of golden light emerged from the waves of dark and stormy seas. As heaven and earth opened and yin and yang separated, the three disks simultaneously transformed into three radiant divine sages. For this reason, [our country] is the land of the gods. Transmitted from the age of the gods through countless emperors who were each selected for his virtue, [it has been governed by] a single lineage of rulers (*setsurishu* 刹利種; Skt. *ṣṣatriya*) that has yet to be overthrown.⁴⁷ Because their supreme rule can be compared to that of Jambudvīpa (Enbu 閻浮), the land of the sun constitutes the trunk and root while India and China are its leaves and branches.⁴⁸

43 Ken'ei was appointed chief administrator in 1567, three years after Takeda Shingen seized the mountain and surrounding territory (following a series of battles between Shingen and Uesugi Kenshin that destroyed the site). Ken'ei resettled with a group of priests in Echigo (Kenshin's territory) before overseeing the reconstruction of the site under the Tokugawa.

44 Eison was appointed chief administrator from 1604–1612. The vermilion seal, bestowed by Tokugawa Ieyasu, effectively removed Togakushi and its landholdings from the oversight of the *shugo* (provincial constable) and placed it on par with the territory of a *daimyō* or *hatamoto* (shogunal vassal).

45 Although this statement appears to refer to the shrine attendants of Achi, Jōin elsewhere refers to his lineage (and even title) as originating from Achi (based on Omoikane's initial descent there).

46 Although the language varies slightly, this quotation appears in the book of *Guan* of the *I jing*. Chinese Text Project, ctext.org/book-of-changes/guan (Accessed 23 September 2021).

47 Sidestepping the reality of imperial (limited) versus military authority (great) for most of Japan's history, Jōin seems to subtly compare the Minamoto 源 clan (unmentioned but later discussed; and from which the Ashikaga 足利 and Tokugawa claimed descent) with the *ṣṣatriya* class of ancient India, who acted as military rulers.

48 *Tōshō daigongen kana engi* 東照大権現假名縁起, p. 35. Jambudvīpa (full transliteration: Enbudai 閻浮提) is the great continent south of Mount Sumeru in Buddhist cosmology and can represent anything from the Indian subcontinent to the entire human world.

This preface on the divine way was composed by the late emperor Gomizunoo.⁴⁹ It signifies that Japan is the land of the gods because every one of its installed emperors, since the bifurcation of heaven and earth, have descended from Amaterasu Ōmikami. Even though the lineage of Fujiwara heads held the ranks of regent and chancellor, which exceeded all other posts, it was the decree of this divine land that they could not rise to the rank of king.

Even if the royal line deviates by multiple generations, the succession of the imperial throne is not interrupted in terms of the way of this divine land. As such, the twenty-seventh emperor Keitai was a sixth-generation descendant of Emperor Ōjin.⁵⁰ Even though ten generations of emperors passed between the two, all between ruled the land virtuously with compassion, benevolence, and filial piety. For this reason, Keitai received the duties of emperor and was installed at the age of fifty-seven. He ascended to heaven at the age of eighty and became the great luminous god (*daimyōjin* 大明神) of Asuwa 足羽 Shrine in Echizen.⁵¹ That being the case, as Emperor Seiwa's twenty-sixth-generation descendant, the ruling Great Avatar of Eastern Radiance must [also] be a descendant of Amaterasu Ōmikami.⁵² For this reason, he serves the great jewel of the emperor, and through his governance of this country, fulfills the following divine proclamation of Amaterasu:

My descendants must rule this reed plain land of fresh rice stalks for five hundred thousand autumns. Indeed, my grandchildren hereafter will govern it. Based on the loftiness of the jeweled seat [of the emperor], heaven and earth will not suffer.⁵³

This meaning resonates in the following passage from the origin account [of the Great Avatar of Eastern Radiance]:

Among the numerous lineages of the original imperial court, the Minamoto clan, which descended from the fifty-sixth Emperor Mizunoo [Seiwa], have the greatest military strength. For many generations, they protected the ruler and governed the land. Nobly serving the founding deity [Amaterasu] of this remarkable family, the Great God of Eastern Radiance has been highly praised for generations. To expound upon what this means would exhaust the tip of the brush.⁵⁴

Turning to more recent times, the third-generation shogun of the Ashikaga, Yoshimitsu of Rokuon'in 鹿苑院, demonstrated his military authority in Japan and China. For this reason, he achieved illustrious ranks: chief administrator to the two academies of Shōgaku'in 奨學院 and Junna'in 淳和院, leader of the Minamoto clan, barbarian-expelling-general, chancellor of the realm (*daijō daijin* 太政大臣), junior-first rank (*ju ichii* 從一位), *ju sangū* 准三宮,

49 Emperor Gomizunoo 後水尾 (1596–1680, r. 1611–1629).

50 Emperor Keitai 繼體 (early sixth century). Ōjin 應神 is traditionally recognized as the fifteenth emperor of Japan. Here Jōin ascribes to the theory that Keitai was a distant member of the imperial family outside the direct line of emperors.

51 Asuwa Shrine is located today in the city of Fukui.

52 The ninth-century Emperor Seiwa 清和.

53 This famous passage comes from the *Kogo shūi*, pp. 16–17.

54 *Tōshō daigongen kana engi*; TZ 1, p. 35.

kubō 公方, and was presented with the title of dharma emperor (*hōō* 法皇).⁵⁵ As his dying words (*goikun* 御遺訓), this great divine ruler uttered, “A king who balances rank and talent [among his ministers] is one who governs all under heaven.”⁵⁶ Because the two academies of Junna and Shōgaku belonged to Emperor Tenchō, the position [of chief administrator] was appointed by abdicated emperors (*daijō tennō* 太上天皇).⁵⁷ Given these factors, is it not obvious why this descendent of Emperor Seiwa rose to the highest royal post?⁵⁸

It thus goes without saying that after his initiation into Ichijitsu Shintō, the Great Divine Ruler of Eastern Radiance set in place a foundation of sacred bedrock for the security of all under heaven and the prosperity of his descendants. For this reason, [Ieyasu’s site of enshrinement, Tōshōgū] received the imperial designation of *miya* (*gūgō* 宮號) after Ieyasu’s death. The *sansai* 散齋 and *chisai* 致齋 ceremonies were performed there in strict fashion, and the decree for the messenger to bring offerings (*reiheishi* 例幣使) equaled the ceremony at the great divine shrines of Ise.⁵⁹ This proves that [the Great Avatar of Eastern Radiance] will be venerated as a ruling king of this divine land for countless generations to come. As such, the origin account [of the Great Avatar of Eastern Radiance] states:

Our court is comprised of Amaterasu Ōmikami’s descendants. From the time that the imperial child [Ninigi no Mikoto] descended [to earth] to the imperial family’s protection by countless gods to the time when the twenty-two shrines were propitiated, nothing was revered more by the court than the great shrines [of Ise].⁶⁰ Nowadays, the equivalent site is that of the three great avatars of Eastern Radiance.⁶¹

That being the case, long ago when Amaterasu Ōmikami hid in the cave in heaven, Tajikarao no Mikoto opened the cave door to save the Central Kingdom of Bountiful Reed Plains. The Great Divine Ruler of Eastern Radiance now prays to Tajikarao no Mikoto for the security of all under heaven. He exists as the supreme founding deity of the [Tokugawa] rulers of this

55 Shōgaku’in and Junna’in were the two principal educational facilities for court nobility. The post of chief administrator to the academies historically carried symbolic value for heads of the Minamoto clan (Varley 1980, p. 2). Ashikaga Yoshimitsu retired as shogun in 1394 and appointed himself *daijō daijin* (Great Minister of the Council of State). This new title implied authority over both military and nobility. The rank of *ju ichii* was the highest level for courtiers. It was awarded to Yoshimitsu at the age of twenty-two. The title of *ju sangū* was given to members of the immediate imperial family and officials close to the emperor. *Kubō* was an honorific title reserved for the shogun. Finally, the court granted Yoshimitsu the title, *daijō hōō* 太上天皇, denoting the symbolic status of a retired dharma emperor.

56 Original text: 位ト禄トツリ合ヒタル者ヲ王ト云ハ天下ヲ治ル人。Source unclear.

57 Jōin most likely means Emperor Junna 淳和, whose reign ended in the year of Tenchō 天長 10 (833).

58 For a detailed account of Yoshimitsu’s ascent to sovereignty through ritual performance, see chapter 7 of Conlan 2011. By listing the various titles received by Ashikaga Yoshimitsu that connote sovereign status, Jōin argues that Yoshimitsu should be regarded as a king or emperor. Under this logic, Tokugawa Ieyasu should be regarded in the same capacity. In addition, Jōin makes a subtle comparison between Ieyasu and Yoshimitsu by referring to the latter as a great divine ruler, despite never being deified like Ieyasu.

59 As described in the tenth-century *Engi shiki* 延喜式, the *sansai* and *chisai* were performed prior to the Daijōsai 大嘗祭. The *sansai* constituted a month-long period of partial abstinence on the part of the new emperor. The *chisai* was carried out in the final three days leading up to and including the day of the Daijōsai, whereupon strict abstinence was performed by everyone participating in the ceremony (Bock 1990, p. 30). Both rituals declined in the fourteenth century but were later revived in the Meiji period.

60 For background on the imperial cult of the twenty-two shrines, see Grapard 1988.

61 *Tōshō daigongen kana engi*, p. 35. The three avatars (*gongen*) refer to the Tōshō Daigongen, Sannō Daigongen 山王大権現, and Matarajin 摩多羅神 at Nikkō.

divine land. Even if one were to suggest that this differs from other ages, the authority and virtue of this numinous deity (*reijin* 靈神) unites all past and present affairs under heaven.

A transcription of the Vermillion Seal (*goshuin* 御朱印):

The Divine Territory of Mount Togakushi

Kurita Mura 栗田村, Nijō 二條, and Kamikusugawa 上楠川 of the Minochi district in the land of Shinano—a combined stipend of 200 *koku*—have been previously gifted. Ueno Mura 上野村, Shimokusugawa 下楠川 of Tochiwara Mura 栃原村, Uwahara 宇和原, Narao 奈良尾—a combined 800 *koku*—are further advanced. Under a total allotment of 1,000 *koku*, the chief administrator will receive 500 *koku*, the shrine priests will receive 300 *koku*, and the shrine families will receive 200 *koku*. All temples, shrines and received territory outside of the temple gates shall not be entered by the *shugo* and is permanently off-limits to unaffiliated persons.

Keichō 17 [1612], fifth month, first day. Seal [of Tokugawa Ieyasu]

Regulations for Mount Togakushi:

Item 1: Priests of the three temples of Kenkōji 顯光寺 who have not received initiation (*kanjō* 灌頂) will not be granted permission to reside in the sub-temples. As an exception, those residing on the mountain who virtuously labored in its restoration will be permitted to remain for one generation.

Item 2: Even if a disciple receives a sub-temple from his master, he will be investigated if his conduct violates the rules. If he is ultimately exposed of a crime, he will be expelled from the temple.

Item 3: The act of carrying out the tasks of one sub-temple by another is forbidden altogether.

Item 4: Repairs to a temple's ritual implements or temple grounds requires permission from the main temple [of the chief administrator].

Item 5: Rogue priests who form alliances or factions that establish unauthorized protocol will be immediately expelled.

The above articles are to be observed in strict accordance.

Keichō 17, fifth month, first day. Seal [of Tokugawa Ieyasu]

Turning to another subject, the transmission of initiation at Kenkōji of the great Mount Togakushi has been passed from master to student for generations of chief administrators, dating back to En no Gyōja. All annual festivals have been practiced on the basis of the Dharma. Our divine hall (*shinden* 神殿) holds the single-scrolled *Transmitted Account* (*Ruki* 流記) of Gakumon Gyōja, the single-scrolled *Regulations [for rituals] in the Mountains* (*Buchū hōssoku* 峯中法則), and the *Secret Teachings of the Thirty-Three Transmissions* (*Sanjūsan tsūki no hiketsu* 三十三通記之秘訣). All are treated as sacred treasures.⁶² Inside is [also] the following certificate of

62 The first text refers to the *Togakushisan Kenkōji ruki*, which describes the origins of Togakushi. The second text is another name for the *Sanbu sōjō hōsoku mikki* 三峰相承法則密記, compiled by Akyūbō Sokuden. The third text was compiled by Akyūbō's predecessors at Mount Hiko. According to Jōin's *Togakushisan shinryō ki* (ST 59, *Jinja ben* 24, p. 402), Akyūbō transmitted the two latter texts to Togakushi's head clerics in 1524 (Daiei 大永 4).

transmission [of rituals conducted] in the two-realm mountains (*ryōkaizan buchū injin* 兩界山峯中印信), which verifies our dharma lineage.⁶³

Certificate for Peak Entry (*nyūbu inshō jō* 入峯印證狀)⁶⁴

Kenkōji, Mount Togakushi, Land of Shinano

The twofold Womb and Diamond pure land and the ten-realm *maṇḍalas* coexist on this mountain. At this time, Gizōbō Eikei 義藏房榮快 has entrusted himself to the *daisendatsu* 大先達 Akyūbō in undertaking the rituals of peak entry (*nyūbu shugyō* 入峯修行).⁶⁵ They entail the movement from seed to fruit, from fruit to seed, and that of neither fruit nor seed, among other initiatory rites.⁶⁶ These rituals trace back to our lofty founder En the Layman (En *ubasoku* 役優婆塞; Skt. En *upāsaka*) and have been transmitted through [esoteric] initiations in the mountains (*buchū kanjō* 峯中灌頂) through *mudrā* and *mantra* from teacher to student. They are now received in their entirety. Truly, this [transmission] is based on the mystical virtue of the bodhisattva Nāgārjuna and is the reward of En no Gyōja's vow. Moreover, the peak entries of successive generations of *sendatsu* will confirm this certification.

Daiei 4 [1524], third month, day of birth.⁶⁷

Received by Eikei, forty-third chief administrator of Mount Togakushi.

This confirms the luminous transmission from the *daisendatsu* Akyūbō of the numinous mountain of Hiko. Seal [of Akyūbō].

Now, the regulations for initiation at this mountain were established by En no Gyōja. They are based on the worldly laws of the wheel-turning sage kings (*tenrin jōō*; Skt. *cakravartin*), as exemplified in scriptures such as the *Flower Garland Sutra* and the *Golden Light Sutra*. These esoteric teachings have been transmitted by *mudrā* and *mantra* through the successive generations of *sendatsu* 先達 who have relied on them. The section on Correct Reasoning (*Shōron hin* 正論品) of the *Golden Light Sutra* states:

In the past there was a king named Rikison Sō 力尊相 who had a son he named Shinsō 信相. It was not long before [the son] was to receive initiation, which would allow him to rule the country. At that time, his father the king said to Prince Shinsō, “In the world, there is correct reasoning, by which one effectively governs the country. When I was prince, it was not long before I too succeeded my father as king. At that time, my father, who grasped this correct reasoning, explained it to me. On the basis of this

63 The term *injin* refers to *mudrā*, hand signs (*in* 印), and *mantra*, true words (*shin* 信), secretly transmitted through esoteric Buddhist rituals. By extension, it refers to a certificate recording the transmission of this esoteric knowledge, verifying the passage of a dharma lineage from master to student. As such, Jōin claims here the existence of a document proving that Shugendō peak entry rituals were transmitted from Mount Hiko to Togakushi and performed there in the mountains of Takatsuma and Ototsuma.

64 The blank form for this document appears in Akyūbō's *Shugen shūyō hiketsu* (p. 397b). Jōin was familiar with this work, suggesting a possible source for him.

65 A *daisendatsu*, roughly meaning “great mountain guide,” is a high-ranking position in Shugendō.

66 These three movements refer to the three seasonal peak entries at Mount Hiko: spring (seed to fruit: symbolic of the path to awakening), autumn (fruit to seed: the reverse direction by which bodhisattvas descend into the world to help others), and summer (neither seed nor fruit: symbolic of the nonduality between either direction).

67 The completion of these rituals and this transmission symbolized Eikei's birth into this lineage.

reasoning, I have [established] effective governance of the country for the next twenty thousand years.”⁶⁸

The *Flower Garland Sutra* states:

The crown prince, born from a wheel-turning sage king, has as his mother the proper empress, and his body is in complete form. The wheel-turning king orders the prince to mount the white elephant on a saddle made of jewels and marvelous gold, hang great curtains, raise a great dharma banner (*hōban* 法幡), burn incense and scatter flowers, have various forms of music played, take the water of the four great seas and put them in a golden vase. The king takes the vase and pours it over the prince’s head. At this moment, he receives the rank and duty of king, and his name is counted among the [class of] consecrated rulers. His abilities are complete, he practices the ten good ways, and moreover, he is referred to as a wheel-turning sage king.⁶⁹

One can see from these passages that the transmission of initiation originally sanctioned the succession of wheel-turning sage kings who would govern the state under heaven. Thus, it must be that this ceremony was conducted in Japan since the age of the gods.

The [Fujiwara] family of regents has stated that the great affair of worshipping the heavenly gods and earthly deities in the Great Feast of Enthronement (*Daijōe* 大嘗會) and the great affair of the enthronement initiation (*sokui no kanjō* 即位の灌頂) have been transmitted since the age of the gods. This explanation from the family of ritual specialists is to be truly trusted.

The *Abhidharmakośa* refers to the Celestial Worthy (Tenson 天尊) as a wheel-turning king.⁷⁰ Among the scriptures of the other country [China], the *Lingbao zhutian lingshu duming miaojing* 靈寶諸天靈書度命妙經 states:

The Celestial Worthy said, “Those who can serve him will have seven generations of ancestors [re-]born in heaven, and the wheel-turning sage kings will, generation upon generation, never cease.”⁷¹

Does this not make the seven generations of heavenly gods and five generations of earth gods [of Japanese antiquity]—all of whom are celestial worthies (*ama no mikoto*

68 *Konkōmyō kyō*, T 16, no. 663, p. 346, c24–29.

69 *Kegon kyō*, T 10, no. 279, p. 206, a20–25.

70 The *Abhidharmakośa* uses the term *tenson* in the following context:

The golden-wheel [king] greets all kings of small countries who make this request: “Our lands are broad, rich and fertile. They are peaceful and pleasant with multitudes of people. We ask [you,] Heaven-honored one, to foster and command us. We all call on the support of [you,] Heaven-honored one.” (T 29, no. 1558, p. 65, a27–29)

71 The passage is actually taken from the *Bianzheng lun* 辯正論 (*Benshōron*, T 52, no. 2110, p. 543, a22–23), a text by Falin 法琳 (572–640) that rebuts a Daoist attack against Buddhism. In it, Falin quotes from the *Lingbao zhutian lingshu duming miaojing*, no longer extant.

天尊)—wheel-turning sage kings?⁷² Arriving at the age of men, the *Shūgaishō* 拾芥抄 and the *Genkō shakusho* 元亨釋書 among other texts refer to Japan's sovereign as a “golden-wheel sage king.” As such, the divine way of other countries must be based on that of our divine country. In addition, the *Taishang xiangong qingwen jing* 太上仙公請問經 states, “A royal family which produces kings for generation after generation is referred to as a ‘wheel-turning sage king family’ and ultimately enters the path of perfected transcendents (*shinsen* 眞仙).”⁷³ The scripture of the other country [China] constitutes 3,957 fascicles. Known as the *Storehouse of the Way* (*Daozang jing* 道藏經), the Song emperor Zhenzong also named it the Comprehensive Register of Precious Literature (*Baowen tonglu* 寶文統錄) in his preface to it.⁷⁴ It has not yet crossed [the seas to our country].

According to the *Flower Garland Sutra*, the treasure of the white elephant is the greatest of the seven treasures of the sage king. Han Feizi 韓子 remarked, “The elephant is the great animal of the south. It is not known in the Central Kingdom, but one can see them in illustrations.”⁷⁵ Even though kings are obviously not born in the Central Kingdom, if a ruler of sagely virtue brings about universal subjugation to the four [surrounding regions of] barbarians and his tribute arrives without impediment across ten thousand leagues of blue sea, is [this tribute] not referred to as the treasure of a wheel[turning] king?⁷⁶

During the Ōei 応永 period [1394–1428], when black elephants and parrots were received from southern barbarians (*nanban* 南蠻) as tribute, the military virtue of Lord Yoshimitsu permeated widely across Chinese and barbarian (*kai* 華夷) lands.⁷⁷ The great Ming emperor Jianwen referred to him in writing as King Minamoto Michiyoshi 源道義 of the country of Japan.⁷⁸ Yoshimitsu was such a luminous ruler that Emperor Chengzu composed an elegy in which he referred to him posthumously as a reverential tributary king (*kyōken'ō* 恭猷王).⁷⁹ Is this not similar to the Iron-Turning King (*tetsurin'ō* 鐵輪王), who rules all countries of the southern region of the central four continents of Mount Sumeru?⁸⁰

72 Jōin glosses 天尊 in Japanese (*ama no mikoto*) in order to equate Japan's gods with Celestial Worthies (*tianzun* 天尊), a term that typically refers to a trinity of primordial gods in the highest realm of the Daoist pantheon. While the term can be used to refer to the Buddha (lit. as “one honored by devas”), Jōin's usage reflects the Daoist rendering. He equates the two groups of deities because both played cosmogenic roles and perhaps because this conflation places Japan's gods on par with those of the central kingdom of China.

73 This is also taken from the *Bianzheng lun* (T 52, no. 2110, p. 543, b16–18), which credits Laozi as the source of this quote.

74 The *Baowen tonglu* was commissioned by Song emperor Zhenzong 眞宗.

75 Han Feizi was a legalist philosopher of the Chinese Warring States period.

76 Here Jōin acknowledges the distinction between the title of emperor (*huangdi*), designated for the ruler of the Middle Kingdom, and king (*wang*), given to heads of allied or alien foreign states.

77 From the late Muromachi to the Edo periods, *nanban* referred to the area of present-day southeast Asia (*Dejitaru daijisen*, s.v. 南蛮). By extension, the term was applied to Portuguese and Spanish visitors to Japan (coming from the south) in the sixteenth century. It is unclear here to whom Jōin is referring. Exotic animals, including elephants and parrots, were among the items the Portuguese brought in trade, but this activity began in the mid-sixteenth century, long after Yoshimitsu's rule (Joaquim 2017, p. 43).

78 Emperor Jianwen famously addressed Yoshimitsu as “Your subject, Minamoto, King of Japan” in a letter of invitation to commence trade relations as a tributary state of the Ming dynasty, which Yoshimitsu accepted (Hall and Toyoda 1977, pp. 163–165; Conlan 2011, pp. 172–173).

79 Emperor Chengzu 成祖, also known as Yongle, was the third emperor of the Ming dynasty.

80 In Buddhist cosmology, the Iron-Turning King rules over the southern continent of Jambudvīpa, and is one of four wheel-turning kings (the others being gold, silver, and copper).

Turning to another subject, the Vinaya teachings for initiation rites consist of the four grave offenses and the ten good precepts.⁸¹ The *Mahāvairocana Sutra* states:

There are the four grave crimes (*shi harai* 四波羅夷, Skt. *pārājika*) that are crucial to the causes and conditions of one's life. Do not commit these crimes. What are the four? Slandering the Dharma, discarding the aspiration for awakening, possessing greed, and harming living beings. Why? These inclinations are impure and do not maintain the *bodhisattva* precepts.⁸²

The commentary of the heavenly master Yixing states: “As for these four precepts, it is as if after having received them, one is shown an abbreviated form of the [entire] precepts. You must know that these are the four grave offenses in the secret repository [of Mahāvairocana's teachings].”⁸³ The ten good precepts (*jū zenkai* 十善戒) were enacted into law by the kings of India. In Japan, when we call the emperor the “ruler of the ten good” (*jū zen no kimi* 十善ノ君), it refers to this.

Now turning to the office of the chief administrator, the title of chief administrator originally applied to one of four managerial posts. Pronounced in Japanese as *kami*, it was the highest-ranking position [of the four posts] and oversaw the management of all affairs. The *Shokugen* 職原 states: “The orders of the chief administrator constitute government orders. Since ancient times, they have accorded with imperial decrees and thus are respected by all under heaven. A violation of them constitutes a disobedience of an imperial decree.”⁸⁴ This statement means that because the orders of the chief administrator are the orders of the government, they are sanctioned in the name of the emperor. For this reason, they are equivalent to imperial orders. Taking this into account, all under heaven treat the post of chief administrator with obeisance. An instance that violates his policies is a criminal act and equal to disobedience of an imperial decree. Because there is a chief administrator for the office of criminal affairs (*kebij shi no bettō* 檢非違使ノ別當) for issues of this sort, officials outside [of this office] also advance such [criminal cases]. The gravity of the office of the chief administrator should be understood in terms of this context.

That being the case, the position of chief administrator of temples and shrines has also been appointed since ancient times. All affairs fall under the jurisdiction of the chief administrator, given that the office of the chief administrator is appointed by the imperial court and shogunate. Those fellows who, without appointment, privately call themselves chief administrators are not even worth mention.

The chief administrator of the shrines of state-sponsored temples originally began as a secular position. According to the *Record of Abbots of the Sanmon* [branch of Tendai Buddhism] (*Sanmon no zasu ki* 山門ノ座主記):

81 The four *pārājika* are the most serious offenses a monk or nun can commit and can lead to expulsion from the sangha. The ten good precepts, intended for lay followers of Mahayana, are aimed at promoting wholesome behavior: not to kill, steal, commit adultery, lie, speak harshly, divisively, or idly; not to be greedy, angry, or have wrong views.

82 *Mahāvairocana sūtra*, T 18, no. 848, p. 40, a12–15.

83 Yixing 一行 (684–727). Jōin cites his *Da piluzhena chengfo jing shu* 大毘盧遮那成佛經疏 (T 39, no. 1796, p. 671, a9–10).

84 The *Shokugen shō* 職原抄 is a medieval text that outlines administrative duties for government officials.

On the third day of the third month of Kōnin 弘仁 14 [823], the Fujiwara courtier and Middle Councilor (*chūnagon* 中納言) Mimori and the Middle Controller of the Right (*uchūben* 右中辨) Ōtomo no Sukune Kunimichi were placed as chief administrators of the temple [of Enryakuji] by imperial decree. From that time forward, the Minister of the Left was installed as controller (*kengyō* 檢校) and either the Major Controller of the Left (*sadaiben* 左大辨) or Senior Recorder of the Left (*sadaishi* 左大史) were installed as chief administrators.⁸⁵

The *Isshin kaimon* 一心戒文 also states, “The Fujiwara minister (*daijin* 大臣), Chief Councilor (*dainagon* 大納言) Yoshimine and Imperial Advisor (*sangi* 参議) [Ōtomo no] Sukune appointed the chief administrator of Enryakuji to manage the Buddhist matters at the foot of Mount [Hiei].”⁸⁶ As for the Buddhist affairs at the foot of the mountain, Hiyoshi Shrine carries out dharma assemblies.

The *Jingi dō bukki ryō* 神祇道服忌令 lists Hachiman 八幡, Hiyoshi 日吉, Gion 祇園, Kitano 北野, Imamiya 今宮, and Goryō 御霊 as shrines that are managed by temples.⁸⁷ For this reason, we can assume that the position of chief administrator for temple-shrine complexes began with them. Now let us consider some examples of chief administrators of the great shrines. When the retired emperor Shirakawa made his sovereign pilgrimage to Kumano, he asked if the mountain had a chief administrator.⁸⁸ When informed there was not, he was aghast. He called for the appointment of one, summoning the Ui ウイ [宇井] and Suzuki families. When the avatar from the land of Magadha flew over to our country, it was [the ancestors of] them who comprised its two wings.⁸⁹ At that time, the territory of Kumano was managed autonomously without civilized oversight. Right after [the avatar landed], a *yamabushi* in seclusion appeared before it to offer flowers. When Suzuki suggested that he become chief administrator, the *yamabushi* [accepted, though humbly] replying, “My talents are insufficient.” This was the start of the tenure of Kyōshin 教真 as chief administrator. The position of chief administrator was to be passed down [patrilineally] for generations, so he could no longer remain an itinerant (*hijiri* 聖). He made inquiries regarding a wife. The court lady Tatsutahara タツタハラ [立田腹], daughter of Tameyoshi, was chosen as especially suitable for Kyōshin.⁹⁰ Kyōshin placed his five sons at the five sites of Hongū 本宮, Shingū 新宮, Nachi 那智, Wakata 若田, and Tanabe 田邊. As his last request, Kyōshin stated that the eldest one should succeed him. At that time, Tanzō 湛増 of Tanabe was the eldest, so he became the next chief administrator. Because Kyōshin was a descendant of the lieutenant general (*chūjō* 中將) Sanekata 實方, the executive administrative

85 Jōin is most likely referencing the *Tendai zasu ki* 天台座主記. The two figures mentioned are Fujiwara no Mimori 藤原三守 (785–840) and Ōtomo no Sukune Kunimichi 大伴宿禰國道 (768–828). Together they held the first appointments of “secular chief administrator” (*zoku bettō* 俗別當) to Enryakuji.

86 Yoshimine no Yasuyo 良岑安世 (785–830). Jōin’s source is the *Denjutsu isshin kaimon* 傳述一心戒文, edited by Kōjō 光定 (779–858), 3 fasc.

87 The *Jingi dō bukki ryō* (Administrative code for divine mourning) was enacted by the shogunate in 1684.

88 Emperor Shirakawa 白河 (1053–1129; r. 1072–1086).

89 Magadha was one of the sixteen ancient kingdoms of the Indian subcontinent.

90 Minamoto no Tameyoshi 源為義 (1096–1156).

(*shugyō bettō* 執行別當) [temple] at Nachi was named Jippōin 實方院 [by Tanzō].⁹¹ This is confirmed in its entirety in the *Taiheiki tsurugi no maki*.⁹²

[According to the lineage chart of Iwashimizu Hachimangū 石清水八幡宮] Enjō was the first chief administrator of Hachiman Iwashimizu on Otokoyama.⁹³ His son Ryōjō held the offices of chief ritualist (*kannushi*) and chief administrator.⁹⁴ Ryōjō's son Shōsei held the offices of dharma master (*hōin*), controller (*kengyō*), and chief administrator, where he managed the temple site for eleven years.⁹⁵ He was the first person to be appointed dharma master in our country, and since then, his descendants have flourished.⁹⁶ Now situated at Zenpōji 善法寺, Shin Zenpōji 新善法寺, and Tanaka Zenpōji 田中善法寺, they all advanced to the positions of dharma master and high priest (*daisōzu* 大僧都).⁹⁷ Long ago, the daughter of the Zenpōji dharma master Tsūshō 通清 became the mother of Lord Yoshimitsu of Rokuon'in. Through this marital connection, Tsūshō gained the alliance of the shogunate. This history is all revealed in the great lineage chart [of Iwashimizu Hachimangū].

In the cases of the executive chief administrator (*shugyō bettō* 執行別當) of Gion and Shōbai'in 松梅院 of Kitano, the combined offices of chief administrator and shrine officiant (*jimu* 寺務) have been passed down through the ages. As for Mount Hiko in the district of Buzen 豊前, a single lineage has been transmitted all the way back to En no Gyōja. This dharma lineage is shared by Togakushi and Hiko, having been transmitted at both mountains through rituals of initiation since ancient times.⁹⁸ Allow me to expound on the details surrounding it.

Emperor Go-Fushimi's sixth son Jokō *shinnō* was the first to hold the position of head priest (*zasu* 座主) at Mount Hiko.⁹⁹ He was originally titled Chōjō *shinnō* 長助親王 during his time at Enman'in 圓滿院 of Miidera 三井寺.¹⁰⁰ When he was later appointed head priest of Mount Hiko, he transmitted the dharma teachings of that mountain. His descendants

91 Fujiwara no Sanekata 藤原實方 (d. 998).

92 This extended account, taken from the *Taiheiki tsurugi no maki* (better known simply as *Taiheiki*), contains a number of historical inaccuracies. Shirakawa's visits to Kumano extended from 1090 to 1128. On his first visit, he established the office of controller for the three major shrine-temple complexes of Kumano (*Kumano sanzō kengyō* 熊野三山檢校) (the three sites already had their own respective administrators). This position was held concurrently with the office of chief priest (*chōri* 長吏) of Onjōji. Zōyō 增譽 (1032–1116), Shirakawa's guide to Kumano and the chief priest of Onjōji, was appointed by Shirakawa as the first controller of the Kumano *sanzō*. Furthermore, Lady Tatsutahara (alt. Torii zenni 鳥居禪尼) was married to the nineteenth administrator of Shingū. Kyōshin does not appear in the administrator lineage chart (Miyake 1990).

93 Enjō 延晟 (d. 933). Iwashimizu Hachiman (Jōin writes the name in reverse order) is located in present-day Kyoto. Historically, it was also referred to as Otokoyama Hachiman.

94 Ryōjō 良常 (d. 982). The shrine's lineage chart lists him as the first secular administrator of the shrine. After him, there appear to be offices for both administrator and secular administrator.

95 Shōsei 聖清 (d. 1013). *Hōin*, abbreviated from *hōin daisōhō i* 法印大和尚位, was awarded by the court and was the highest rank for a priest at the time.

96 According to Nakamura 1975 (1496c, s.v. 法印), Shinga 真雅 (801–879), disciple of Kūkai, was the first priest to receive this rank in 864.

97 The Tanaka and Zenpōji branches of the shrine emerged in the late twelfth century as the shrine complex expanded (*Kokushi daijiten*, s.v. 石清水八幡宮).

98 The one recorded instance of this transmission between the two mountains is Sokuden's transmission of the Certificate for Peak Entry to Eikei in 1524, noted by Jōin above.

99 Emperor Go-Fushimi 後伏見 (1288–1336, r. 1298–1301).

100 This is Chōjō *bōshinnō* 長助法親王 (1320–1361). The origins of Jōin's reference to Jokō *shinnō* 助康親王 are unclear.

have the character *yū* 有 in their names, a feature that has continued down to the present.¹⁰¹ In recent times, they have held the position of abbot (*monshu* 門主) of Nikkō. During the Tenshō 天正 years [1573–1592], the head priest Shun'yū 舜有 had daughters but no sons, so he adopted the third son of the chief councilor Lord Terusuke 耀資 of Hino and named him Chūyū 忠有.¹⁰² Chūyū also had only daughters, so he adopted the second son of Lord Iwakura Tomotaka and named him Yūshō 有清.¹⁰³ Yūshō's son was named Ryōyū 亮有. Ryōyū's son was Kōyū 廣有, and Kōyū's son was Sōyū 相有. Over the generations priests ranked as *sōjō* 僧正 and *daisōzu* [have served at Hiko].

As for our mountain of Togakushi, it was originally restored by Gakumon Gyōja during the reign of Emperor Ninmyō.¹⁰⁴ Since he undertook the post of chief administrator, it has been sustained for fifty-five generations, or over 870 years. The order of succession for the position of chief administrator is recorded in the [*Togakushisan*] *Shinryō ki* 神領記 and the lineage chart and thus is omitted here.¹⁰⁵

Ichijitsu Shintō truly constitutes the virtue (*dōtoku* 道德) of the heavenly deities (*tenson* 天尊). In order to govern oneself as well as govern the country, nothing is more essential than petitioning them for eternal stability between heaven and earth. In praying for good fortune, nothing surpasses the benefits of softening their light in order to mingle with the dust (*wakō dōjin*). For this reason, we perform ceremonies and make offerings (*saishō* 齋醮) before the gods and chant the *Daode jing*.¹⁰⁶ In prostration, we solemnly pray for the peace of all under heaven, for the security of the state, for treasures that bring enduring prosperity, for lasting fortune from heaven, for the five grains to reach maturity, for abundance and ease among the people, for harmony between yin and yang, and for continuity between heaven and earth.

Jōin, fifty-fifth chief administrator of Mount Togakushi, shrine official (*shashoku* 社職), and high priest of Kanjuin 勧修院.

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- ST *Shintō taikei* 神道大系. 120 vols. Shintō Taiei Hensankai, 1977–1994.
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101 Chōjo himself was given the dharma name, Joyū 助有 (*Nihon jinmei daijiten*, s.v. 長助法親王).

102 The chief councilor is Hino Terusuke 日野輝資 (1555–1623).

103 This is Iwakura Tomotaka 岩倉具堯 (d. 1633).

104 Emperor Ninmyō 仁明 (808–850, r. 833–850).

105 Both texts were compiled by Jōin. The list of administrators begins with the origin gods of Japan and continues up to the thirty-third administrator, Kanjō 寛清.

106 The term *saishō* (Ch. *zaijiao*) was used in Tang-period Daoist ceremonies (*zai*) that involved the purification of a ritual space and communication with supreme deities, followed by sacrificial offerings (*jiao*) presented to subordinate gods who assisted the priests (Andersen 2008). In this case, Jōin is most likely referring to Japan's pantheon of deities.

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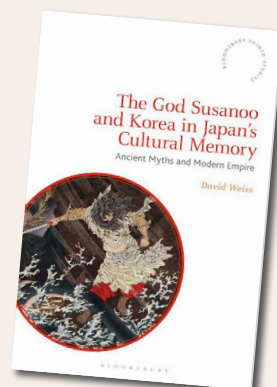
BOOK REVIEW

The God Susanoo and Korea in Japan's Cultural Memory: Ancient Myths and Modern Empire

By David Weiss

Bloomsbury Academic, 2022
ix + 243 pages.

Reviewed by Mark E. CAPRIO



From ancient times, a people's mythology has served the useful purpose of providing explanations for the inexplicable—the origins of peoples and objects as well as the “whys” behind otherwise incomprehensible phenomena. Myths are used to inject logic into the illogical. In recent times the function of these colorful stories has been replaced by scientific inquiry as a means to understanding such phenomena, rendering myths as little more than entertaining stories. They are obviously problematic when used to justify the political actions of a particular people over another. This, David Weiss shows, is what occurred in Japan, where people exploited such stories to explain their colonization of the Korean Peninsula from 1910 onwards.

Weiss describes his study as tracing “the role myths and legends surrounding Susanoo played in Japanese intellectual history from the ancient to the modern period ... As early as the medieval period, Susanoo was regarded as a ‘foreign’ deity who had come to the Japanese archipelago from the Asian mainland” (p. 2). Weiss looks at a wide range of ancient texts, as well as secondary interpretations of these texts, for the connections they made between archipelago and peninsula. Among these, he finds the *Nihon shoki* (720) and the *Izumo fudoki* (733) invoked more often than the *Kojiki* (712), which focuses more on domestic-centered stories than those foreign to Japan (p. 89). In Weiss's telling, Susanoo embodies the threatening role that Japanese saw the Korean Peninsula as having vis-à-vis Japan from even before the nineteenth century, as a base for military invasion or as a source of epidemics (pp. 21–22).

Weiss's analysis of this complicated issue is thorough and entertaining, yet at the same time disturbing. Susanoo is the mischievous younger brother of Japan's mythical creator, Amaterasu. The *Kojiki* accuses Susanoo of wreaking havoc on the fields that his sister had sowed in the spring: “He filled in the ditches, destroyed the sluices and the divisions between” the fields. “In autumn, when the grain was ripe, he stretched ropes around the fields, claiming them as his property, or he let horses loose in the fields.” As his sister was about to taste the new rice “he defecated inside the New Palace” that had been built especially for the tasting (p. 56). Indeed, this “trickster” is considered to be Amaterasu's antithesis, a marginal god who took charge of the *ne no kumi*, the underworld (p. 54), and frightened his sister into a cave, thus shrouding the world in darkness (p. 50). Weiss's study

details how “Japanese myths justified the colonial order by contrasting a corrupt, impure, and sinister Korea with the shining Japanese metropole ... Susanoo played a central role in this process” (p. 146).

In the colonial period, Japanese portrayed the Korean people as their not-so-distant cousins, as a people that once shared familial branches with them. Susanoo was considered an important part of this connection; indeed, according to some, he was identical or related to Korea’s ancient legendary first king, Tan’gun (p. 149). Japanese scholars reasoned that in earlier days “deities travelled to and fro.” Waseda University historian Kume Kunitake, for example, argued that Susanoo no Mikoto, along with his son Itakeru no Kami, crossed over to Japan from the ancient Korean kingdom of Silla (p. 159). Weiss quotes the *Nihon shoki* as stating that during the “Age of Gods” Susanoo declared that he no longer wanted to “stay in this land [Korea],” before he built a boat from clay to cross the seas that separated the two lands (p. 91). This mythical link justified Japanese claims that their “assimilation policy” (*dōka seisaku*) was nothing more than a natural return to the distant past, when the two peoples enjoyed similar roots.

Weiss draws attention to Eric Hobsbawm and Terrence Ranger’s “invention of tradition” in his discussion on the evolution of the Susanoo myth over the centuries.¹ He finds this idea useful for highlighting that “traditions are selectively ‘fashioned from both material and discursive antecedents’” (p. 19). The Japanese reinvention of this mythology following the 1868 Meiji Restoration particularly complicated matters. Weiss succeeds in showing just how complicated such an inquiry can become as he unscrambles interpretations of these stories that debated the location of places mentioned in these texts, how gods of different names were actually seen as the same deity, as well as how they are to be interpreted. In tracing numerous renditions of the Susanoo myth over the long term, he identifies how the interpretations of scholars differed from their contemporaries, and from other invocations of Susanoo in the past. However, these twists and turns make Weiss’s flow at times difficult to follow, a problem that might have been partially eased had the author included a glossary of the different gods and the alternate names by which they are associated. Weiss does note on occasion that Susanoo’s role on the margins is not unique to Japanese mythology, but also found in other mythologies, such as Norse stories (pp. 64, 69), an interesting point to which he might have devoted more attention.

David Weiss’s *The God Susanoo and Korea in Japan’s Cultural Memory* represents a careful analysis of rather complex issues, complicated by the different interpretations that the stories have assumed over the centuries. I would have liked to have seen more attention directed toward connections made around the early twentieth century, when Japan absorbed Korea into its empire. The author does note that the Japanese media frequently drew on the Susanoo myth as justification for their country’s absorption of Korea, but a few more tangible examples would have been welcomed. That said, Weiss’s discussions on the links that Japanese made between the gods, and the connections they invented with their neighbors’ ancient history, are interesting, informative, and convincing. For this reason alone, *The God Susanoo and Korea* belongs on the reading list of any initiative that concentrates attention on Korea and Japan’s historical relations, and particularly Japan’s colonization of, and subsequent policies toward, the Korean Peninsula and its people.

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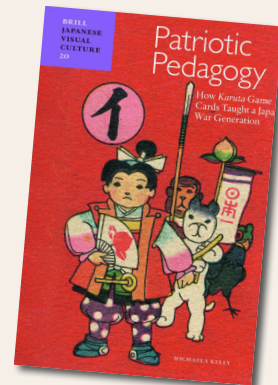
BOOK REVIEW

Patriotic Pedagogy: How Karuta Game Cards Taught a Japanese War Generation

By Michaela Kelly

Brill, 2022
224 pages.

Reviewed by Peter CAVE



In this beautifully produced volume, Michaela Kelly introduces twenty-three sets of *karuta* game cards, the vast majority produced during the 1931–1945 period that is often called the Fifteen Years War in Japan. Through detailed analysis of the words and pictures on the cards, she explicates the largely imperialistic and war-focused messages they communicated to the children (and adults) who used them. She also contextualizes the cards in relation to the *karuta* tradition in Japan, other media aimed at children in the period, and educational movements in Taishō and early Shōwa. In so doing, she makes a valuable contribution to understanding adult attempts to shape the worlds of twentieth-century Japanese children.

The book is composed of a prologue and introduction, four chapters, and an epilogue. Chapter 1 briefly introduces the history and use of *karuta* cards. Chapter 2 shows how teachers and educationalists developed *karuta* as a pedagogical tool after World War I. This is placed within the context of the development of Japanese education, pedagogy, and views of childhood from Meiji through to World War II. The chapter points to the increasing dominance of the state-centered view of children as “little citizens” (*shōkokumin*) as war intensified, and the corresponding efforts to shape children in this mold. Chapter 3 frames wartime *karuta* as “educational propaganda,” comparing them with manga of the same period, such as the popular *Norakuro* series about a dog who has comic adventures in a company of canine soldiers. Kelly analyzes texts and images from different *karuta* sets to explicate the (stereotyped) identities they portray: the superiority and beneficence of imperializing Japan, the soldier as an ideal, the ridiculous inferiority of Japan’s (mainly Chinese) enemies, and the good child citizen. Chapter 4 elaborates further on particular themes in wartime *karuta*: gender roles, the training-accented understanding of education encapsulated in the wartime term *rensei* 錬成, and the portrayal of Japan, its colonies, and the wider world. The chapter also discusses the new anthology of *One Hundred Patriotic Poems* (*Aikoku hyakunin isshu*) produced by the government-backed Japanese Literature Patriotic Association in 1942 in imitation of the traditional *Ogura hyakunin isshu*. Kelly explains how the anthology was produced, and analyzes the poem selection, including detailed analysis of particular poems. The epilogue sums up the findings of the study and provides some interesting contemporary examples of *karuta* being used for educational and

propagandistic purposes, such as inspiring interest in local dialects or Japan's claims to the four southernmost Kuril Islands.

Besides the lavish color illustrations of cards that are analyzed, the book also contains five "interleaf" sections, covering over fifty pages in all. Each provides a color reproduction of an entire *karuta* set (or in one case, syllabary blocks). These provide a wonderful resource for both research and teaching. Many of the cards in the book are held in the archives of Lafayette College, Pennsylvania.¹

This is a work of meticulous scholarship, which provides a fascinating window into significant and little-studied cultural artifacts, and in so doing, illuminates attempts to shape the worlds of children in imperial Japan. I would like to suggest some points that I think it raises for further consideration.

First, near the end of the book (pp. 180–181), Kelly rightly notes that the main market for these mostly high quality and so relatively expensive cards would have been better-off families, especially in urban areas. This helps to explain why cards tend to depict civilians wearing decidedly middle-class apparel. I would further suggest that the cards portray what might be called an ideal of "imperial modernity." Japan is presented as a land of empire, but also of modernity—of cars, trains, planes, warships, uniformed schoolchildren, modern buildings, education, and organizations. Indeed, empire and modernity are presented as a seamless whole.

A second point is the question of how unusual Japan was in portraying empire positively. Kelly does provide some international contextualization for the use of children's games in relation to war, but such comparisons could be extended. There is a significant amount of scholarship on the favorable presentation of the British Empire in the nineteenth-thirties, for example, including not only by British but also Hollywood cinema.² Was Japan abnormal among imperial nations?

The third point centers on the relationship between education and propaganda. Kelly is unpersuaded—I think rightly—by definitions that try to distinguish the two. Nonetheless, she continues to use the term "propaganda" in a pervasively pejorative way, ending the book with an exhortation to "eschew educational propaganda in favor of a future of peace" (p.183). She clearly implies that the use of propaganda is wrong, at least when directed at children. I have to admit that I find this somewhat naïve, especially given Kelly's own definition of propaganda as "a cultural artifact ... that directly or symbolically expresses a particular bias (political or social), and created or deployed *with the intent* to deceive, influence, or evoke a particular emotional or physical response in a person" (p. 78). We may agree that intentional deception is wrong, but all cultural artifacts are inevitably selective in the "truth" they portray. This would apply to any cultural artifact that seeks to evoke a response regarding any matter of debate—including, to take contemporary examples, gender, sexuality, or climate. Are all such artifacts "propaganda" and therefore bad? Or only the ones we disagree with? If the latter, "propaganda" simply becomes a boo word that might itself be termed propagandistic, since it seems designed to evoke a response prior to thought. For these reasons, I am not persuaded that the use of "propaganda" as a major analytic category

1 The archives can be accessed at <https://exhibits.lafayette.edu/s/karuta/page/welcome>.

2 MacKenzie 1986.

is helpful here. The messages and intentions of artifacts can be analyzed, and criticized, without the term. However, this suggestion should not detract from Kelly's fine study.

REFERENCE

MacKenzie 1986

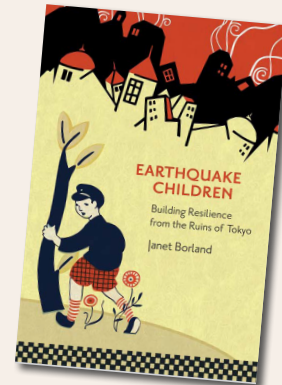
John M. MacKenzie, ed. *Imperialism and Popular Culture*. Manchester University Press, 1986.

BOOK REVIEW

Earthquake Children: Building Resilience from the Ruins of Tokyo

By Janet Borland

Harvard University Asia Center, 2020
352 pages.



Reviewed by Julia GERSTER

Janet Borland's *Earthquake Children: Building Resilience from the Ruins of Tokyo* explores the destruction caused by the 1923 Great Kanto earthquake and the city's subsequent recovery from the unique perspective of the children themselves. Packing well-researched details into the engaging stories of individuals, Borland describes how the response to this catastrophe propelled Japan from being "an earthquake nation" (p. 2), frequently subject to disaster, to one of the countries best-prepared to resist them. Borland also challenges images of the Japanese that have spread worldwide in the aftermath of the 2011 Great East Japan earthquake, showing that a calm and coordinated disaster response is not a national characteristic, but a skill that can be learned and taught.

The book consists of an introduction, seven chapters, and an epilogue. Each chapter focuses on the experiences of children in Tokyo, along with their families and teachers, schools and neighborhoods. The first chapter gives the reader the background information necessary to imagine life in crowded 1920s Tokyo, and explores how experts evaluated disaster risk at that time and why the earthquake led to such a large-scale disaster. Most of the insights presented in subsequent chapters are based on essays and drawings by children. Chapter 2 describes how children experienced and coped with the direct impact of the earthquake and the fires that turned their city into "hell on earth." The primary sources the author deploys reveal the chaos and violence that occurred after the earthquake and the extent to which children were aware of what was happening around them. The third chapter highlights children's struggle for survival in the immediate aftermath of the disaster. It shows that support for Tokyo's young people was prioritized because their "innocent or pitiful" (p. 78) stories were widely featured in the press. Nevertheless, Borland, drawing on school essays, demonstrates that many children suffered in the post-disaster period. A girl in fourth grade, for instance, confessed that she could barely eat the rice provided to her family, as, "The brown rice felt rough, it tasted strange and smelled bad. It was horrible to eat. How miserable!" (p. 81). Quotes like this help the reader understand that it was not only the loss of homes and loved ones, but also changes in everyday life that affected the youngest residents of Tokyo.

While chapter 3 emphasizes the stories of vulnerable children as helping to secure disaster relief, chapter 4 focuses on their role as "Objects of Investigation and Agents of Recovery." Borland argues that it was expert recognition in 1923 of the vulnerability

of children that signaled the emergence of modern theories of resilience. The deaths of vulnerable people in the chaos and fires after the earthquake helped complicate the assumption that such disasters were a purely natural occurrence. Disasters were increasingly understood as the outcomes of natural hazards intersecting with vulnerable populations. Experts concluded that people needed to learn how to behave if an earthquake occurred, remaining calm and extinguishing sources of fire before evacuating. Therefore, society “could reduce the destructive effects ... through education and infrastructure” (p. 107). Children were not just passive objects of investigation but also contributed to the knowledge experts acquired. Children recorded how they coped with the disaster through pictures and essays, contributing significantly to the understanding of mental health and what is nowadays known as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Their essays revealed their resilience, and how they imagined their future in a Tokyo rebuilt to withstand natural hazards.

Chapter 5 centers on the efforts of the “earthquake teachers.” Borland explores their hardships, their losses, their searches for surviving pupils, and their role in school reconstruction. Schools, it emerges, were poorly prepared for earthquakes and other hazards, and only a few of them possessed emergency plans. Chapters 6 and 7 build on this point to explore how lessons learned from the disaster were finally implemented in the curriculum, positioning schools at the center of modern Japanese disaster preparedness. The fears of seismologists that the disaster could be forgotten, and the search for ways to ensure that it was not, show striking similarities to discussions being held today as a result of the 2011 Great East Japan earthquake. The final chapter stresses that newly built schools and parks were “certainly the high point of an otherwise disappointing reconstruction” (p. 243). Children living elsewhere in the Kanto region often envied the children of Tokyo for their safe schools, but the buildings did not last as long as their architects intended as many were destroyed in the air raids of 1945.

Finally, the epilogue connects the stories of 1923 to more recent disasters, such as the 1995 Great Hanshin Awaji earthquake and the 2011 triple disasters. Borland argues that it was not one disaster that transformed Japan into the resilient nation we know today, as disaster preparedness is a dynamic process always in need of reflection (p. 252). However, she asserts that since 1923, “children, safe schools, drills, and disaster education have remained a fundamental component of efforts to build resilience in local communities” (p. 253).

With *Earthquake Children*, Janet Borland delivers a fascinating account of the devastating Great Kanto earthquake, the long road to recovery, and the earthquake’s influence on disaster studies and preparedness. The book engages the reader through the stories of individuals, and focuses on the vivid descriptions provided by children. Borland emphasizes the importance of children’s accounts, a vital contribution given that children’s experiences of disaster remain understudied. Her account of 1923 reveals many similarities with modern disaster responses. If there is a shortcoming, it is also a strength, which is the book’s reliance primarily on children’s testimonies. The book offers one of the most detailed descriptions available in English of the Great Kanto earthquake, but reliance on these sources restricts critical examination of one of the darkest aspects of the 1923 disaster, the massacre of Koreans by vigilante groups. While children witnessed the violence, many of them recorded only wild rumors. Nevertheless, Janet Borland’s book is highly recommended for researchers of disasters, memory and trauma, those examining the history of children and childhood, and anyone interested in the history of Japan’s disaster preparedness.

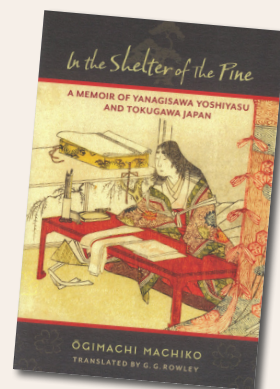
BOOK REVIEW

In the Shelter of the Pine: A Memoir of Yanagisawa Yoshiyasu and Tokugawa Japan

By Ōgimachi Machiko. Translated by G. G. Rowley

Columbia University Press, 2021
368 pages.

Reviewed by Bettina GRAMLICH-OKA



On the tenth day of the first month of 1793, a woman from Hiroshima noted in her diary: “Cloudy. Mother of Katō pays a visit to exchange New Year’s greetings. I start copying *Matsukage nikki*.” Seven days later, she wrote, “Finished copying *Matsukage nikki*.” Years later she gave the copy to her wedded daughter. The woman, Rai Shizu (1760–1842), offers no explanation why she had copied *Matsukage nikki*, a memoir written by Ōgimachi Machiko (d. 1724) about one hundred years earlier. She was one of many such copiers in the Tokugawa period, and the modern reader is fortunate that G. G. Rowley has now rendered the memoir into fluent, elegant English as *In the Shelter of the Pine*.

This is the latest of Rowley’s valuable contributions examining what women wrote during the Tokugawa period. After coediting *Female as Subject* (University of Michigan Center for Japanese Studies, 2010), about women from all ranks of society and their reading and writing habits, Rowley’s monograph *An Imperial Concubine’s Tale: Scandal, Shipwreck, and Salvation in Seventeenth-Century Japan* (Columbia University Press, 2013) traced from fragments the tumultuous life of an aristocratic concubine who once served the emperor. With the translation of Ōgimachi Machiko’s memoir, Rowley now takes her readers to the world of an aristocratic concubine serving a high-ranking warrior.

This first translation into a language other than Japanese is important for many reasons. First, as far as we know, Ōgimachi Machiko is the only aristocratic woman of the Tokugawa period to have written this kind of lengthy autobiographical prose account. Tadano Makuzu (1763–1825), the author of the comparable *Mukashibanashi*, lived a century later, was of lower rank, and did not live in a household to which the shogun himself visited a stunning fifty-eight times. Yet, Machiko shares with Makuzu the difficulty of finding an appropriate form in which to write. She, like Makuzu, recollects the world of a man. For Makuzu, it was the world of her father, the domain physician Kudō Heisuke (1734–1800). For Machiko, the world was that of Yanagisawa Yoshiyasu (1658–1714), chief adjutant to the fifth shogun Tsunayoshi (1646–1709). Machiko decenters her own persona—a phenomenon seldom encountered in men’s memoirs. Only rarely does she break with this stance. One instance is when she gives birth to her first son: “On the sixteenth day of the Eleventh Month of that year, My Lord’s fourth son was born ... Though I hesitate to ask, ‘From which mother was the child born?’ am I to feign ignorance by answering, ‘It was

that broom tree briefly glimpsed'? For hidden as I am in the shade of that flower blooming high up on the tree, like a plant sprouting in spring, it may be that I write something of my own place in this world" (p. 28). Through the classical allusion to the broom tree, which can be seen from a distance but disappears up close, Machiko addresses the difficulty of drawing a line between narrator and protagonist, and makes clear that women ought not to be the center of their narrative. Those interested in issues of self-representation and the generic conventions of memoir writing will welcome this translation as a rich resource for comparison.

A second significance is that, unlike other Tokugawa autobiographers, Machiko purposely used the language of the imperial court. Her effort to emulate the *Tale of Genji* in style and create a "classical effect" (p. xxii) was evidently one of the work's attractions for Tokugawa readers. This effect is on full display in the final chapter, where Machiko takes us to the still famous Rikugien garden, one of Yoshiyasu's projects, and comments on his retirement from official positions: "And now he sets out to follow the 'dew on the mountain path,' just as he had long been determined to do, ... and [I] jot it all down, bit by bit, just as I remember it, quite heedless of the censure I shall attract for gossiping on so. And yet ... like glistening oaks that can never be buried beneath the seaweed are his deeds, shining forth in their own brilliance" (p. 208). In the space of only two sentences, Machiko alludes to an apocryphal *Genji* chapter ("Yamaji no tsuyu"), the "Yūgao" chapter from *Genji*, and Minamoto no Toshiyori's (1055–1129) poem from *Senzai wakashū*. For the general reader three hundred years later, such extensive allusions to the classical Japanese and Chinese canon are formidable, but fortunately Rowley provides just the right amount of information in the notes, enabling us to understand Machiko's display of learning while taking pleasure in the translation.

A third reason is the importance of the broader context, the reign of Tsunayoshi and the Genroku period. The account provides us with information on the political, cultural, and economic history of a period that has been assessed in many divergent ways. Readers get many intriguing glimpses of the world of government. We read about the hundreds of gifts given and received on each formal visit, as in the case of Tsunayoshi's first visit: "The gifts he had bestowed upon My Lord that were piled up here and there were cleared away and, in their place, the many gifts to be presented to him were brought out and arranged. Then His Highness came in again, and as soon as he was seated, My Lord presented a list of his gifts secured with a genuine sword" (p. 9). Such accounts remind us that we ought not to forget the consumer economy underlying these gift exchanges, and the procurers, and record and storage keepers for all the precious scrolls, swords, gorgeous silks, and exquisite foodstuffs. Machiko's description of a court hearing taking place in Yoshiyasu's mansion performs a similar function. With members of the Deliberative Council gathered to judge fifteen cases while Tsunayoshi listened from behind screens, Machiko alerts us that at the end of the day, "the judges were given their rewards. Needless to say, they looked delighted as they went off with their gifts over their shoulders" (1697.11.14; pp. 46–47).

One of the many valuable services translations perform is to open up dialogue between specialists and non-specialists. Readers of this polished rendering of a text that circulated widely and was hand-copied more than thirty times during the Tokugawa period will surely find many other reasons beyond those mentioned here to welcome its publication.

BOOK REVIEW

Overcoming Empire in Post-Imperial East Asia: Repatriation, Redress and Rebuilding

Edited by Barak Kushner and Sherzod Muminov

Bloomsbury, 2020
279 pages.

Reviewed by Steven IVINGS



Overcoming Empire in Post-Imperial East Asia, edited by Barak Kushner and Sherzod Muminov, is the second of several multiauthor volumes derived from Kushner's European Research Council project entitled, "The Dissolution of the Japanese Empire and the Struggle for Legitimacy in Postwar East Asia, 1945–1965." The first volume, *The Dismantling of Japan's Empire in East Asia*, addressed the macro picture at the end of Japan's colonial and wartime empire, examining issues of regional order, "deimperialization," migration, legitimacy, and justice, along with a plethora of contributions on more specific themes. At sixteen chapters plus an introduction, that first volume provided a comprehensive, if somewhat Japan-centric, reassessment of the period by leading scholars in the field. Many were well-known in Japan but publishing in English for the first time, so the volume added considerable depth to the literature in English on the period. Collectively, it provided a strong corrective to the assumption that, with defeat, Japan effortlessly morphed from a cosmopolitan empire into a homogenous nation-state.

It was thus with great anticipation that the reviewer waited for the second volume, and for the most part it does not disappoint. *Overcoming Empire in Post-Imperial East Asia* is slimmer than its predecessor, with ten chapters plus an introduction, and this time the contributors are largely emerging scholars. The volume should not, however, be seen as leftovers from Kushner's project. First of all, the volume presents a less Japan-centric understanding of how state and society were reformulated in East Asia following the collapse of Japan's colonial and wartime empire. Only two of the chapters are primarily Japan-focused (Doglia, Stegewerns) and thus the second volume supplements the first with more extensive treatment of the situation in China, Korea, and Taiwan. The chapters discuss how issues of reconstruction, migration, and memory—both from the colonial period and as an immediate result of the Japanese empire's collapse—lingered, and to some extent shaped, those societies. There is no sharp divide between the two volumes, but broadly speaking the first addresses the deimperialization of Japan, while the second primarily focuses on the decolonization of East Asia, both messy processes, complicated particularly in the latter instance by civil and cold war conflicts.

This second volume is also noteworthy for addressing some of the shortfalls in the study of East Asia's transition from the Japanese colonial empire to the early postwar period.

As Muminov notes in his introduction, few scholars have been willing to cross the prewar-postwar divide, or indeed the borders of postwar nation-states, in their appraisals of the colonial period or postwar East Asia. Many works on the legacy of the Japanese empire in Japan have failed to include primary sources from the former colonies, whilst much of the early literature produced in the former colonies themselves was painted with a nationalistic brush, providing a rather caricatured vision of colonial rule. A new generation of scholars, however, are more willing to engage in comprehensive archival research in several languages, and this volume is a testament to that trend. Several of the contributors have combined archival work in both Japanese and English alongside the same in Chinese or Korean, and in one case (Hirata) Chinese and Russian. In this sense, the individual chapters contribute greatly to our understanding of this contested period by adding newly available archival materials and by ambitiously traversing national viewpoints and historiographical traditions.

The themes addressed in the volume are internment and repatriation of Taiwanese; foreign refugees in China; early narratives of the Korean War in occupied Japan; colonial architecture in postwar South Korea; representations of East Asia in postwar Japanese cinema; anti-imperialism and legitimacy during the Chinese civil war; the afterlife of Manchukuo's industrial base in postwar China; administrative and bureaucratic aspects of regime change; struggles for compensation for forced labor; and the postwar history of former military sites in Japan—in this case the chemical weapons facilities on Ōkonoshima. Each of the chapters provides new insights into the process of overcoming empire.

I would like to mention here two contributions of particular note. First, Hirata Koji's study of the industrial afterlife of empire focuses on the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) reconstruction and utilization of heavy industries built up during the Japanese colonial period. That the Japanese-built industrial base in the Chinese northeast played an important role in China's early postwar economy and the CCP's victory in the Chinese civil war is reasonably well known. However, exactly how the CCP was able to effectively utilize this colonial legacy and turn it into "Red China's Ruhr" (p. 148) is less well understood, at least outside of China. Hirata sheds light on the practical efforts of the CCP to rebuild. Recognizing the scarcity of skilled human capital, the CCP sought to reconcile both Chinese nationalists and Japanese to their cause. While propaganda played a role, a basic respect and appreciation shown towards former enemies willing to contribute to the CCP's cause was critically important. As a result of the CCP's efforts, over twenty thousand Japanese remained in Manchuria in 1950, many of them technicians, engineers, and other essential skilled workers (p. 153). Having been employed in the state-led Manchukuo industrialization drive, particularly during the war itself, these former industrial technicians of the Japanese empire needed little persuading on the merits of economic planning from CCP cadres.

The contribution by Chang Chihyun on the Chinese Maritime Customs Service (CMCS) in the period 1950 to 1955 is also noteworthy. The largely foreign-staffed CMCS was established in 1854, very much in the context of growing Western imperialism. Over time, however, it became an effective revenue-generating arm of the Chinese state. Tainted by its connections to imperialism, the survival of CMCS influence into the postwar years was unlikely given the collapse of the Western and Japanese empires and the establishment of a Communist regime in mainland China. Nevertheless, as Chang ably shows, the institutional know-how and human capital of the service and its link to state finances

meant that the CMCS's staff had a part to play in the administrative reformulation of early postwar East Asia and thus the CMCS cast a long shadow over successor services following its dissolution. Though the outcomes varied across the states concerned, Chang shows how administrative reform was also a key site of ideological conflict and one in which imperial structures proved surprisingly resilient. In Japan, under the auspices of the Allied Occupation, cosmopolitan CMCS staff would play a role in reformulating Japan's own customs service.

Contributions such as these make for an admirable volume of work that prompts readers to rethink the sharp divide of 1945, and to better appreciate the continuities and interconnections which shaped postwar efforts to overcome empire in East Asia.

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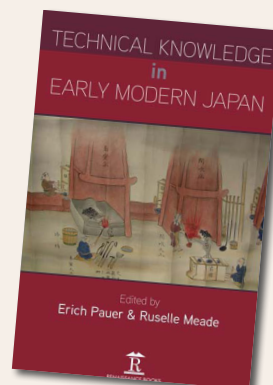
BOOK REVIEW

Technical Knowledge in Early Modern Japan

Edited by Erich Pauer and Ruselle Meade

Renaissance Books, 2020
224 pages.

Reviewed by Hyeok Hweon KANG



In Japan between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, new knowledge on material production became increasingly codified and circulated in texts and images. Occurring alongside existing practices of transmitting craft knowledge—mainly oral, tacit, and apprenticed—this process signaled a modernizing society, one in which technical knowledge accumulated in sectors such as agriculture and metalworking; dissemination was increasingly effective and in “more publicized ... and printed form(s)” (p. xx); and a transformation of knowledge structures facilitated the influx of foreign (Chinese and Western) technologies.

This story of an early modern transformation in technical knowledge is familiar to most historians of science and technology. It was first told in the context of Western Europe, where historians demonstrated that craftspeople and practitioners began transforming their embodied knowledge into writing after 1400.¹ The story has been recently complicated by historians of China and Korea, who point to intriguing differences in how craft knowledge was also increasingly codified and circulated in these societies.² *Technical Knowledge in Early Modern Japan* offers seven contributions of meticulous scholarship that address a similar phenomenon in Japan. Unfortunately, while the contributors carefully situate their work in the historiography of Japanese studies on technology, they do not directly engage with this broader, global-historical discourse—the volume’s main shortcoming. Nevertheless, the chapters describe in rich detail the culture of knowledge in early modern Japan, and the volume also provides an introductory historiographical essay, appendix, and individual bibliographies, all of which aid further research.

A strength of the volume is its consistent emphasis on the processes of knowledge formation and circulation. Annick Horiuchi’s chapter examines the rise of *meisan* (“famous products”) books in eighteenth-century Japan. Containing illustrated descriptions of craft techniques and products, these books, she argues, were written by scholars who directly observed rural craft industries and sought to document knowledge deemed useful for domainal authorities. While these scholarly books were, as Bray has it, “social documents”

1 For a recent overview, see Klein 2021.

2 Schäfer 2011; Chen 2014; and Kang 2020.

that captured (but did not necessarily teach) craft knowledge, Erich Pauer focuses on another genre, technical drawings, which served as efficient carriers of craft know-how.³ Pauer argues that across various fields, such as agriculture, carpentry, and clock-making, Japanese illustrations grew increasingly sophisticated and useful as templates for action—that is, for hands-on material production.

It was not just texts and illustrations that moved knowledge. Regine Mathias' chapter surveys the introduction of various smelting techniques into Japan from Chinese, Korean, and European sources. Mathias shows that the prompt and successful adoption of techniques was not just due to the emergence of a "relatively rich literature and pictorial material on mining [unlike in China]," but also the mobility of skilled experts, who fostered knowledge exchanges within and between mines (p. 92). Itō Mamiko's contribution examines yet another vehicle for knowledge transmission by narrating how the nascent Meiji government fostered the development of Edo-era *yakuhin-e* (medical and pharmaceutical shows) into modern *hakurankai* (exhibitions). These championed the epistemic role of observation and experience, and proved to be an "especially practical medium" for transmitting new knowledge about the industrial arts (p. 66).

The remaining chapters retain the emphasis on the transmission of knowledge, but focus on Western technologies. On the basis of both scholarship and material disassembly, Hashimoto Takehiko's contribution details the craftsmanship of Tanaka Hisashige and his masterful combination of Western and Japanese clock-making, concluding that Tanaka's "sub-millimeter precision" contributed to Japan's early success in modernization (p. 126). Nishiyama Takahiro emphasizes the strong tradition of Japanese metalwork by tracing the introduction of Western technologies, and detailing how Japanese gunsmiths, in particular, became mechanics able to support the emergence of modern ironworks and shipyards. Finally, Suzuki Jun's chapter examines the uneven uptake of boilers in the Meiji period. Suzuki argues that differences between Western and Japanese craft traditions created obstacles to the spread of boilers in Japan, and that it was local adaptations—rather than transplantation from abroad—that determined the speed and extent of technological diffusion.

In uncovering a wide spectrum of Japanese knowledge in action, the volume is a welcome addition to the growing Anglophone scholarship on the history of East Asian science and technology. Yet it is unable to fully meet the contributors' hopes of stimulating "historians of technology and representatives of other disciplines to broaden their view and include Japan ... as a matter of course in their reflections on technological development," due to the following limitations. First, opportunities are missed to reflect on the nature of technical knowledge. Is craft knowledge necessarily tacit and informal? How does it move? Where does it fail or succeed when conveyed in writing or drawing? More than half of the contributors—Horiuchi, Pauer, Mathias, and Suzuki—had clear opportunities to address these questions, and could have done so by engaging with a rich literature on this topic by historians of China.⁴ Second, this volume emphasizes cases where novel knowledge and technology were seamlessly transmitted into and within Japan. Recent work in the history of science has, by contrast, emphasized the need to study "sticky things" that prevent or inhibit the movement of such knowledge. Likewise, historians of technology have long

3 Bray 1997, p. 95.

4 See for instance Bray 2008; Golas 2014; Eyferth 2010.

emphasized the importance of technologies-in-use and the maintenance of old technologies. What would happen if we examined Japanese technical knowledge from the perspective of “sticky things” and the maintenance of the old?

Despite these shortcomings, the volume is valuable in making new scholarship on Japanese technical knowledge available in English. Other merits include the colorful illustrations, while the introduction and appendix provide an effective overview of Japanese historiography on technology. Taken together, the contributors demonstrate a robust culture of technical knowledge in Japan, which proved remarkably successful in adopting and adapting complex technologies. Future research will further illuminate how exceptional the case of Japan was; what underpinned its successes and failures; and how the Japanese historical experience may offer theoretical contributions to the field of the history of science and technology at large.

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BOOK REVIEW

Bokujinkai: Japanese Calligraphy and the Postwar Avant-Garde

By Eugenia Bogdanova-Kummer

Brill, 2020
xi + 181 pages.



Reviewed by Matthew LARKING

The Bokujinkai (People of the Ink) were founded in Kyoto on 1 January 1952, an early postwar manifestation of the calligraphy avant-garde. The group's goals were conventional ones—pursuit of artistic freedom and escape from such authoritative hierarchies as traditions, teachers, schools/salons, and exhibiting forums and their judges. Abstraction, or calligraphic variations resembling these vogues in mid-twentieth-century American and European art, was the Bokujinkai's vehicle for modern artistic reform and international outreach. The group promoted an emphasis on line and space, asserted primitivism as the common source for both modernism and calligraphy, and eventually resorted to interpretative obscurantisms sourced from Zen metaphysics (p. 57).

Bokujinkai opens with an illustration of the idealism of the period. In 1954, the Museum of Modern Art in New York held an exhibition of Japanese modernist calligraphers, while across town the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum displayed “Younger American Painters,” including Franz Kline, Jackson Pollock, and Robert Motherwell. A number of American critics, ignorant of Japanese tradition and buoyed by the postwar wave of Japanese cultural-religious faddism, drew parallels between the two exhibitions. Visual similarity, which Bogdanova-Kummer refers to using the linguistic analogy of “false friends” (p. 4), and the elision of cultural contexts, were key to the conflation of modernist calligraphy with mid-twentieth century abstract expressionist painting, as was the early postwar period's ebullient optimism.

Bokujinkai wishes to recover this optimism. Bogdanova-Kummer envisions reclaiming her calligrapher subjects from contemporary neglect in Western scholarship, where they allegedly have been “wiped out from the records of postwar art history” (p. 141). She wants to elevate the Bokujinkai's status to that enjoyed by their American and European abstract expressionist painting contemporaries, doing for the Bokujinkai what has been attempted for the Gutai Bijutsu Kyōkai (Gutai Art Association) in recent decades (p. 3).¹ More ambitiously still, she seeks to assert that her calligraphers' abstract works played a crucial role in the development of mid-twentieth century Western modernism.

1 Among the most significant English texts are Munroe 1994, Tiampo 2011, and Tiampo and Munroe 2013.

By the final lines of the book, however, the expectations established at the book's outset appear to have been revised. The author concludes that "The names of the People of the Ink—Morita Shiryū, Inoue Yūichi, Eguchi Sōgen, Sekiya Yoshimichi, and Nakamura Bokushi—need to be reinscribed in the history of art next to those of the artists with whom they once exhibited and collaborated, including Franz Kline, Yoshihara Jirō, Pierre Soulages, Georges Mathieu, Pierre Alechinsky, and Hans Hartung" (p. 147). The art-historical reputations of Morita and Inoue may yet rise to join this company, but this list of names points to a distinctly second-tier modernism.

A more significant issue also lurks here. Of the five Bokujinkai calligraphers listed in this denouement, only two, Morita and Inoue, have a substantial presence in the book. The calligraphers themselves are overshadowed by Bokujinkai collaborators like Hasegawa Saburō, the Zen promotion and theorizing of Hisamatsu Shin'ichi and Ijima Tsutomu, and diversions such as the American and European receptions of Sengai Gibon's *Circle, Triangle and Square* (Edo period). The book's narrative makes clear that Gibon's geometric calligraphy can be considered the more conventionally influential in postwar Western and Japanese art (pp. 109–117).

The approach is a global modernist one, though the author prefers the "transcultural" terminology (p. 8). The focus is on how artists and interlocutors ("global art players," p. 35), and, perhaps to a lesser degree, actual art objects, were valorized by their connections to "postwar global artistic networks," in which some Bokujinkai calligraphers were "central nodes" (p. 146). The aim is to reconsider the Bokujinkai within art historian Partha Mitter's postcolonial concept of "multi-centered modernisms." The effect, however, is the insertion of Japan, the country, between the art center cities of New York and Paris, resulting in a "triangular structure" of modernist interaction somewhat antithetical to Mitter's more inclusive ideal (pp. 8–9).

More problematic from an art object approach is how the author skates over intricacies of influence, their directional flows, and creative cooption. Bogdanova-Kummer's visual analysis can appear remarkably disengaged at times, as with Morita and Pierre Soulages: "It is clear that both artists were interested in the same questions and looked to each other's works for solutions" (p. 74). Even a cursory glance at the visual comparisons between pp. 71–73 demonstrates that Morita and Soulages were doing extremely different kinds of "painting." In addressing another pairing, the author falls back onto the conceptually weak visual similarity approach criticized earlier in the text: "Looking at Inoue and Kline together, the difference between American painting and Japanese calligraphy ... disappears" (p. 131).

Bokujinkai engagingly wrestles with a topic in drastic need of further art-historical attention, and is an intriguing contribution to the embryonic field of modern Japanese art history. Bogdanova-Kummer can be especially judicious in her commentaries and analyses, reveling as much in the hypocrisies as in the achievements of the Bokujinkai calligraphers and their interpreters. But this judiciousness is unevenly applied. In the global modernist approach adopted here, the principal significance of the Bokujinkai is outside Japan, with the domestic art context either absent or relegated to the level of background information. The author barely considers the debt of her subjects to earlier traditions of calligraphy, Japanese and Chinese, and relies upon the invocation of modern Western painters to bring

prestige to her Japanese calligrapher subjects.² The book is therefore less about the evident merits of modern calligraphy *as* calligraphy (as much Bokujinkai output can hardly be considered “abstract”), and instead considers calligraphy as a form of painting that failed to take firm hold within the Western modernist pantheon and its scholarship. Crucially, however, this implies that calligraphy is less “transcultural” than the author would have us believe.

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² This situation recalls Hirai Shōichi’s claim that in studying the Gutai Art Association, scholars should be “transferring our focus from Gutai as an international movement to a peculiarly Japanese one.” Hirai 2004, p. 173.

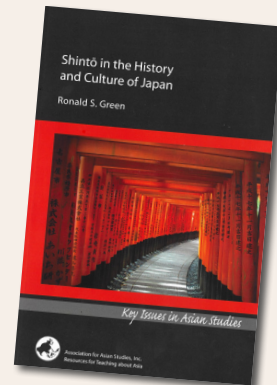
BOOK REVIEW

Shintō in the History and Culture of Japan

By Ronald S. Green

Association for Asian Studies, 2020
108 pages.

Reviewed by Ernils LARSSON



With his concise *Shintō in the History and Culture of Japan*, Ronald S. Green sets out to introduce Shinto to a broad public. Across seven themed chapters, Green sketches a portrait of Shinto's history, while also emphasizing its continued relevance in contemporary society and culture. The book is written in an accessible and easy to follow manner for readers unfamiliar with Japanese history and religion.

The first chapter begins with the question “What is Shintō?” which the book purports to address “from beginning to end” (p. 1). Green then presents a series of definitions for Shinto: a “Japanese ethnic belief,” a “tradition that has been transmitted from ancient times,” or as an almost “exclusively ... Japanese phenomenon” (pp. 1–2). Although the author references the work of one historian who has written critically about understandings of Shinto as a transhistorical entity, this thread is subsequently dropped. Instead, Shinto is used throughout the book to denote all shrines, rites, myths, and forms of *kami* worship present in the archipelago, at least from the time the *Kojiki* was put to paper in 712 CE up to the present day.

While the debate on the emergence of Shinto in ancient and medieval history is undoubtedly complex, Green's insistence on portraying Shinto as a single tradition is concerning. Its effects can be illustrated by a passage in chapter 7, where Green argues that “the religion's leaders have suggested that Shintō move away from the staunch nationalistic posture sometimes associated with its past” (p. 77). Shinto is presented not only in the singular, but also with a definite article, suggesting a leadership exists that has the authority to speak for all shrines. To the unacquainted reader, organizational divisions between different shrine lineages are likely to be lost, as are the significant divisions that exist between shrine and sect Shinto.

Green's approach leads to the amalgamation of various traditions usually differentiated within Shinto scholarship. The absence of sect Shinto is one example of this, but more significant is the book's consistent focus on the imperial institution as central to the history of Shinto. Green's often ambiguous prose makes it possible to read his book as accepting the view that “Shintō begins with legendary first emperor Jimmu, grandson of Amaterasu, in the seventh century BCE” (p. 25). Aike P. Rots has referred to this as the “imperial paradigm” of Shinto, the idea that “the essence of Shinto lies in its relationship

with the divine imperial institution.”¹ The first three chapters in Green’s book are all deeply informed by this paradigm, as they explore Shinto’s “ancient roots,” its mythology, and its role in Japanese history, all the while keeping the imperial institution at the center of the discussion.

The effects can also be seen in chapter 4, where Green writes that because of its connections to the imperial institution, Ise Shrine “is considered a preeminent shrine of Japan ... of central importance to Shinto” (p. 43). Ise Shrine was granted this status by Japan’s political leaders in the early Meiji period, and while it certainly claims a position as *primus inter pares* today, these claims are upheld through the work of a number of political and religious actors. The same chapter also includes a brief discussion of Izumo Taisha, described by Green as “one of the most important shrines to both the imperial family and the Shintō belief system” (p. 44). Unfortunately, the author pays no attention to the shrine’s history as an unsuccessful contender to Ise Shrine in the nineteenth century, described in great detail by Yijiang Zhong in a work cited by Green.² Nor does he discuss the shrine’s role within Izumo Taisha-kyō, one of the original thirteen sects of Meiji-era Shinto.

Conspicuously missing from Green’s work are the organizations behind postwar Shinto. There is no reference to what John Breen and Mark Teeuwen have called “the Shinto establishment,” perhaps best represented by Jinja Honchō, the Association of Shinto Shrines.³ While Green mentions some political controversies surrounding Shinto, including visits by LDP politicians to Yasukuni Shrine and the enshrinement of Class A war criminals, he does not seem to consider these issues particularly significant. As he writes with regards to demonstrations staged at Yasukuni, “there is little evidence to suggest that these are anything other than small fringe groups” (p. 42). Mark R. Mullins has conclusively shown in his recent *Yasukuni Fundamentalism* that the ideology behind such demonstrations is hardly a fringe phenomenon in contemporary Japan.⁴ It is noteworthy in this context that Yasukuni is omitted entirely from the chapter on “famous shrines.”

The lack of precision granted to Shinto as a concept impacts on the book’s usefulness as an introduction. This is unfortunate, as parts of the book are both informative and pleasant to read. Chapters 5 and 6, on “material culture” and “rituals and events,” stand out as particularly useful for introducing new readers to the diversity of shrine traditions in Japan. This is overshadowed, however, by Green’s lack of interest in the political and ideological facets of Shinto. “State Shinto” is briefly discussed as a historical phenomenon, yet its legacies and lingering effects in postwar Japan are completely ignored.⁵ The book would have benefitted from more nuanced reflection on Shinto as a category. Green’s work pays insufficient attention to the diversity of shrine traditions in history and contemporary society, as well as to the political machinations that have shaped Shrine Shinto since the mid-nineteenth century, and which continue to do so today.

1 Rots 2017, p. 31.

2 Zhong 2016.

3 Breen and Teeuwen 2010, pp. 199–210.

4 Mullins 2021.

5 See for instance Ama 2017, pp. 91–93.

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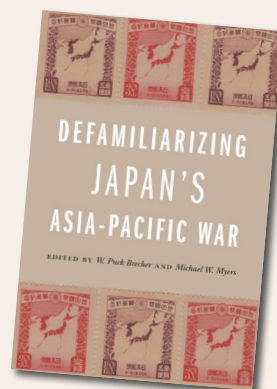
BOOK REVIEW

Defamiliarizing Japan's Asia-Pacific War

Edited by W. Puck Brecher and Michael W. Myers

University of Hawai'i Press, 2019
244 pages.

Reviewed by Zachary LONG



Defamiliarizing Japan's Asia-Pacific War, an edited volume by Puck Brecher and Michael W. Myers, sets out with the goal of “refreshing and reorienting history” (p. 13) through a series of chapters focused broadly on three major narratives: that of a unified, homogenous Japan, the Asia-Pacific War as an illegal war, and depictions of the Asia-Pacific War as a race war. The chapters look to unsettle general understandings of the war by detailing underexplored histories or presenting new information that complicates these narratives.

The opening chapter by Kazufumi Hamai and Peter Mauch address the “oft-told tale” of the “willful destruction of official Japanese records in the dying days of the Second World War” (p. 30). The chapter contextualizes this in two ways: first, by detailing the means through which official records were meticulously produced, maintained, and protected throughout the Meiji, Taisho, and Showa periods, and thus how the depredation of the record during the war, through fires, the Allied bombings, and intentional incineration, was exceptional. Second, it outlines various efforts undertaken after the war to publish the existing diplomatic record, either under Allied auspices in the case of the *Gaikō shiryō* diplomatic document series in 1946, or, immediately after the occupation, the more broadly focused *Shūsen shiroku* (Historical records of the ending of the war) in 1952. Additionally, it describes the ongoing process of making these records available to scholars and the public over the years, culminating in their digitization in recent decades.

Yoneyuki Sugita undercuts common narratives of a “clean break” (p. 34) between prewar and postwar Japan by looking at the example of medical insurance programs. The chapter describes the national healthcare system in Japan from its beginnings in 1922, its steady expansion in coverage, and its transformation into a fully-fledged public assistance program in 1946, highlighting both continuities and ruptures in the health care regime.

M. W. Shores explores the variety of responses of *rakugo* writers and performers when asked to deliver acts with militaristic or nationalist themes. The primary contrast drawn is between the more traditional Osaka-based *rakugo* performers on one side, and Tokyo *rakugo* and the Yoshimoto Co.'s *manzai* performers on the other. While the latter were increasingly patronized by the state for publication and live shows, both at home and overseas, the

former found themselves marginalized for refusing to alter their traditional repertoire to meet wartime demands.

Annika A. Culver uses care packages, *imon bukuro*, to explore mass mobilization, how such objects helped bridge the distance between the battlefield and the home front, and “the linkages between gender and commercialization in Japan at war and its empire” (p. 86). Through an examination of advertisements and announcements of collections for packages in the *Asahi Shinbun*, the chapter shows how the practice ebbed and flowed before petering out due to diminishing resources at the end of the war, with the final article on the subject appearing in the paper on 13 January 1945 (p. 99).

Florentino Rodao sheds light on the underexplored history of Japan’s complex relations with various neutral states, including Spain, Portugal, Turkey, and Sweden. The chapter describes the various types of neutrality these states maintained vis-à-vis Japan leading up to 1945, and the shifts in relations which occurred due to the defeat of Germany, as countries began to respond to the likely outcome of the conflict. Of particular interest is the active role of both Japan and the various neutral states in attempting to refine relations with one another in response to broader shifts in the international situation.

Michael W. Myers addresses one of the most pervasive narratives in modern Japanese history: the presumed inevitability of Allied victory in the Pacific. Myers shows that much of this narrative was constructed with the benefit of hindsight and no small dose of Allied propaganda, asserting that contemporary observers on both sides remained uncertain about the outcome of the war until its final moments, and that, moreover, Japan’s strategic goals were realistic when they were conceived in 1941. This chapter is one of the volume’s most provocative, and grapples directly with a dominant narrative that drives much of the professional and popular history surrounding the Asia-Pacific War.

Yumi Murayama provides a counterpoint to the history of religious organizations being forced by the weight of surveillance and coercion into cooperation with the government, focusing on the contributions of Yanaihara Tadao (1893–1961) as a Christian intellectual and scholar of colonial policy. The chapter shows how Yanaihara wove criticism of colonial policy and biblical narratives together in order to produce withering assessments of Japan’s actions. The focus on his use of biblical references as a means to criticize government policy opens up a space for seeing religion during this period as not merely being forced into compliance or silenced by the state.

The final two chapters provide complementary viewpoints on the issue of race during wartime Japan. They argue that “the presence of Nisei, Eurasians, colonial subjects and other ambiguous populations ... required the Japanese authorities to re-examine the concept of Japaneseness” (p. 185), although the factors they emphasize are distinct. A. Carly Buxton writes that race and gender were decisive for how a given individual was treated, whereas W. Puck Brecher argues that nationality-based criteria were strictly maintained. The latter’s history of mixed-race experiences in wartime Japan engages directly with John Dower’s *War Without Mercy* and its claims that the war in the Asia-Pacific was a “race war,” pointing out the limits of such a perspective and providing concrete examples of what it misses.

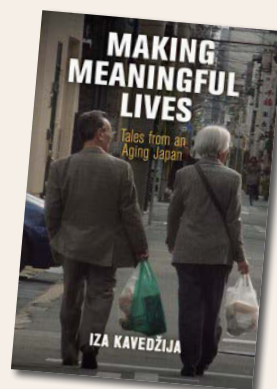
The introduction to the volume acknowledges that the chapters are “thematically and methodologically ... diverse,” (p. 1) but they collectively serve to “defamiliarize” the Asia-Pacific War in its broadest sense, and invite further efforts to reexamine dominant historical narratives.

BOOK REVIEW

Making Meaningful Lives: Tales from an Aging Japan

By Iza Kavedžija

University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019
216 pages.



Reviewed by Ra MASON

In *Making Meaningful Lives*, Iza Kavedžija offers a unique, close-up account of the complex issue of aging in Japan. The book's greatest value is in its anthropological, ethnographic approach, which allows the reader to understand how aging is more than simply a negative process that results in gradual decline, or a societal problem that requires top-down policies to address. Conversely, the text examines a range of phenomena associated with the experience of aging, many of which are Japan-specific or affected by Japan's distinct sociocultural milieu. This allows Kavedžija to support her overarching argument that "the issues of aging and the good and meaningful life are inextricably connected" (p. 4). Furthermore, the book adopts the perspective of the author's interlocutors, providing a fascinating range of accounts that convincingly substantiate its central thesis and bring forth first-person insights into how aging permeates the boundaries between state-society relations and personal interactions within individual lived experiences.

The text is cleverly structured into a series of interrelated case studies, which narrate the relational nature of aging as lives in a story (p. 85). This allows the discussion to seamlessly transition from critically examining the elderly as subjects of care (chapter 1), and how they form and sustain active communities in response to government policies where mutual cooperation is essential (chapters 2–3), through to how community spirit and action allow meaningful lives to be well-lived (chapters 4–5). Consequently, the narration interprets a full gamut of human emotions and qualities, including love and loss, compassion and companionship, and purpose and ambition, experienced along one's life-path (chapters 6–7). It is refreshing to see the author unapologetically avoid an overarching conclusion simply for the sake of satisfying academic convention or readers' preformulated expectations. Instead, Kavedžija confidently asserts that her research illustrates that meaningful lives in the context of aging embody the "messy and multifaceted" (p. 163) in a form more suited to open interpretation than positivistic quantification.

The (inter)disciplinary approach, drawing on insights from post-structuralists such as Derrida and Sartre, sociologists of community like Richard Sennet, and leading anthropologists, including the Japanologists Joy Hendry and Ronald Dore, serves to generate an enthralling intersection of insights and observations. These allow the specific details of Kavedžija's elderly research subjects' lives to be contextualized within a broader,

historically informed discussion of aging in Japan. For example, stereotypical views about Japanese concepts such as *tatemae* and *honne* (social front and real feelings) are challenged head-on in the context of the lively but largely unconflictual political debates exchanged between her interlocutors (p. 75). Correspondingly, the transformative meaning and socially embedded role of post-retirement pastime practices within the case study communities are also revisited to thought-provoking effect (p. 77).

In terms of limitations, although understandable given the ethnographic focus and format, referencing is relatively sparse for an academic text, and is almost entirely absent from pp. 36–45, 101–105, 108–113, and 130–138, where individual dialogues take precedence. Methodology is another area where a degree of supplementation might have been beneficial. While it is clear that Kavedžija is conducting two subject-specific anthropological case studies of aging in urban Japan, more could have been said regarding the particular significance of the chosen locales and situations. The primary justifications for their selection appear to be that the Kansai region has been sparsely covered in the extant literature and that it incorporates large elderly populations of socioeconomic diversity (chapter 2). However, it remains unclear how representative the interactions between these elderly folks are, either within the wider body of the municipality or across Japan as a whole. The absence of a sustained analysis addressing regional differences, as well as other intersectional factors that account for cultural variance, is stark. A full explication of these methodological elements would have positively enriched the text. In addition, while the circumstantial, exploratory nature of the study is commendable and engaging, what it actually reveals by way of value-added insight is less clear—beyond the overlapping intricacies of aging social milieus present in two Osaka wards.

Nevertheless, Kavedžija's study offers an excellent and timely contribution to the literature on Japan's aging society. It supplies a highly original ethnographic case study approach that allows the reader to view aging holistically from the inside out. Thanks to the quality and depth of documentation and interpretation, it also convincingly translates and interprets the aging experience, although the wider implications of the research remain speculative in nature. *Making Meaningful Lives* argues persuasively that aging requires a radical rethinking in terms of how society frames individually lived experiences and the human creation of meaning.

BOOK REVIEW

Dancing the Dharma: Religious and Political Allegory in Japanese Noh Theater

By Susan Blakeley Klein

Harvard University Asia Center, 2021
401 pages.



Reviewed by Hanna McGAUGHEY

Audiences at noh performances today may seek to immerse themselves in intuitive, and thus highly individual, experiences of noh aesthetics. The audiences for whom these plays were written, however, could decode specific—often religious or political but also erotic—messages. In *Dancing the Dharma*, Susan Blakeley Klein “re-embeds” noh plays “in the contemporaneous beliefs and practices of the medieval period” (p. 5). In doing so, she not only reveals hidden meanings in a selection of plays treating themes from the *Kokin wakashū* (tenth century) and *Ise monogatari* (ninth century), but cautiously explains how those plays may have been understood by their first audiences.

Klein’s analysis of noh plays in chapters four through nine is convincing. For example, esoteric commentaries to the *Ise monogatari* identify its ostensible author, the legendary imperial aristocrat Ariwara no Narihira (825–880), as a bodhisattva and an avatar of Dainichi Nyorai and the Sumiyoshi divinity (p. 34). Homophone punning (*kakekotoba*) on Narihira’s name layers up these identities and destabilizes historical time in the plays *Unrin’in* (p. 132), *Oshio* (p. 177), and *Kakitsubata* (pp. 209–210). Furthermore, Narihira slept with, and in doing so enlightened, as many as 3,733 women, twelve of whom were “important” enough to name according to the *Waka chikenshū* (1265) by the Shingon priest and poet Fujiwara no Tameaki (p. 36). In noh, too, these women are sometimes named—as in the *bijin zoro* (“line-up of beautiful women”) section of *Maiguruma* or the fragmentary *Kuzu no hakama*—and sometimes referred to merely as flowers, as in *Oshio*, where Narihira bestows on them “dew-drop pearls of passion,” that is, semen (pp. 103–104, 106–108, and 185). This dewy intimation reappears in *Kakitsubata* (pp. 197, 214, 224) and—not associated with Narihira this time—in *Ominameshi* (pp. 245, 261). Without knowledge of the esoteric commentaries, these erotic readings would remain speculative.

Knowing when these plays were originally performed is crucial for scholars seeking to decipher how they were received, but this is extremely rare. *Oshio*, exceptionally, can be dated to 1465 (p. 152). The play both commemorates a grand cherry blossom viewing party shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa and his wife hosted that spring, and celebrates an imperial poetry collection Emperor Go-Tsuchimikado (1442–1500) commissioned that year but never completed (pp. 152, 156). Incidentally, the book under review would have benefitted from a translation of *Oshio*, which is as yet unavailable in English. Klein’s dating of *Haku*

rakuten (Bai Juyi) to 1419 agrees with the circumstantial evidence most recently set out by Amano Fumio. Two events that year shook the confidence of shogun Ashikaga Yoshimochi, who had terminated ties with China: a short-lived Chosŏn attack on Tsushima (*Ōei no gaikō*) and the arrival of an envoy from the Ming emperor (pp. 268–269 and 287). This explains why the Sumiyoshi deity trounces Bai Juyi, an otherwise beloved poet in Japan, in a poetry contest.

Klein analyzes the intellectual influences on medieval noh playwrights Zeami, leader of the Kanze troupe who might have written *Haku rakuten*, and his son-in-law Konparu Zenchiku, leader of the Konparu troupe, and probable author of *Oshio* and *Kakitsubata*. This excavates the theoretical underpinnings of their plays' rhetorical structures. In chapter 2, Klein traces the Chinese source of the "six modes" (*rikugi*) in the Great Preface of the Classic of Poetry (Ch. *Shijing*), their adaptation in the Chinese and Japanese prefaces to the *Kokin wakashū* (ca. 920), and in a number of esoteric commentaries on the Japanese preface (late thirteenth century), in order to come to Zeami's critical writing *Rikugi* (1428). However, she interprets Zeami's use of the character 風 as "allegory constructed through implicit metaphor" (p. 73), failing to engage with Matsuoka Shinpei's assertion that Zeami idiosyncratically used the graph to indicate a quality of dance rather than poetry—despite its title, dance remains absent from this book.¹ I take Klein's reading of *Rikugi* as one conducted through Zenchiku's eyes, for as Noel Pinnington writes, most likely "the contents were a response to Zenchiku's own interests."²

Klein's comprehension of Zeami suffers elsewhere as well. She mistakenly identifies his use of "two sounds" in a passage of *Sandō* as "a pun" (p. 128). Elaboration by Zeami in the same passage and annotations in the standard edition and in translation make clear that the "two sounds" are not two punning homophones, one sound with two meanings, but rather a unified blend of language and music.³ While an error, it does not undermine Klein's argument that homophone puns layer meaning at key points in the plays, evidenced through examples from *Sarugaku dangi* and another citation from *Sandō* (pp. 129–131, 128).

Considering Klein's interest in how these plays created meaning, it would be worth asking if Zenchiku's plays could be read as parodies of the commentaries. Klein notes that some commentary material was popularized by the late fourteenth century (p. 3) and that Zenchiku was irreverent in simply ignoring inconvenient readings (p. 217). This reviewer wonders if Zenchiku was familiar with the outright dismissal of all allegorical and especially erotic readings by his patron Ichijō Kanera (Kaneyoshi, 1402–1481) in his *Ise monogatari gukenshō* (1474), a draft of which Kanera finished in 1460, five years before the first performance of *Oshio*.⁴ Is it possible to read *Oshio* as a parody? How might playwright-performers have handled disapproving reviews from patrons?

Dancing the Dharma convincingly argues that allegory was intentionally employed by noh's performer-playwrights to appeal to the desire of their martial patrons for novel entertainment with imperial cultural trappings. The book is aimed at scholars and intellectuals with an interest in premodern literary theory and performance literature. By

1 Matsuoka 2000, p. 315.

2 Pinnington 2010, pp. 77–78.

3 Omote 1974, p. 141; Quinn 1993, p. 82.

4 Bowring 1992, pp. 451–452.

seeking to understand noh plays as their first audiences might have, Klein rightfully claims that readers “will begin to recover at least some of their original intellectual richness and thus ... their scholarly allure” (p. 265). As *Dancing the Dharma* makes clear, the road is difficult and littered with pitfalls, but the rewards are worth the effort.

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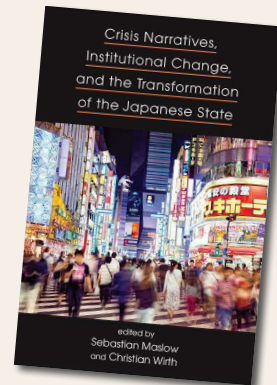
BOOK REVIEW

Crisis Narratives, Institutional Change, and the Transformation of the Japanese State

Edited by Sebastian Maslow and Christian Wirth

SUNY Press, 2021
xxvii + 375 pages.

Reviewed by Ian NEARY



Essays in collections like this often end up with little in common beyond having been first presented at the same event. This is not the case here, as the editors have insisted that each of their authors use Colin Hay's concept of crisis to frame their contributions.¹ Drawing on Hay's understanding, a crisis is defined in the collection as a "politically mediated moment of decisive intervention and structural transformation" (p. 266). This would seem to suggest that if there is no decisive intervention, or if no transformation results, then no crisis can be said to have taken place. So what do these authors conclude?

The contributors in the first section examine social crises. David Chiavacci focuses on a crisis narrative emerging in the last two decades that highlights increasing social inequality (*kakusa shakai*) and regional disparities. His data suggests that these claims are overstated, and also that the Abenomics policies which purported to address them failed to deliver much growth, or to distribute equally what little there was. Hiroko Takeda locates Abe's family and gender policies in the context of what she calls the LDP's authoritarian populism. This, she argues, seeks to "strengthen the moral framework of the family from the nationalist/statist perspective" (p. 71). However, despite trying to mobilize a sense of crisis, in his family policy Abe was only able to make minor adjustments. Similarly, universities in Japan have faced a number of critical challenges since the 1990s, not least a halving in the number of eighteen-year-old applicants. Jeremy Breden reviews the policies devised to deal with this, but also concludes that while they address the crisis narrative, they fail to resolve the underlying issues that sustain it.

Part II moves on to political and economic crises, beginning with a review of energy policy before and after the Fukushima meltdown. Koichi Hasegawa finds that despite the traumatic experiences of those living close to the nuclear facilities and clear evidence of "misconduct, malfunctioning and delay[s]" (p. 114), no fundamental change in policy has taken place—unlike in Germany, Taiwan, and South Korea, which are all now committed to phasing out nuclear power. In chapter 5, Iris Wiczorek examines policies that aimed to overcome Japan's Galapagos-like isolation from the global scientific community. Discourses of crisis and economic decline in the 1990s resulted in a shift from industrial to science

¹ Hay 1995.

and technology policy, and as Abe took over in the 2010s, the focus was on how and where to nurture a Silicon Valley ecosystem in Japan. Wiczorek reviews Abe's promises to bring about the "rebirth of Japan" through the creation of a "world leading 'super-smart society' (Society 5.0)" (p. 147). It is not clear whether the author thinks this amounts to a decisive intervention but the view that Japan has lost its global scientific edge remains common. Other chapters in parts I and II address particular dimensions of the Abenomics policy package, but Saori Shibata examines Abenomics more holistically, and concludes it proved unable to provide an alternative growth model. Rather, it remained simply another example of Japan's "inertial and reactive system" with no evidence of "reflective, strategic and decisive transformation" (p. 186).

The final section, Part III, addresses crises in Japan's foreign policy. Paul O'Shea examines the three policy "failures" that damaged the DPJ's reputation and underpinned Abe's claims, when he took office in December 2012, that there was a crisis facing the security of Japan. O'Shea, like Christopher Hughes and others, argues that DPJ foreign policy was not an outright failure. In combining a more independent foreign policy with a conciliatory attitude to Japan's neighbors, it strengthened the fundamental pillars of the U.S.-Japan alliance while loosening the normative and constitutional constraints on Japan's military. Although Abe described his foreign policy as setting Japan off on a new path, it is possible to see clear strands of continuity. Raymond Yamamoto looks at a single instrument of foreign policy, Official Development Assistance (ODA), to illustrate the rise of LDP reform entrepreneurs. ODA policy commanded wide support until the 1990s, when critics within the LDP, many of them supporters of Nippon Kaigi, began to point out that its recipients—especially in Asia, and particularly China—showed neither gratitude nor support for Japan in the international arena. This criticism resulted in 2003 in a toning down of the philanthropic principles espoused through Japan's ODA policy, and a later shift towards mandating that ODA projects contribute to Japan's security and economic growth.

The DPRK has been launching missiles at regular intervals into or over the Sea of Japan since 1993, while in 1997 the government recognized that at least six Japanese citizens had been abducted by North Korea. Japan-North Korea relations have thus been in a state of crisis for nearly thirty years, with no prospect for detente in sight. Ra Mason and Sebastian Maslow argue that Abe was able to use this crisis to justify the redesign of security institutions. In the final substantive chapter Shogo Suzuki reflects on the "crisis of confidence" in Japan as it discovered it was no longer number one. Japan's response to this was to claim some kind of moral superiority, at least within Asia, on the basis of having a liberal political system and notional adherence to democratic values. This is clear in Free and Open Indo-Pacific discourse, for example. More broadly it has seen the reemergence of references to cultural attributes supposedly unique to Japan, whether these be *wa* (harmony) or the spirit of *michi* (proper conduct). Suzuki suggests that these are effective in terms of delaying the emergence of a sense of crisis that would demand decisive interventions.

Collectively, these ten chapters contribute to our understanding of the post-Abe political economy in Japan. However, in none of these chapters does the crisis narrative result in a "decisive intervention" which resolves the issue, and thus none of the chapters should be regarded as "Crises" using Hay's criteria. At best these are "small-c" crises. So is Japan heading for what Hay calls a "catastrophic equilibrium" (p. 61), where the old cannot die and the new cannot be born? Some thought that the triple disasters of 2011 would shake

Japan out of its path-dependent (non) solutions and force it to embark on fundamental reform. The conclusion to be drawn from this important set of essays is that this has not happened, nor is it likely to.

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BOOK REVIEW

The Metabolist Imagination: Visions of the City in Postwar Japanese Architecture and Science Fiction

By William O. Gardner

University of Minnesota Press, 2020
232 pages.



Reviewed by Raffaele PERNICE

The Metabolist Imagination is a timely and valuable addition to a series of recent high-quality scholarly titles that have heralded renewed interest in the futuristic projects and legacy of the design philosophy of Metabolism, the influential Japanese avant-garde group which presented its manifesto at the Tokyo World Design Conference in 1960.¹ The book explores both direct and more subtle connections between the architectural invention and imagination associated with Metabolism and the world of science fiction. It specifically examines the creativity behind the utopian/dystopian visions of the city characteristic of disaster movies, apocalyptic literature, and the peculiar world of Japanese anime and manga between the 1950s and 1980s.

The author, a Japanese studies scholar rather than an architect or architectural historian, grounds his work in recent research and an innovative use of original sources in order to explain the development and characteristics of the architectural and urban design of the Metabolist group. The result is a comprehensive and appealing showcase of their main ideas and key projects, summarized through a rich and persuasive narrative that, nevertheless, largely adheres to established interpretations.

Three major themes are set out in the introduction, which collectively link architecture and science fiction and provide the overarching framework for the book and its six chapters. These are megastructures over land and sea; capsules (as architectural form); and apocalyptic cities, or ruins as architecture. The early chapters revisit the story of Metabolism and introduce its key members, projects, and design proposals. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the Metabolist group and their key megastructure projects, with references to capsule architectures. Tange Kenzō's "Tokyo Plan 1960" is drawn upon to demonstrate the Metabolists' emphasis on new technology and large-scale prefabrication as the engines which would foster the rapid modernization and urbanization of a defeated Japan. Chapter 2, focussing on Isozaki Arata and Komatsu Sakyō, and chapter 3, on Komatsu's disaster fiction, both examine ruins and the destruction of cities by either natural disaster or human intervention. A recurrent discourse is the destruction of Tokyo, which ultimately represents the larger destiny of urban civilization, leaving its ruins behind. For Isozaki and Komatsu,

¹ See Pernice 2022, Mack 2022, and Jacquet and Souteyrat 2020.

these stand for the loss of memory and decadence of human values and cities, but are more optimistically read by the likes of Kikutake Kiyonori and Kurokawa Kishō as opportunities for reconstruction, rebirth, and regeneration.

Chapter 4 hones in on the 1970 Osaka Expo and various government sponsored think-tanks, such as the “Society of the Future,” which advocated for the use of technology as a catalyst to enhance society and promote the structural transformation of Japan. Chapter 5, which contains a series of reflections that were produced in the period 1950s–1990s on the future of the city as a cybernetic environment, and chapter 6, which discusses the impact of Metabolist concepts on three anime films produced in Japan in the late-Bubble years, are both highly original. However, the former appears at times to be a patchwork of ideas that do not quite cohere (the author admits it is a “rough sketch,” p. 141). The latter effectively links themes of continuous destruction and rebirth and the development and ruin of Tokyo to a critique of various political agendas that privilege economic profits over the loss of old neighborhoods filled with social memories. However, this final chapter should have been refined and extended beyond the three films in question, *Akira* and *Patlabor 1 & 2*. The author is here writing for a North American readership less familiar with the influence and diffusion of Japanese sci-fi, anime, and manga than their European counterparts. Writing for the latter would necessitate expanding the list of references to include at least *Gundam* and 1970s and 1980s popular *mecha* (piloted robot) stories like *Grandizer*, *Mazinger*, or *Macross/Robotech*.

The book provides a sound historical background for the thriving of Metabolism, introducing key elements of its futuristic architecture, and detailing its influence on anime, literature, and the broader cultural milieu both at the time and in the years since. The documenting and references to the historical and cultural context in which Metabolism developed are really valuable here. Rapid economic growth and social transformation in the postwar decades resulted in intensive urbanization, and fostered the rediscovery of traditional architecture and art—part of the search for new architectural and urban spatial concepts able to negotiate the retention of the past in the future. Reflection on the dualities of old/new, change/stability, and tradition/modernity of architecture and cities are at the root of Metabolist thinking, as they were for Japanese architecture more broadly.²

While full of insights, the various chapters of the book are only loosely connected with one another. Given many of the chapters were first published as stand-alone articles, this is perhaps to be expected. More disappointing is the limited number of images, which is a severe constraint in a study documenting the highly visual and distinctive “Metabolist Imaginations,” as well as the “Visions of the City” in architecture, sci-fi, and anime to which they gave birth. On the other hand, the primary strength of the text is its documentation of the cultural milieu within which Metabolism’s influence expanded, and its accentuation of the frequently neglected links between architectural planning, urban visions, and science fiction culture during these turbulent but transformative years in Japan’s modern history.

2 See for instance Kawazoe and Tange 1965, Inoue 1985, Ashihara 1983.

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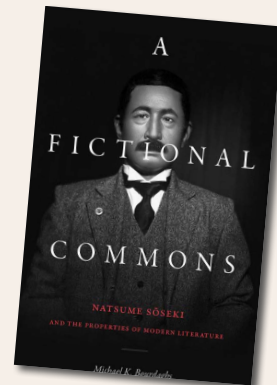
BOOK REVIEW

A Fictional Commons: Natsume Sōseki and the Properties of Modern Literature

By Michael K. Bourdaghs

Duke University Press, 2021
240 pages.

Reviewed by Gouranga Charan PRADHAN



The humanoid robot with dark suit and black necktie on the cover of *A Fictional Commons* undoubtedly resembles the noted Japanese novelist Natsume Sōseki. It can even speak, albeit in the voice of Sōseki's great grandson. And the technologies and know-how to develop this android are mediated by underpaid software engineers working in the so-called silicon valleys of Bangalore and Shenzhen. The android belongs to many.

Products of the embodied forms of accumulated labor, whether literary fiction or artificial intelligence, are common property. In this volume, Michael K. Bourdaghs revisits Natsume Sōseki's works to remind us that Sōseki also belongs to all, and so does his literary output. Bourdaghs has worked extensively on Sōseki, and the present volume is a welcome addition to the existing literature. But as the subtitle of the book suggests, Bourdaghs here attempts something new: exploring vital questions of cultural and intellectual property ownership, especially of literary fictions, through Sōseki's works. Bourdaghs persuades us that "literature becomes a playful, noninstrumental site for imagining a different economy, a new commons, alternative modes of communal owning—which is to say, sharing" (p. 12).

The volume consists of four chapters, thematically linked but independent, as well as a critical introduction and extensive conclusion. The first chapter discusses how the nonhuman animals in Sōseki's novels—a nameless cat, a trickster badger, and a stray sheep—offer possibilities to decenter humans, while showing how the modern concept of "property ownership" is an arbitrary one. The animal protagonists in Sōseki's works complicate the human ownership of animals, showing humans under the gaze of nonhuman animals and thus raising questions regarding the extent to which humans own their own selves.

The second chapter considers Sōseki's portrayal of madness in *The Gate* (*Mon* 門, 1910) as another form of ownership, one with the potential to disrupt both economic ownership and ownership of the self. This understanding of madness allows for literary production without claiming ownership. Bourdaghs demonstrates how *The Gate* employs American psychologist William James's notion of stream of consciousness to show the protagonist as "unable to function as a proper subject in the modern regime of ownership" (p. 77), suggesting that he owns nothing, including his own self.

While chapter 2 examines ownership from the perspective of the still-evolving modern scientific discipline of psychology, chapter 3 introduces sociology, another new discipline that Sōseki extensively employed to question the modern regime of property ownership. Bourdaghs focuses on *To the Spring Equinox and Beyond* (*Higan sugi made* 彼岸過迄, 1912), another famous novel, to show how it “wiggles and twists, groping its way toward an experimental ‘way out’ from the ideologies of property that were hegemonic in the Meiji period” (p. 94). Sōseki seeks to become a “knowing subject” within the field of sociology, an academic discipline holding racially-inflected prejudices towards non-Western societies. This complicates Sōseki’s position, for he needed sociology to develop a radical definition of literature that transcended nation-states and linguistic divisions while countering Western academia’s prejudices. Sōseki here borrows James’s notion of experiences and memories as forms of personal property, but transforms it radically. James claimed that possessive individualism is nontransferable, but Sōseki argues in *To the Spring Equinox and Beyond*, *Kokoro* (1914) and other novels that literature makes such private property transferable. He adapts the ideas of the French sociologist Marcel Mauss to the field of literature, but never forgets to critique Western sociology. Although Bourdaghs does not explicitly make this point, his argument shows that Meiji intellectuals could cross disciplinary boundaries to experiment with innovative and at times radical ideas, as Sōseki does in his search for a new definition of literature. We have lost this epistemological approach, perhaps due to an undue emphasis on the maintenance of rigid disciplinary boundaries.

In the penultimate chapter, Bourdaghs turns to *Kokoro* to examine the critical but rarely debated problem of property inheritance in the Meiji period, looking particularly at the younger brothers, women, and colonial subjects paradoxically “defined as being potentially both a subject and object of ownership—that is, as being simultaneously a possession and a possessor” (p. 124). Traditionally, property inheritance in East Asia was reserved for the eldest son, a norm that Sōseki interrogates through his fiction. In *Kokoro*, for instance, Bourdaghs finds at least eight instances of last wills, of which all except one falls apart. Sōseki’s protagonists in many of his novels prefer to forfeit their right to inheritance. Bourdaghs claims that this allowed Sōseki to disturb both traditional and modern property norms through his fictional productions that were otherwise impractical in the real world.

The concluding chapter touches upon a variety of leitmotifs, including world literature, translation studies, and copyright laws, but the unifying thread here remains ownership, particularly how Sōseki skillfully avoided being pigeonholed within world literature by not being drawn into it, refusing to have his work translated into Western languages. Sōseki’s theory of literature, Bourdaghs argues, “encourages forms of reading that poach literary texts from existing canons and release them into new commons, moving from an economy defined by scarcity to one defined by plentitude” (pp. 148–149). Bourdaghs also touches upon a variety of other problems, including the division of intellectual labor, the disciplinization of scholarship, and the divide between the humanities and the natural sciences, and by extension, the so-called crisis of the humanities. We are still seeking answers to many of these issues today.

Bourdaghs mentions that some of Sōseki’s novels are based on East Asian literary genres, but he does not explore the influence of East Asian literary traditions. Might Sōseki’s “fictional commons,” a shared artistic pool, originate there? The Japanese poetic tradition of *honkadori* (allusion), for instance, not only celebrated past literary repertoires but actively

borrowed from a common cultural and aesthetic pool to produce new literature. Do such past literary practices, with which Sōseki was well acquainted, have any bearing on his idea of a fictional commons?

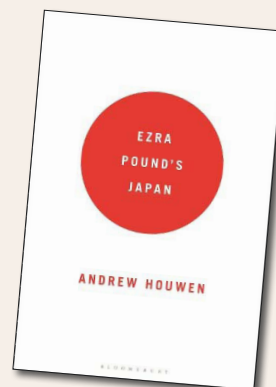
Japanese scholars often complain that North American Japanese studies researchers do not use enough primary sources. But Bourdaghs's volume is an exception. He makes extensive use of Japanese and Western sources, both primary and secondary, drawing seamlessly on work in multiple languages. This volume is extensively referenced and comes with an exhaustive list of bibliographic studies, constituting almost a quarter of the whole volume, which will be of immense help to both students and scholars interested in Sōseki, and in Meiji- and Taisho-era Japanese literature more broadly.

BOOK REVIEW

Ezra Pound's Japan

By Andrew Houwen

Bloomsbury Academic, 2021
280 pages.



Reviewed by Stephen RODDY

Andrew Houwen's study of Ezra Pound's Japanophilia is a welcome contribution to the existing scholarship on Pound's engagement with Japanese culture, and a corrective to various misconceptions and gaps in knowledge and understanding of this topic. Although focused primarily on Pound's creative life (ca. 1910–1960), the book begins in the early- to mid-Meiji era, and concludes with Pound's final years, thus covering approximately an entire century (ca. 1870–1970). It is divided into three parts of roughly equal length: (1) Pound and *hokku*, (2) Pound and *noh*, and (3) *noh* and the poem *The Cantos*, with a total of twelve chapters; as is evident from this summary, Pound's interest in *noh* takes up roughly two-thirds of the book, and could be considered both its heart and its principal contribution.

Houwen takes issue with statements by T. S. Eliot, Pound himself, and Pound's most influential biographer and interpreter, Hugh Kenner (1923–2003), amongst others, that *noh* was neither central to Pound's art, nor a significant component of his oeuvre. As Kenner put it, Pound's acknowledged masterpieces among *The Cantos* were relatively less influenced by *noh*; correspondingly, his translations of *noh* plays do not rise above the status of mere "translations," and are neither especially masterly nor significant. In part three, Houwen argues that Pound's early fascination with *noh* echoes through many of the later *Cantos*, and that specific plays (especially *Takasago*, *Kumasaka*, and *Aoi no Ue*) retained their hold on him and thus should inform our readings of some of his most memorable poems in the China (1940) and Pisan (1948) sequences.

Responding to the neglect of this aspect of Pound's work, Houwen marshals correspondence and some recently published materials unavailable to, or not consulted by, Kenner and others as evidence of this critical misconception. Moreover, he connects these arguments to the rise of Vorticism and *hokku* discussed in part one by demonstrating how Pound continued to view *noh* as a powerful expression of Vorticism's "Unifying Image," which informed Pound's poetic theory and practice throughout his later life (p. 125).¹

Houwen sensibly avoids well-studied topics that are less germane to this study, such as Pound's antisemitism, or those of his private or public relationships that were relatively

¹ Vorticism was an avant-garde group which emerged in London after 1912, which advocated for relating art to industrialization and the dynamism of the modern world. *Hokku* are the progenitor of the modern haiku.

unaffected by his interest in things Japanese. However, he performs an important service by demonstrating how Pound's later views of noh as a martial and nationalistic art form closely mirrored and were inextricably intertwined with his support for European fascism. These two strands of Pound's life are reflected in his appreciation for a joint Japanese-German film, *Die Tochter der Samurai* (*Daughter of the Samurai*; Japanese title, *Atarashiki tsuchi*, 1937), which includes a brief segment of a performance of the noh play *Aoi no ue*. Tracing the history of shogunate and imperial patronage of noh, and its symbolic appropriation by the Japanese military, especially during wartime, Houwen shows how these associations became important to Pound when his interest in Japan revived after a nearly two-decade hiatus thanks to his involvement with the Tokyo-based literary journal *VOU* after 1936.

It should be noted that some of Pound's own writings, as well as other assessments of his work, tend to deemphasize his Japanese interests in favor of the seminal impact on him of China, specifically Ernest Fenellosa's theories about Chinese characters, as well as Chinese poets like Li Bo and Qu Yuan, Confucianism, and other aspects of Chinese culture. Houwen cites some of Pound's correspondence to show that he, like others, tended to view Chinese literature and culture through the prism of its reception in Japan, where Japanese and some Westerners had argued that it was better preserved and better understood than in China itself (p. 200). Thus, even when Pound professed to admire China as the greater, more "solid" civilization, he did so through a Japanese filter, as for example in his consistent transliteration of the Chinese poet Li Bo's name as "Ri Haku" (its Japanese pronunciation). Houwen also gives a counterexample (p. 204) from *Canto* LVIII, where Pound relied largely on an eighteenth century Jesuit history of China to briefly sketch the history of Japan from Emperor Jinmu to Toyotomi Hideyoshi as prelude to the fall of the Ming dynasty and rise of the Manchus. In a letter written around the time of its composition, Pound complains that he had not found any good histories of Japan, and thus, Houwen speculates, he had not been able to produce a "Japan Cantos" that might have followed and complemented his China sequence. This may indeed be one reason for the greater visibility of China over Japan, which despite its relative inconspicuousness in the *Cantos* remains vital, Houwen convincingly argues, through the multiple echoes of noh (p. 195).

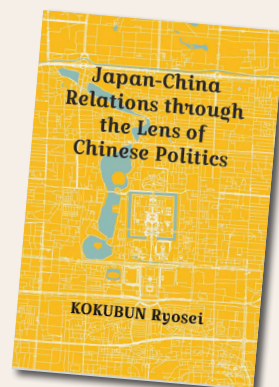
Another factor may have been Pound's own ambivalence toward Japan's invasion of China, especially in the aftermath of the Nanjing Massacre of December 1937–January 1938. *Canto* LVIII begins with Japan's 1592–1598 invasion and occupation of Korea as the incident precipitating the fall of the Ming court and the humiliation of Korea, and much of the rest of the poem dwells on the social chaos caused by peasant rebellions and disorder in China during the 1620s–1640s. The poem ends on a plaintive note with the Chinese character for "peace" beside the romanization of its Chinese pronunciation, "p'ing." In the late-1930s, Pound cast himself as a committed peacemaker and intermediary seeking to avert conflict between the US and Europe; perhaps we might read this poem as a prophetic plea for an end to hostilities in East Asia, lest peasant revolutionaries take advantage of wartime mayhem to destroy the pillars of neo-traditional states to which Pound was so passionately attached.

BOOK REVIEW

Japan-China Relations through the Lens of Chinese Politics

By Kokubun Ryosei

Japan Publishing Industry Foundation for Culture, 2021
326 pages.



Reviewed by Shogo SUZUKI

Japan-China Relations through the Lens of Chinese Politics, originally published in Japanese in 2017 and now translated into English, is a very welcome addition to the field of Sino-Japanese relations. The book consists of two parts. The first provides a chronological survey of the developments that have taken place in the People's Republic of China (PRC) since the death of Mao Zedong. In the second part, the author shifts his focus to Sino-Japanese relations, and examines (also in chronological order) key events that have shaped interaction between the two states.

There are a number of features that make this book useful for furthering our understanding of Sino-Japanese relations. First, it is very strong on the political history of bilateral relations between the two countries, a consequence of the original Japanese being targeted at a more general audience. This may have shortcomings for some readers, as I will note below. Yet there is no doubt that it provides a very detailed overview of events that have shaped the two states' diplomatic relations. This will be particularly useful for scholars or students who are relatively new to the field. The author's deep and authoritative understanding of the topic enables this "general history" to be written and communicated clearly to a wider audience.

Second, as the book's title implies, the author provides a very interesting "Sino-centric" interpretation of Sino-Japanese relations. The key argument in the second part of the book is that most analysts have placed too much emphasis on the Japanese side of the equation. The author argues that China's domestic power politics within the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leadership constitute the chief factor influencing Beijing's policies towards Japan. This argument has considerable merit, particularly in the context of successive controversies over Japan's collective memory of its imperial past (the "history issue"). Too often, analysts are quick to point the finger of blame at Japanese nationalist hawks who make poorly-thought out, morally offensive remarks that seek to downplay or even whitewash any Japanese wrongdoing in the past. Ascribing changes in Sino-Japanese bilateral ties to the actions of these figures does, to a certain extent, reflect the political sensibilities of analysts, who are quite rightly concerned with the rise of historical revisionism within Japan. In the context of analyzing Sino-Japanese relations, however, it can lead us to pay less attention to domestic political dynamics within the PRC. While it would be wrong to say that the

Chinese leadership does not care about how Japan remembers its history, this does not mean that the PRC's policies towards Japan are unaffected by contests over political power within the CCP.

The author's main claim is that Japan has been strategically used by certain CCP elites. At the beginning of the 1980s, it served as a tool to divert criticism by CCP conservatives of the overtly "capitalist" policies pursued by reformists such as Deng Xiaoping. Since the death of Deng in 1997, it is the Jiang Zemin faction within the CCP that has had the largest influence on the PRC's policies towards Japan. Jiang's father was a cadre of the Wang Jingwei regime, the puppet regime set up during World War II by the Japanese, and Jiang himself attended the National Central University in Nanjing, which had strong links to the Japanese. Kokubun Ryosei puts forward the fascinating argument that this background, as well as Jiang's own personal antipathy towards Japan, has led him and his faction to launch anti-Japanese attacks regularly. While such measures may rock Sino-Japanese relations, they served Jiang's domestic political interests by bolstering his nationalist credentials and providing an effective tool with which to snipe at his political rivals and protect his faction's vested interests.

Finally, another key contribution of this monograph is that it gives non-Western scholars and students access to a work that was originally written by a Japanese scholar for a Japanese audience. Within Anglophone scholarship, studies of Sino-Japanese relations are dominated by scholars based in the United States. While these works have provided valuable contributions to the field, there is no doubt that they sometimes come with their own nationalist baggage. As part of the move to "decolonize the curriculum," greater attention should be paid to making the voices of Asian scholars available to a wider audience. This book makes a positive contribution in that respect, for which it should be commended.

While this is a strong contribution to the literature, there are areas where additional information would have been appreciated, particularly for this somewhat greedy reviewer. One is with regard to footnotes, which are somewhat sparse in places. The author's key point about CCP elite politics is extremely interesting, and also plausible in a one-party state where the decisions of the Politburo can have wide policy implications. However, the lack of footnotes does leave the impression that some of the arguments are potentially speculative, and more concrete information or references would have given the author's arguments greater credibility. I could of course be demanding the impossible here. In an opaque regime like the PRC, it is impossible to access information that pertains to top level political decision-making. Inevitably, analysts must resort to "Kremlinology," and make "intelligent guesses." There is also the need for analysts to protect their informants. The author does, to his credit, acknowledge these difficulties associated with analyzing China, and his academic integrity here is something which should be lauded.

My other point is related to the well-known "level of analysis" problem. This has generated a vast library of literature, and there is no need to revisit it here. The point, however, is that foreign policy can be analyzed from multiple angles, each with their own merits. The author could have considered adding a chapter looking at these different approaches, and elucidated on the merits of each approach, particularly his own domestic-level analysis, which seeks to open up the black box of the state's domestic political decision-making process. This would have granted the book greater utility to students of foreign

policy analysis, as well as students of Chinese politics, and helped this book reach a wider audience.

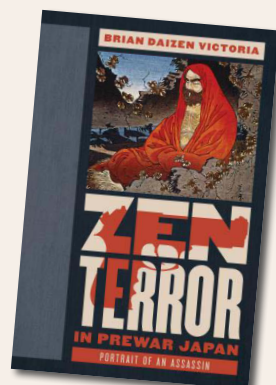
These points are, however, minor. They do not take away from the fact that Kokubun's book has made a valuable contribution to the field, and I look forward to more excellent analyses by Japan-based scholars reaching beyond their domestic readership.

BOOK REVIEW

Zen Terror in Prewar Japan: Portrait of an Assassin

By Brian Daizen Victoria

Rowman & Littlefield, 2020
392 pages.



Reviewed by Christopher W. A. SZPILMAN

Brian Victoria's book aims to expose the complicity of Zen in Japanese aggression and terrorism by focusing on the life of Inoue Akira (or Nisshō, 1886–1967), the mastermind of the notorious Blood Pledge Corps Incident of February and March 1932.

Inoue was a university dropout and former Japanese army spy in China who in the 1920s presided over a temple/academy in Mito as a self-styled Buddhist priest. Although uncouth, Inoue possessed the gift of the gab and a certain charisma. Early sponsors included Count Tanaka Mitsuaki, a former Imperial Household Minister, and General Banzai Rihachirō, the army's foremost China expert, while disciples were an incongruous mixture of elite Imperial University students and simple farmers from Mito. Right-wing activists, including radical junior army and navy officers, paid Inoue frequent visits and he radicalized them further. Yet little at the time set him apart from various other obscure right-wing figures.

Inoue suddenly gained notoriety when, dismayed by the failure of recent military and civilian plots, he decided he could do better. His plan was simple: his most devoted acolytes, retrospectively known as the Blood Pledge Corps, would assassinate twenty prominent politicians and businessmen, causing the collapse of civilian government and its replacement with a military junta. Inoue set his murderous scheme in motion in early 1932, but only two assassinations took place before the police arrested all the plotters. A lengthy trial ensued. Inoue and his two successful assassins received life sentences, but were pardoned and released in 1940.

While Inoue relished fifteen minutes of fame grandstanding at his trial, his post-prison career was lackluster. Prince Konoe Fumimaro allowed him to stay in his residence, but, contrary to the book's claims, Inoue played no significant role in the Pacific War. In 1946, American investigators concluded he was not important enough to prosecute in the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal. Having failed to gain control over Japan's ultranationalists in the 1950s, Inoue faded from public view and died in relative obscurity in 1967.

Victoria's is the first ever book-length work in English on this sinister figure. He corrects the prevalent misconception that Inoue was a Nichiren sect priest (p. 3), but his work suffers from serious defects.

First, Victoria seems confused about the role of Zen in shaping Inoue as a terrorist. While titling his book *Zen Terror*, implying Zen was at the root of Inoue's actions, he denies at one point that Zen motivated Inoue to engage in terror (p. 217). On the strength of Victoria's own evidence, Inoue emerges not as a Zen fanatic, but as an eclectic figure who cherry-picked from a variety of Buddhist creeds. Since countless adherents of Zen have shown no particular propensity for either violence or terrorism, it seems likely that Inoue's personality and his extreme political views shaped his terrorist proclivities more than any religious influences, Zen or otherwise. Victoria fails to consider this obvious possibility.

Second, the "life-history method" which Victoria uses is problematic in the extreme. This relies on "life story ... as a primary source of the study of history and culture" to remedy "the overall lack of studies based on primary data" (pp. 3–4), a puzzling statement given the multitude of works on Japan's prewar terrorism. Victoria spurns archival research, not listing a single unpublished source in his bibliography, but also fails to cite relevant published primary sources, and disregards important secondary materials.¹ He also relies on sources that most historians would dismiss as inappropriate. For example, to explain Konoe's aggressive policy toward China, he cites Gerhard Weinberg's work on Hitler's foreign policy, though Weinberg, a distinguished diplomatic historian of Germany, is no authority on Japan or Prince Konoe (p. 286).²

Victoria's account leans heavily on Inoue's 1953 autobiography, accepting uncritically the words of a "man of exaggerated self-importance who consistently tried to write himself into history."³ The book reproduces Inoue's absurd claims that he could converse with insects and animals and that he predicted the Great Kanto earthquake (p. 74). Inoue's assertions that he overawed the Americans who interrogated him in 1946 are also credulously reported. Hugh Barnett Helm, a counsel at the United States International Prosecution Section, apparently regarded Inoue as an "amazing genius" (p. 165), while whenever Chief Justice William Webb caught a glimpse of him, he "ducked into an office" for fear of humiliation (p. 166). According to Victoria, lawyers were not the only ones whom Inoue impressed. He writes that, on meeting Inoue, the journalist Mark Gayn exclaimed, "This is the first time in my life I have encountered thoughts as wonderful as yours" (p. 167). I looked in vain through Gayn's *Japan Diary* for confirmation of this extravagant praise.⁴

Third, sometimes Victoria makes claims that amount to conspiracy theory. For example, he contends that "Hirohito and his advisors" plotted to get rid of Minobe Tatsukichi's "organ theory" because it hampered "their efforts to take complete control of the government" (p. 22). Yet it is beyond dispute that the chief goal of the anti-Minobe campaign was to oust the relatively liberal advisors from their court positions.⁵ Moreover, Victoria, without offering any evidence, lists the Shōwa Emperor as a "major Inoue-related figure" (p. 283). Not only does Victoria rely uncritically on Inoue's autobiography, but he also invents an imperial conspiracy.

1 A key published primary source not utilized is Senshū Daigaku Imamura Hōritsu Kenkyūshitsu 1986–1992; important secondary ones would include Nakajima 2013.

2 Weinberg 1980.

3 Large 2001, p. 535.

4 Gayn 1981.

5 Chadani 2009, p. 143.

The book is also plagued with basic errors. Inoue did not save Baron Hiranuma Kiichirō's life by thwarting an assassination attempt (p. 147). Only good luck saved Hiranuma, who was shot six times by his assailant. Nor was Hiranuma responsible for the "creation" of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association; on the contrary, he opposed it, and that was why there was an attempt on his life. Ōkawa Shūmei was not a member of "the Blood Oath Corps" (p. 188), and Marquis Tokugawa Yoshichika was not involved in the formation of the Taikakai (Taika Reform Society) in 1920 (p. 290). The name of the well-known Japanese historian is Otabe Yūji, not "Ota Beyūji," as Victoria renders it (pp. 318, 337).

In fairness, Victoria does occasionally get it right. He notes, "Readers unfamiliar with Bergamini's work ... are cautioned against accepting at face value the author's always flamboyant and sometimes inaccurate description of events" (p. 326).⁶ It is advice that readers should follow when reading Victoria's book.

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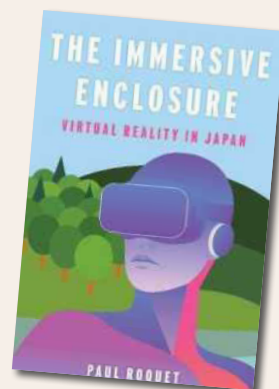
⁶ Bergamini 1971.

BOOK REVIEW

The Immersive Enclosure: Virtual Reality in Japan

By Paul Roquet

Columbia University Press, 2022
254 pages.



Reviewed by Michael VALLANCE

Virtual reality is a three-dimensional, computer-generated environment. As you don a virtual reality headset your vision adjusts to a new environment and your imagination jettisons your body's sensory and physical restraints as you leave behind the real world, the first-person perceptual logic inviting you to enter a seductive metaverse.

The Immersive Enclosure by Paul Roquet expertly details the social and historical situatedness of Japanese interpretations of the alluring metaverse. In early iterations, virtual reality practitioners in the U.S. constructed virtual environments to simulate the real world, but in Japan the goal was to obscure reality and enter a new world, positioning the user as the focal point of perceptual enclosure. Roquet tackles this perspective by examining the cultural politics of new media as it transformed in Japan from shared entertainment (for example, TV, hi-fi stereo) to isolated privatized perceptual bubbles (for example, the Walkman, Oculus Go) and the desire for personal spatial control to disengage from the real world. The cultural politics of virtual reality is subsequently investigated through an historical framing of the politics of perceptual enclosure.

Jaron Lanier, who is credited with popularizing the term “virtual reality,” struggled to classify virtual reality research projects coming out of Japan and had to simply refer to them as strange experiments—peculiar technological solutions of undefined problems, where light-hearted entertainment was prioritized over serious application. Japan is often viewed from afar as bizarre and weird, with glitzy neon cityscapes represented by dystopian futuristic scenes from the Philip Dick-inspired movie, *Bladerunner*. This image is no different when viewed in the imagined environments of Japanese virtual reality. But it is not odd at all. *The Immersive Enclosure* informs us that Japan has its own interpretations of virtual reality, and these are likely to be discordant with the aspirations of Mark Zuckerberg's heavily-financed metaverse.

The book begins with the emergence of the one-person media space, then guides us through the research and technology of the popular culture of virtual reality in Japan. Chapter 1 discusses the historically central role of audio as people desire isolation in non-virtual immersive spaces. Initially there was much disdain shown to commuters wearing the Walkman, for instance, but the emergence of the one-person space as a physical entity, with one room apartment blocks proliferating in urban spaces, demanded a particular

social and physical reframing of technologies in order to accommodate spatial ambience, and subsequent acceptance. Yet it may be a while before youngsters wearing virtual reality headsets on public transport meet the same level of acceptance in mainstream Japan.

Chapter 2 details the reimagining of virtual reality towards the fictional, fantasy worlds which dominate Japanese games. With the competing terms—cyberspace, artificial reality, and virtual reality—having shifted the narrative away from the initially dominant U.S. military applications, a discussion of Japanese etymological interpretations of an imaginary space contrasts hypothetical fiction simulating reality. This helps us understand why Japanese approach virtual reality technologies “as a tool for fabricating fictional layers that add to rather than simulate the existing world” (p. 79).

Chapter 3 reflects on the notion of corporations controlling its workers as physical commutes and communication decline, arguing that an “emphasis on perceptual enclosure stands to make even a person’s social ‘presence’ dependent on the whims of VR platform providers” (p. 81). Corporations’ desire for increased productivity of the telepresent workforce has been experienced during the past two years of the coronavirus pandemic lockdown as many people have worked from home, but future embodied VR-enabled telework systems may lead to people being technologically housebound, and maybe even too scared to go outdoors. Roquet argues it is imperative to consider whose interests are served by remote working, and what it means to be present in the perceptual enclosure of work. There are warnings about privacy and tracking in virtual reality, the control of our virtual social interactions (as we have witnessed with current social media), the monetization of our views, and disciplining workers to conform in the occupational metaverse.

Chapter 4 discusses the cultural politics of a perceptual enclosure, with the virtual reality headset being a portal to immersion in fantasy worlds, and analyzes the desires, anxieties, and fears of other worlds. The examples of a reimagining of colonial pasts cast Japanese as altruistic saviors over harmful Americans in a gothic mediaeval world of European architecture. Virtual reality in Japan is motivated by “the quest narratives of fantasy literature and role-playing games” (p. 106), with narratives intertwined with “transformations in the Japanese social and historical imagination” (p. 106).

Chapter 5 highlights patriarchal control of virtual reality spaces, with human men immersed in a world of skimpily-clad, fetishized, teenage virtual girls. Even Unity-chan, a freely available 3D model of the most popular application for virtual reality development, is a sexualized heroine character. The relationship with real-world anime, manga, games, and *otaku* are sensibly discussed, as references to mainstream and academic literature provide balanced arguments: “Otaku defenses of the sexualization of young girls often hinge on the assertion that the characters are entirely and explicitly fictional” (p. 150). However, as Roquet acknowledges, Japanese virtual reality is rife with gendered stereotypes of boys in control and girls being submissive. Despite a desire for more gender equity, the current beneficiaries of virtual reality remain predictable in Japan’s patriarchal society.

Roquet concludes with a call for more open virtual reality repositories beyond the powerful corporations such as Meta, and cautions that as we become immersed in an enclosed space, relocating our real world, we need to confront “what it means for a media interface to assert control over someone’s spatial awareness” (p. 177). Through theoretical

exploration and pragmatic exemplification of perceptual enclosure, Roquet successfully demonstrates how virtual reality in Japan emerges from a uniquely cultural and historical perspective, inspiring others to address the local specificity of their virtual reality. *The Immersive Enclosure* can be their guide.

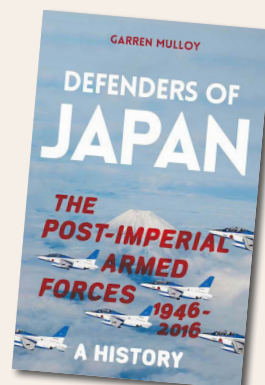
BOOK REVIEW

Defenders of Japan: The Post-Imperial Armed Forces 1946–2016, A History

By Garren Mulloy

C. Hurst & Co. Ltd., 2021
440 pages.

Reviewed by Corey WALLACE



Garren Mulloy's *Defenders of Japan* is an ambitious attempt to provide an integrated history of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces (SDF). Weaving together history, international relations, and military studies, as well as English and Japanese sources, Mulloy eschews oversimplified narratives of postwar defense debates and the policies Japan adopted. *Defenders of Japan* is evenhanded in describing both the capabilities and limitations of Japan's postwar military and offers original material that enhances the discussion over the postwar evolution of Japan's security and defense policy.

Chapter 1 places the 1954 establishment of the SDF in its historical context. It makes the obvious connections to SDF predecessor organizations (the National Safety Force, the National Police Reserve, and the Maritime Safety Agency) and details the personnel and institutional connections to Imperial Japan's military forces. Mulloy is most original, however, in exploring the "blank" period between 1946 and 1954, where a number of Japanese "holdouts," "converts," and "captives," including demobilized troops, were involved in fighting in different parts of Asia—both with Western forces and against them (pp. 12–25). While no official Japanese government-sanctioned military organization was involved in combat during this period, many Japanese ex-combatants certainly were. Citizen involvement in non-combat duties inside and outside Japan set a precedent for later "para-civilian" involvement in the Vietnam War, where Japanese would crew landing and cargo ships.

Chapter 1 also provides real insight into postwar Japanese rearmament debates. There is increasing scholarly recognition that Japanese attitudes towards defense policy in the immediate postwar period were contingent, with the eventual antimilitarist gloss and restraints imposed on Japanese rearmament by no means pre-determined. The postwar conservative battle between the "mainstream" Yoshida Shigeru and "revisionist" Kishi Nobusuke over the direction of defense and security is well known, but Mulloy also describes the important early influence of another conservative, Ashida Hitoshi. Ashida sought moderate rearmament based on constitutional revision, a degree of independence from the United States, and, crucially, on the basis of transparent democratic assent. Ashida argued Yoshida's approach to these three issues was disingenuous and unprincipled for a new democracy attempting to overcome its imperial legacy (pp. 26–31) and would distort

discussions of Japan's national security. Ashida's critique foreshadows the "civilian control" problems introduced later in *Defenders of Japan*.

In chapter 2, Mulloy systematically reviews the establishment, institutional culture, and major events that affected the structure, posture, and capabilities of each of the SDF's three services. This comparative approach allows the reader to appreciate the unique factors shaping the evolution of each service as they sought legitimacy within society, politics, and the alliance. While there is extant in-depth research exploring Japan's Ground and Maritime Self-Defense Forces, *Defenders of Japan* also fleshes out the establishment and evolution of the Air Self-Defense Force. All three services are dealt with in one omnibus seventy-seven page chapter, but I felt that more detail on the post-Cold War evolution of each of the three services could have been covered in separate chapters.

The third chapter provides a useful and detailed discussion of post-Cold War SDF Overseas Despatch Operations (ODOs). Mulloy delves into the struggles and successes of the SDF as they negotiated "a journey with few maps." The purpose of the final section of the third chapter is unclear, however, and some geopolitical context could have been omitted. From this point onwards, *Defenders of Japan* loses its thematic structure and becomes somewhat encyclopedic in describing Japanese security events and policies since the end of the Cold War.

Nevertheless, throughout the book, and in chapter 4 in particular, Mulloy throws the spotlight on the inadequacies of Japan's postwar civilian leaders and their approaches to defense and security policy. Despite constantly raising the alarm about "existential threats" (p. 66), Japan's conservative leaders oversaw the emergence of a "responsibility gap," as they prioritized the avoidance of political damage (pp. 112–113). Mulloy argues that "fear among Japanese politicians decrying public ignorance of security issues" led them to avoid "engaging in security discussions with civil society" (p. 194). Even the vaunted 2015 security legislation reflected limitations in civilian leadership, as it did little to help the SDF navigate its most dangerous post-Cold War ODO in the South Sudan UNMISS operation (pp. 219–227). Mulloy also notes how hypothetical scenarios, such as rescuing Japanese nationals during a conflict or minesweeping the Strait of Hormuz, have dominated the parliamentary debate, rather than more pressing and genuinely existential scenarios, such as Taiwan and DPRK military emergencies and China-related maritime security challenges to Japan's southwest (p. 203).

This "avoidance approach" also limits push back against entrenched interests in the bureaucracy, parliament, and industry. Mulloy observes that during the Cold War, "Discussions by default were often conducted within closed LDP policy committees, largely divorced from JSDF advice" (p. 114) and defense tribes in the Diet asserted their own service- or industry-specific interests and pet projects at the expense of broader discussions regarding Japan's defense portfolio and strategic aims (and trade-offs). That this remains a contemporary issue is demonstrated by the LDP-led push to have the Izumo turned into a "aircraft carrier" (the limitations of which Mulloy discusses on p. 255) and LDP enthusiasm for foreign territory strike capabilities as an alternative to ballistic missile defense—despite dubious real-world application.

Mulloy highlights how force imbalances, obsolescence issues, capability gaps, and legal and constitutional inconsistencies (pp. 112–115, 227–230) remain unaddressed even as Japan's security environments deteriorates. Japan's national defense would be greatly

enhanced by altering command structures (pp. 251–252) and reconfiguring “front heavy tail light” (p. 230) approaches to procurement. The acquisition of frontline and high-tech military systems limits resources for logistical and other enabling operational investments (pp. 103–107, 205–215, 238) that would enhance force posture resilience and the SDF’s ability to generate *and* sustain force during conflict—not only for Japan’s own territorial defense, but to assist Japan’s traditional alliance partner and new strategic partners alike. The impression is that, rather than symbolic enhancements of marital prowess, the SDF requires more resources for burgeoning maintenance costs, logistical and resilience investments, and to improve conditions to sustain recruitment and maintain mental health. The Japanese government also needs to rectify Japan’s poor defense R&D investment to remain technologically competitive with China and valuable to its partners.

Rather than a traditional concern with the prospects of the Japanese military running amok, *Defenders of Japan* makes it clear that civilian control issues for Japan today pertain to elected politicians failing to exert leadership and responsibility. With no independent audit office to provide advice on defense and other policy areas to the public and parliament about the outcomes and value derived from fiscal spending, it is no wonder the government struggles to convince the public of the need for enhanced defense spending vis-à-vis other claims on the national budget. For this reader, Mulloy’s book demonstrates how Japan’s elites (across the political spectrum) bear as much responsibility for distorting the postwar debate on defense as much any perceived “one-nation pacifist” mentality among the general public.

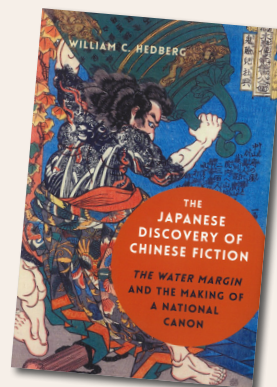
BOOK REVIEW

The Japanese Discovery of Chinese Fiction: The Water Margin and the Making of a National Canon

By William C. Hedberg

Columbia University Press, 2019
264 pages.

Reviewed by YAMAMOTO Yoshitaka



The Japanese Discovery of Chinese Fiction bridges gaps in more ways than one. In the process of tracing multifarious trajectories of the Chinese novel *Shuihu zhuan* (*The Water Margin*), Hedberg straddles nations, languages, time periods, and fields of specialization. The result is a subtly nuanced account of the ever-changing conceptions of the toponym “China” and the term “fiction” (*shōsetsu*) in Japan from the late seventeenth to the early twentieth century.

As Hedberg notes, Takashima Toshio has written a Japanese-language book on the reception of *Shuihu zhuan* in Japan from the Edo period to the Shōwa era.¹ Hedberg improves on Takashima’s work, not only by delving into theoretical questions surrounding periodization, reception, and nationhood, but also by researching and analyzing primary sources unexamined by Takashima, such as the eighteenth-century scholar Seita Tansō’s marginal notes in his personal copy of *Shuihu zhuan*, now held at the University of Tokyo’s Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia, or the journalist Tokutomi Sohō’s travelogue on China, published in 1918.²

One salient feature of this monograph is its attention to historical detail. The four chapters, bookended by an introduction and an epilogue, proceed chronologically: the first two examine the Edo period, while the latter two focus on the Meiji and Taishō eras. Chapters 1 and 3 offer excellent historical overviews of nascent academic fields that provided the backdrop for the reception of *Shuihu zhuan* in early modern and modern Japan: namely, the study of contemporary, colloquial Chinese (*Tōwa*) in the eighteenth century and the “literary historiography” (*bungakushi*) of the late nineteenth century. In turn, chapters 2 and 4 explore specific examples of how Japanese intellectuals (as well as consumers of fiction and polychrome prints) engaged with *Shuihu zhuan* over the course of nearly three centuries.

While Hedberg uses the terms “early modern,” “Meiji,” and “Taishō” in his chapter titles, he does not treat time periods as immutable categories. In presenting his own research, he locates “a chronological division line” in the late 1880s and 1890s (Meiji 20s and early 30s), which he identifies as the period in which the emergent field of literary historiography inaugurated a new framework for comparing texts and genres (p. 13). As this hypothetical

1 Takashima 1991.

2 Tokutomi 1918.

temporal divide does not coincide with the Meiji Restoration of 1868, it serves as a powerful reminder that turning points in history do not necessarily correspond to conventional systems of periodization.

What then changed in the late 1880s and 1890s vis-à-vis the place of *Shuihu zhuan* in Japan? It is no easy task summarizing Hedberg's response to this question, as he presents complexities as they are, without oversimplifying them. Two factors seem to have been at play: a transformation in the toponymic conception of "China" and a rise in status of the genre of "fiction." As Meiji and Taishō Japanese intellectuals "triangulated" between "Chinese, Japanese, and Western conceptions of writing" (p. 101), they began to view *Shuihu zhuan* as an embodiment of a "dehistoricized, timeless Chinese character" (p. 161). In Japan in the late 1880s and 1890s, outstanding works of "fiction" like *Shuihu zhuan* came to symbolize a nation's essence, which supposedly remained unchanged from antiquity to the present. Hedberg's brilliant discovery here is that the discourse on *Shuihu zhuan*, a Chinese work of vernacular fiction, helped shape late nineteenth-century Japanese intellectuals' ideas of what a national literary canon was.

Although Hedberg deftly covers a lot of ground without skipping over the minutest details, a few questions remain unanswered. In the epilogue, Hedberg describes the near impossibility of creating "an encyclopedic and full account of *Shuihu zhuan*'s impact" on early modern Japan (p. 180). One wonders, however, if he could have provided at least a rough sketch of what had been left out, and the reasons for omission.

Two additional questions have to do with Hedberg's interpretations of specific passages in Tokutomi Sohō's travelogue. Hedberg suggests that "civilization" in Sohō's characterization of China as "a nation poisoned by civilization" specifically refers to "the stultifying effects of traditional Confucian culture" (p. 173). However, the original text by Sohō specifically mentions Su Qin and Zhang Yi, (non-Confucian) political and diplomatic strategists of the Warring States period, as two notable members of ancient Chinese civilization.³ Did Sohō perceive Su Qin and Zhang Yi (mistakenly) as Confucians? Regarding another instance where Sohō displays his anti-Chinese sentiment, Hedberg notes that Sohō's characterization of China as a "puzzle" has less to do with ascribing a quality of "Oriental inscrutability" to China than with pointing out his compatriots' indifference toward China (p. 171). Nevertheless, in his travelogue, in the subsequent chapter titled "Four Thousand Years of History," Sohō again calls "the Chinese" a "puzzle" (*meidai*), adding this time that they are "cunning" (*umi-sen yama-sen*) behind a friendly veneer (*ikanimo hada-zawari yoku*).⁴ As disturbing as it is to observe, isn't Sohō's vitriol directed at the Chinese, and is he not characterizing them as inscrutable here?

All in all, Hedberg succeeds in demonstrating, consistently on the basis of concrete historical examples, the mutability and plurality of cultural artifacts and terms. *Shuihu zhuan* has never existed as a single text, but in the forms of various editions, recensions, commentaries, retellings, and illustrations. Terms such as "China," "Japan," and "fiction" can have drastically different meanings depending on when, where, and how they are used. Hedberg's book stands out as a model of historically-informed transregional research that

³ Tokutomi 1918, p. 392.

⁴ Tokutomi 1918, p. 425.

scholars of comparative literature as well as “national” literatures—and in fact, participants in any type of humanities research—can only hope to emulate.

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CONTENTS

INAGA Shigemi

Classical Chinese Aesthetic Ideals meet the West: Modern Japanese Art as a Contact Zone

Philip SWIFT

Prosthetic Revelations: Sticking the Teachings to the Body in a Japanese New Religion

KAMEYAMA Mitsuhiro

Shaku Unshō in Korea: The Buddhist Precepts and Colonialism in Modern East Asia

Radu LECA

Dynamic Scribal Culture in Late Seventeenth-Century Japan:

Ihara Saikaku's Engagement with Handscrolls

SAKURAI Ryōta

Remembering and (Re)storing War Memories: The Postwar Fiction of Shimao Toshio

Mengfei PAN

Tōkyō Shitaya Negishi Oyobi Kinbō-zu and the Symbolism of Community Mapping
in the Late Meiji Period

TRANSLATION

Caleb CARTER

Narrating the Spread of Shinto and Shugendō in the Eighteenth Century:

An Introduction to and Translation of the *Shugen Ichijitsu Reisō Shintō mikki*

BOOK REVIEWS



COVER IMAGE:

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