Introduction: Texts and Their Transformations

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Texts are essential to historians. Although no one today would hold that all that is important about human life is to be found in inscribed records, since the invention of writing, documents have undeniably constituted the core of the evidence upon which people have based their understandings of time gone by—or, at least, what we call "historical time." Written sources of various kinds, official and unofficial, have everywhere been the marrow of history. But writing is not the only medium through which accounts of the past have been expressed; texts can be transmitted orally, represented visually, performed on stage, or preserved and passed on in other ways. And once a text exists, it is available for reference, recycling, revision—any number of uses and abuses—by those who encounter it.

Recent times have witnessed a widespread fascination with history. Historical novels sell in massive numbers; historical movies—from Oliver Stone's *JFK* to Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*—elicit ferocious debates involving professors of history as well as the laity; and the dedication of an entire television channel to "History" has proved enormously popular. If they demonstrate nothing else, all of these developments prove that the one place that history does not primarily occupy is the past. It remains an extremely important nexus of events and personages and sites to many in the present. And, aside from a few theoreticians, virtually everyone would agree that our main avenues into an understanding of those many pasts are texts.

Why then, many students and laymen will ask, do we have so many different—to say nothing of entirely opposite, even virulently antagonistic—interpretations? It's all how you read the documents, and which texts you read, and which you deem bogus or suspect or veracious. It is also about what you bring to your reading, that is, what precedes one's attention being devoted to documents at all. This can include but is by no means restricted to the "proper" training one acquires on the way to becoming a bona fide historian; it certainly includes the values the reader brings to an assessment of those written sources. For example, it is highly unlikely that the most sophisticated historical and textual knowledge imaginable will ever get Mel Gibson or Oliver Stone—even with their radically different political and cultural perspectives—to budge an inch on the viewpoints of the historical characters portrayed in their films. Similarly, all the mountains and libraries of documentation available—much of it produced by the Nazis themselves—will never force Holocaust deniers to admit the inaccuracy of their views.

Professional historians hold themselves to standards, for the most part, although those standards do indeed change over time, just as societal values change as a consequence of historical change. Thus, even within the same society—and certainly between two synchronic societies separated by space or dominant religion or social structure—professional historians frequently will arrive at radically different interpretations of the same event. Of course this is true also of nonprofessionals who set down versions of the past. Here we look at Japanese

examples. How have Japanese historians approached texts, and how have their texts exploited other texts to constitute historical narratives? This is the immense question the essays in this volume approach from their many different temporal and spatial angles. What aspects of their own past history have attracted the attention of Japanese writers, and how have their explanations changed over time? By joining this project, our contributors implicitly rejected the proposition that texts can speak for themselves. We are persuaded that it is vital to our understanding that we contextualize the texts we consider—to relate them to the particular circumstances of the time of their production and to each other.

Our subject matter runs the gamut from high antiquity (including the "age of the gods") through the Meiji period. The reader will quickly discover that this is not a collection of bibliographic essays that survey the modern historiography of pre-1912 Japan, era by era, and we did not make it our objective to introduce systematically and comment on recent Western-language writing. Our focus is on the Japanese texts themselves and how Japanese writers have used and reused them. The approach here thus contrasts with that taken in the recently-published *A Companion to Japanese History*; in that volume edited by William M. Tsutsui, the authors do comment extensively on Western scholarship, especially work in English.[1]

The essays in this book examine Japanese historical views articulated in antiquity, the medieval era, the early modern period, and into Meiji. They assess private historical works and more public, government-sponsored writings of history. Compared with the post-Meiji age, the historiography of earlier periods has been neglected, a fact which warrants such a wide-ranging collection of essays as ours, indeed necessitates it.

The lead essay in this book, by Kate Wildman Nakai, realizes the potential of the approach taken in this project extraordinarily well. It tracks the path of medieval and early modern texts treating *kamiyo*, the age of the gods. The earliest surviving accounts of this age are *Kojiki* (712) and *Nihon shoki* (720). Although in both works *kamiyo* "stands outside time," the texts are multivalent, Nakai discerns, sometimes depicting what can be understood as an era that preceded human time and at other times conveying an image of an ongoing divine realm. *Nihon shoki* presented several versions, a "main text" (usually labeled *honsho*, *honbun*, or *seibun*) and variants or fragments of variants in "different texts" (*issho* or *ichi iwaku*) appended to the corresponding sections of the main text. The existence of these multiple texts has invited manifold interpretations and revision. Within a century of the compilation of *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*, Inbe no Hironari (fl. 808) authored a commentary, *Kogo shūi*, that supplemented and, in his view, corrected the earlier writings. The great works of medieval historiography, Jien's *Gukanshō* (ca. 1221) and Kitabatake Chikafusa's *Jinnō shōtōki* (ca. 1339) differ in their presentation of *kamiyo*. Jien (1155–1225) for the most part concentrates on historic time, and when he does treat *kamiyo*, he takes it to be a realm outside time populated by deities that affect and sometimes protect the Japanese polity; for example, he describes Amaterasu and Hachiman as the "ancestral deities of the ruling house" and Kasuga Daimyōjin as the "guardian deity of the state." At the same time, having internalized the logic of the syncretic system of beliefs that fused Buddhism with native religious faith—a set of notions widely accepted in the medieval era—Jien considered these deities "hypostatic manifestations of the Buddhas particularly suited to the circumstances of the age and Japanese setting." Kitabatake Chikafusa (1293–1354) devoted considerably more attention to the events

of *kamiyo* than Jien and composed a new narrative that began with the origin of the cosmos. He reworked and reassembled elements from *Nihon shoki*, *Kogo shūi*, and other texts, including Watarai Shinto writings that incorporated Buddhist and Confucian ideas even as they sought to differentiate their form of Shinto from current syncretistic doctrine. He used the *kamiyo* texts to establish the origin and continuity of the "unbroken line" of the Japanese imperial family. Nakai observes that in contrast to Jien, Chikafusa stressed the sequential linkage of the age of the gods to the reigns of the human emperors from Jinmu on. In addition to Jien's and Chikafusa's works of history, Nakai introduces important medieval commentaries on *kamiyo* by Ichijō Kaneyoshi (1402–1481) and Yoshida Kanetomo (1435–1511); although not histories, as we might now understand the term, these texts influenced later thinkers, including historians. Kaneyoshi is notable for his deliberate de-emphasis of the Buddhist correspondences that earlier authors about *kamiyo* had elaborated.

Turning to the early modern period, Nakai observes that Tokugawa-period historians took two broad approaches to the interpretation of *kamiyo*. One was that of such writers as Hayashi Razan (1583–1657) and his son Hayashi Gahō (1618–1680), who in successive generations produced the official shogunal history *Honchō tsugan*, and the scholars of the Mito domain who labored in the early years of the production of the monumental *Dai Nihon shi* compilation project. These historians took *kamiyo* in cosmological or metaphysical terms while simultaneously separating it from history as such. The second approach, exemplified by Arai Hakuseki (1657–1725) and the men who worked on *Dai Nihon shi* from the end of the eighteenth century on, divested *kamiyo* of its cosmological baggage and historicized it. Over the millennium that followed the first writing about *kamiyo*, Nakai thus shows us, the multivalent texts lent themselves to diverse readings by historians and other thinkers, and to different interpretations of the relation of the age of the gods to the history of mankind, and to time itself. The temporal situation of *kamiyo* remained an unresolved matter when Japan entered the modern age.

Hitomi Tonomura investigates the discursive ramifications of an artifact, the birth house, which could be found in many parts of Japan in premodern times and into the twentieth century. Noting that a number of writers over a period of some centuries in the premodern era, and many scholars of folkways and history in the twentieth century, have associated the existence of this parturition house (known as *ubuya*, *koya*, *taya*, *sanjo*, and several other regional or status-marked names) with beliefs about pollution (*kegare*), Tonomura interrogates texts that treat birth, separate spaces for giving birth, and women's bodies and bodily functions. She makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of gender history with her finding that the case for linking birth and menstruation with pollution cannot be made persuasively for all times and places in Japan. The birth house itself, she remarks, does not seem to have been ubiquitous or present in all eras; folklorists who have theorized that it was and the historians who have been influenced by these folklorists have probably exceeded the limitations of their evidence—an excellent example of the sources following the values of the historian rather than vice versa. What Tonomura calls the "*ubuya* trope" remains in circulation today, but her analysis exposes the fallacy of its circular logic ("parturition was *kegare*, therefore the *ubuya* was built in order to contain it by isolating the source of *kegare* [woman]; because the *ubuya* was built, parturition and the human agency that was sequestered in it must have been polluting; and because the *ubuya* was built in the time of Japan's mythical

antiquity and also can be seen in modern Japan, it must have been there continuously"). Scholars in the Yanagita Kunio school such as Segawa Kiyoko (1895–1984) argued that the "problem of *ubuya* should find its point of departure in the world of ancient myth," identifying the tale of Toyotamahime in *Kojiki* as a seminal text, and many have been willing to accept this line of associative reasoning.

Tonomura notes the work of other recent scholars such as anthropologist Namihira Emiko (b. 1942) who read *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* differently from Segawa and her followers. Namihira, who has also examined the birthing house documented in the *Hachijōjima Chronicle* (Hachijōjima nendaiki, 1335–1652), concludes that the notion of pollution presented in the ancient texts has to do with death, not birth. Tonomura looks to the first comprehensive legal codes in Japan, the *ritsuryō* of the seventh and eighth centuries, and to ninth-century compendia of interpretations that supplemented them, to reveal changes in the definition of *kegare.* These texts also undermine the interpretation embodied in the *ubuya* trope. In the medieval era, Tonomura observes, texts such as *Azuma kagami*, the chronicle of the Kamakura shogunate, and *Osanjo nikki*, which she attributes to a Muromachi-period doctor, offer information on childbirth customs of the elite. The space in which the wives and other consorts of shoguns gave birth had a distinctive name (*osanjo*), but birthing practices of this status group do not match the *ubuya* trope. Tonomura introduces several other medieval texts that have become sources of information on birth and *kegare*, including the twelfth-century journal of the noble Kujō Kanezane (1149–1207) and the *Ketsubonkyō* (Blood Pond Sutra, Ch. *Xuepanjing*), transmitted from China in the Muromachi period. In the Tokugawa era, numerous medical texts on childbirth and illustrated guides for women's life appeared, but neither these nor the literature and local records, Tonomura notes, inform us of the existence of *ubuya.* Her reexamination of key ancient, medieval, and early modern texts leads her to conclude that we must revise the view that Japanese society has always accepted that beliefs about birth and pollution were intertwined in all times and places. In this sense, she has successfully historicized an overly hypostatized concept.

Wakita Haruko scrutinizes a range of medieval texts that, until recently, have drawn considerably more attention from students of literature and folklore than from historians, namely, illustrated history scrolls (*engi emakimono*), an anthology of stories called the *Shintōshū*, and scripts of noh and *kyōgen* plays. She supplements her reading of the literary and visual texts with a reexamination of gazetteers and diaries that are the more conventional sources for historians, but her focus in this essay is on materials that previous historical researchers have for the most part overlooked. These contain a treasure-trove of information about the religious beliefs of people of both high and low status, and their existence stimulates us to try to deepen our knowledge of the lives of the people who created and consumed them. Wakita is especially interested in the nature of the supplications to buddhas and "nameless kami" (such as local deities and deities who provide protection in childbirth) in these texts, and in the effects the stories had. She notes that the histories of temples and shrines were sometimes authored by court nobles acting on the commission of high-ranking persons, and sometimes histories were created for people at the folk level. As examples of the latter, she cites several noh scripts by Kan'ami (1333–1384) and the kyōgen *Kurikono shinmei.* She hypothesizes that these were commissioned by shrines or by local communal groups. Myth was integral to the historical sense in these stories, and one place where myths were systematically set down—from our

contemporary historical perspective: fabricated—was Agui temple in Kyoto. The important collection known as the *Shintōshū* was compiled at Agui, or based on work done there; it contains Shintō (actually, Dual Shintō) stories and history-type tales, and the latter include both "official" histories of shrines and romance narratives (*monogatari*) in which the heroes' original forms (*honji*) are buddhas or bodhisattvas. Various deities make their appearance in *Shintōshū*, and Wakita points out that they are endowed with "both fictional and real life natures." This is because medieval men and women demanded deities like those of their own families, she says. Today some temples and shrines reject the kind of fabricated history found in the *engi emakimono* and *Shintōshū*, but the majority of religious institutions have accepted much of it as valid. For scholars, the construction of history and myth in these medieval sources remains a desideratum for further research and reflection.

Organizing his inquiry around issues of early modern warfare, weaponry, and the pivotal role played by Oda Nobunaga (1534–1582), H. Paul Varley reassesses many medieval and early modern sources in his essay. Among the texts he considers as he tries to establish the facts about the introduction of guns into Japan and the conduct of war in the sixteenth century are *Teppō ki*, the 1607 record of the arrival of firearms at Tanegashima in the hands of Portuguese traders in 1543; illustrated narrative scrolls such as *Mōko shūrai ekotoba* (late thirteenth century), *Zen-kunen kassen ekotoba*, *Go-sannen kassen ekotoba*, and *Heiji monogatari ekotoba*; the classic late-sixteenth-century biography of Nobunaga by Ōta Gyūichi (1527–1610?), *Shinchō-kō ki*; multipanel screen paintings of battles such as *Kawanakajima kassen zu byōbu* and *Shizugatake kassen zu byōbu*; and Oze Hoan's (1564–1640) seventeenth-century rendering of the life and deeds of Nobunaga, *Shinchō ki*, a work that was plainly a transformation of *Shinchō-kō ki*.

Varley exploits visual sources here to reevaluate the standard interpretation of Nobunaga's place in the world history of warfare, as the first leader to employ guns on a large-scale, patterned fashion, thereby effecting a military revolution. It is easy to confirm in the texts that relatively large quantities of guns were available in Japan by the second half of the sixteenth century, and the screens depicting the battles of Kawanakajima and Shizugatake can be—and have been—read as evidence that Nobunaga did revolutionize the way armies fought. These paintings show an overwhelming preponderance of soldiers on foot and relatively few warriors on horseback; guns appear prominently in the scenes of combat at Shizugatake (1584), but not in those of Kawanakajima (1561). The turning point, according to the standard view, was the battle of Nagashino (1575). Comparing texts, Varley traces this depiction to Oze Hoan; Ōta Gyūichi, who was a contemporary of Nobunaga, had not described the Oda forces as firing in volleys, and he had put the number of guns much lower than Hoan did when he wrote several decades later. In Varley's judgment, Hoan's *Shinchō ki* is "actually a substantially fictionalized and romanticized version" of Ōta's work. By carefully checking Hoan's fabrication against the other sources, Varley builds a strong case that Nobunaga deserves credit as a major innovator, but that his enemies at Nagashino, the Takeda and others, too, used guns, and we can no longer accept the interpretation that derives from Hoan, however canonical it may have become.

James McMullen takes as his central task the elucidation of the historical thinking of Ogyū Sorai (1666–1728). Although Sorai was a prodigious early modern scholar, he did not actually write history but made the analysis of texts in their particular historical dimensions

central to his project of comprehending the present. Sorai was a historicist, in the sense that he interpreted reality—and the institutions and language of ancient Confucianism that were the main focus of his study—as "responsive to and conditioned by [the] historical environment." At the same time he believed, paradoxically, in what McMullen calls "the transcendent value of the Way of the Sages," a Way that Sorai insisted (possibly ahistorically) "had no past or present." A third structural element in Sorai's thought was what McMullen identifies as "a consequentialist morality, utilitarian values and a utilitarian concept of 'good.'" The notion of utility enabled Sorai to bridge the gap between "the absolute and transcendent" and "the relative and historical," McMullen maintains. Sorai "reconceived and historicized the Confucian canon," he writes. Sorai evaluated the "Six Classics," which contained the historical record of early China, more highly than the "Four Books," which were largely concerned with self-cultivation and the basis of moral action. But it was his reading of one of the Four Books, the *Analects* of Confucius, that was crucial in Sorai's development of utilitarian values. McMullen engages a great many Chinese and Japanese texts himself, as he explicates Sorai's method and his solution to a dilemma in his thought that closely resembles "the crisis of historicism" (in Hayden White's phrase) in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe. Most prominent among those texts are Sorai's *Rongo chō* (The *Analects* Attested), the *Analects* itself, and three of Sorai's treatises, *Bendō*, *Benmei*, and *Seidan*, but McMullen follows Sorai across a wide range of sources on which he drew eclectically, including *Hsün tzu* (Xun zi) and *Mo tzu* (Mo zi). In this chapter McMullen shows how, through "radical historicism" and rigorous linguistic analysis of texts, Sorai arrived at an original and powerful political philosophy, a system of thought that can be labeled utilitarian and that is, ultimately, elitist and authoritarian.

Focusing on the treatment of the fifth Tokugawa shogun, Tsunayoshi (1646–1709), Anne Walthall exposes how eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century *jikki* and *jitsuroku*, texts that by their very names purported to be histories or true accounts of the past, used official and unofficial sources to shape and reshape the image of the ruler and his era. Some of the works she examines, most notably the *Tokugawa jikki*, were compiled by official historians. Others—*Sannō gaiki*, *Nikkō Kantan makura*, and *Gokoku onna Taiheiki* are outstanding examples—dodged shogunal censorship by means of anonymous authorship and substitution of fictional names, and incorporated gossip that would never have been written into the official records. These unofficial works claimed to offer the inside story, or history, of Tsunayoshi's reign. Official and dry or unofficial and sensational, these texts, Walthall demonstrates, "shared certain traits that linked them to the popular culture of their day and situated them in a particular discursive field shaped by the mores of the time. At one extreme this field was defined by a fascination with the red light district and a tendency to explain behavior in terms of sexual desire. At the other can be found an obsession with genealogies and naming practices that situated men firmly in the hereditary status order." In her essay Walthall rehearses many of the titillating "facts" about the shogun and his associates—male and female, family and retainer—that are adduced by the unofficial "vulgar histories." These texts, she proposes, "call into question the modernist distinction between history and fiction. By seeing truth everywhere, they do so in ways that need to be kept distinct from the postmodernist refusal to see it anywhere."

Tokugawa-period popularizers of history and antiquarians are the objects of Thomas Keirstead's gaze in "San'yō, Bakin, and the Reanimation of Japan's Past." Rai San'yō (1780–

1832) and Takizawa Bakin (1767–1848) captured huge audiences for their writings, the former for the most popular and influential work of Japanese history to be published in the nineteenth century, *Nihon gaishi* (released in 1827), the latter for multivolume works of fiction such as *Chinsetsu yumiharizuki* (1806–1811) and *Nansō Satomi hakkenden* (1814–1842). Keirstead shares with Walthall an interest in unofficial, popular works and what they reveal about the society for which they were written. Bakin was representative of a boom in antiquarian interest; he was an active member of a society of writers "addicted to curiosity," and he came to command an astonishing amount of "random erudition," much of it gleaned from Japanese and Chinese encyclopedias (in vogue in his day) and Arai Hakuseki's (1657–1725) historical work. Skillfully, for the purpose of entertainment above all else, Keirstead shows us, Bakin wove selected bits of his historical learning into his fiction. San'yō's success had to do with his unofficial point of view, which was strongly pro-imperial and implicitly critical of the Tokugawa regime, but owed perhaps even more to his literary flair. A storyteller of rare talent who, in Keirstead's phrase, "succeeded in animating Japan's past in a way no one else had," San'yō excited and inspired his readers. Later professional historians such as Shigeno Yasutsugu (1827–1910) would scorn him for fictionalizing and being undiscriminating in his use of sources (previous texts)—both probably valid criticisms. "*Nihon gaishi* is not a particularly reliable or even original history," Keirstead declares, but he also suggests that it merits being regarded as "a pioneering effort at writing a new sort of history, one intended not merely to instruct or enlighten, but to entertain and capture the imagination." Both Bakin and San'yō seem to have been motivated by a desire to make history accessible, Keirstead argues, and their works were received favorably by a society in which books occupied a "central and special place" and history had become "a part of mass culture."

Luke Roberts enlarges on an insight of the University of Tokyo political historian Watanabe Hiroshi (b. 1946) by challenging the aptness and accuracy of certain terms that have been in everyday use in discourse about Japanese history over at least the last two centuries. he thus reveals that the most basic of historical assumptions drawn from texts may, in fact, be constructions imposed on those texts. Roberts argues that common terms for the administrative apparatus of the Tokugawa rulers (*bakufu*), emperor (*tennō*), imperial court (*chōtei*), and domains (*han*), employed uncritically, are accomplices in the promotion of a tendency to "depict the premodern past in Japan within a national framework of understanding"—a framework altogether absent at the time being analyzed. A reexamination of several histories written in the early modern period, some written for the Tokugawa and some for the lords of Tosa domain, gives Roberts ammunition for his case that the terms in question have been used anachronistically by nineteenth- and twentieth-century historians, or have been used in a way that presumes generality when in fact they were originally particular to the vocabulary of one school of historians centered in Mito domain. The texts that Roberts compares are *Dai Nihon shi*, the massive work begun under Mito lord Tokugawa Mitsukuni (1628–1700) in 1657 and finally finished in 1906; *Dai Nihon shi sanso*, a commentary written in the early eighteenth century; *Honchō tsugan*, written for the Tokugawa rulers and finished in 1670 (treated also in these pages by Kate Nakai); *Tokugawa jikki* (about which Anne Walthall writes, as well); *Otōke nendai ryakki*, completed in 1812 and presented to the lord of Tosa, written from the point of view of the domain and its ruling family; and another Tosa history known variously as *Okokushi naihen* and *Hanshi naihen*, begun in the late 1860s and never completed. Roberts

is able to establish that there were multiple discourses about political relationships during the Tokugawa period, and these are reflected in the historical texts. To privilege one of those discourses by adopting its vocabulary today is to distort history, Roberts maintains; at least, it magnifies the risk of distorting our understanding of the past, if we ignore the existence of the alternative usages of language that embodied the diverse perspectives on power and social relations in early modern Japan. In other words, texts are composed in distinctive contexts; ignoring the latter when examining the former is like waltzing through a minefield.

Suzuki Sadami detects a reformulation of the very concept of history during the Meiji period. In his essay here, his primary concern is to reveal how Japanese historiography was affected by both exposure to Western notions and the dynamics of the domestic publishing industry. Before getting to Meiji matters, however, in order to provide context for his argument, he takes a synoptic look at the development of history writing in Japan from earliest times through the first half of the nineteenth century. His is a taxonomical survey that gives special attention to describing the literary genres into which works concerned with history fall, and it is instructive to cross-check his categorization of notable works with what other authors in this book have said about those works. In the course of his survey, Suzuki comments often on how histories written in Japan were patterned after or borrowed from earlier Chinese and Japanese texts; for example, he notes that the eleventh-century *Ōkagami* was modeled on Sima Qian's *Shiji*, and certain passages of the fourteenth-century *Masukagami* obviously drew on the Suma chapters of *The Tale of Genji*. After the Meiji Restoration, it was Western texts that had the largest impact—writings of Guizot, Taine, Buckle, and Spencer were widely read, with galvanic effect on Japanese writers who would rethink their own history. Analyzing Meiji-period work on the history of literature and the history of the nation, Suzuki picks up the theme of the invention of tradition, famously proposed by Eric Hobsbawm (b. 1917) and Terence Ranger (b. 1929) and elaborated by Stephen Vlastos (b. 1943) and other scholars with reference to Japan. New histories of literature that presented *kanbun* writing and works in Japanese as belonging to an integrated national tradition, and new histories of Japan that reformulated the idea of "national history" in keeping with the values of the Meiji state, appeared with increasing frequency from the late 1870s. To facilitate future scholarship on Japan in various fields (including but not limited to history), the government sponsored great classified compilations of classic texts that were published as *Bungei ruisan* (1879) and *Koji ruien* (1896–1914), Suzuki tells us; the government guided the direction of the historical profession by a series of reorganizations of the Imperial University, finally culminating (so far as the discipline of history is concerned) in the 1899 establishment of *kokushi* (national history) as a separate track and the 1904 separation of *tōyō shigaku* (Asian history, preeminently Chinese history) from other historical studies. In the final sections of his essay, Suzuki introduces some historical controversies of the late Meiji period that were argued in the pages of new popular magazines. Kume Kunitake and Shigeno Yasutsugu, who were among the first modern professional historians in Japan, were centrally involved in these controversies. Suzuki shows us how Meiji intellectuals tried to absorb modern European ideas about the study and philosphy of history and incorporate these into their own work, and how at the same time older notions of history were modified and used by some writers such as the authors of the popular *Katei kyōiku rekishi dokuhon* (Household Education: Readers in History) to support the notion of an imperial state and the emerging ideology of Japanese nationalism.

M. William Steele resuscitates for us the historical writing of Katsu Kaishū (1823–99), a man famous not as an author but as a shogunal naval leader in the last phase of Tokugawa rule and a major actor in the events of the Restoration, when he negotiated the surrender of Edo castle to the imperial forces in 1868. Katsu went on to serve the Meiji regime in a number of important posts, but remained deeply committed to the Tokugawa family. In the 1880s, the Meiji government gave him responsibility for organizing the documentary record of the Tokugawa shogunate. Between 1887 and 1893 he produced histories of bakufu financial institutions (six volumes), the bakufu navy (two volumes), the bakufu army (three volumes), and bakufu foreign relations (five volumes). These works have attracted relatively little scholarly attention, Steele remarks, but they deserve careful consideration not only for the wealth of information Katsu culled from the archives, but because they represent a point of view of the shogunate and the Meiji Restoration that is different from the Meiji government's. Katsu's is an alternative perspective, an antidote, in some ways, to the national narrative that the leaders of the Meiji state generally promoted. His financial history, *Sujin roku*, can also be read as criticism of the economic policy of Minister of Finance Matsukata Masayoshi (1835–1924), Steele believes, and his version of the Restoration "paid scant attention to the young Meiji emperor and his loyal supporters." Quoting from another of Katsu's historical works, the 1895 *Bakufu shimatsu*, Steele shows how the old Tokugawa retainer interpreted bakufu actions as protecting the national interest, and how he stressed restraint and mediation. Notwithstanding that he received government assistance for his scholarly efforts, Katsu turned out history that was sympathetic to the old regime, the losing side. In this respect his work contrasts sharply with the typical state-sponsored Chinese dynastic histories—still very familiar to Japanese readers in Katsu's day, and paralleled by other histories sponsored by the Meiji government and its supporters—usually written by the new regime to justify its legitimacy.

James C. Baxter takes history textbooks themselves as the texts to be analyzed. During the Meiji era, universal education was introduced into Japan, and systematic teaching about the national past became an important part of the program. The government deliberately set about inculcating national consciousness in the Japanese people, and the pupils in elementary schools were prime subjects. From 1872 onward, history was in the elementary-level curriculum, and by 1904, when the number of years of compulsory school attendance was extended to six, over 90 percent of school-age children remained in school long enough to get instruction in national history. Baxter examines twelve works that were among the most widely used textbooks between 1872 and 1912, some published by the Ministry of Education, others put out by commercial publishers. To keep his comparisons in focus, he concentrates on passages treating Toyotomi Hideyoshi's (1536–1598) invasions of Korea in the 1590s. Those deal with an outstanding historical personage whose actions did much to determine the course of early modern domestic power relations, and they also show Japan relating with its nearest neighbor. From the earliest days of the Meiji emperor's reign, Japan's relations with Korea were problematic, and the annexation of Korea was one of the culminating—and defining—events of the era. Treatments of the fraught story of the late sixteenth century are not only illustrative of practical problems of textbook history-writing, but also suggestive of the evolving sense of national identity. Baxter finds that authors and editors adjusted the form and substance of textbooks over the years to make them appropriate, in level of difficulty and

appeal, for young readers. Changes in the system of approval and selection of textbooks also affected the content and styles of presentation. Late Meiji schoolbooks generally have a clearer narrative structure, he notes, and do a better job conveying a sense of causality than earlier works. Encouragement of critical thinking never appears to have been an objective of history education, judging from these textbooks. It is difficult to trace the use of sources by textbook authors, Baxter observes, partly because none of these books have citations or bibliographies, partly because they are mostly short and bear a closer resemblance to each other than they do to the kinds of works discussed by other participants in this volume. Throughout the Meiji period, these texts were marked by reverence for the imperial institution, and from the early 1880s, that trend grew steadily stronger, encouraged and then absolutely enforced by state education policy.

Nearly five decades have passed since the publication of *Historians of China and Japan*, the first book in English to reflect at some length on Japanese historiography, Japanese readings of historical texts, and the production of historical texts in Japan.[2] Similarly, over two decades have passed since the Kodansha *Encyclopedia of Japan* came out with an excellent but brief survey article on Japanese historiography by Noburu Hiraga (1922–1984).[3] As this volume was in the final stage of preparation, William Tsutsui's excellent *Companion to Japanese History* was published. But nowhere in this previous Western scholarship—as fine as it is—has there been a concentrated attempt to appraise the issues of Japanese historical texts and their transformations that we have taken up here. We hope that our reflections will stimulate further research into this area.

NOTES

1 William M. Tsutsui, ed., *A Companion to Japanese History* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2007).

2 W. G. Beasley and E. G. Pulleyblank, eds., *Historians of China and Japan* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), contains chapters on Japanese historiography by G. W. Robinson, W. G. Beasley, Carmen Blacker, Jiro Numata, and Hugh Borton.

3 Noburu Hiraga, "Historiography," in *Kodansha Encyclopedia of Japan* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1983), vol. 3, pp. 152–58.