Education, Schooling, and Religion in Early Modern Japan

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It is obvious that the complex of schooling and education is one of the areas in which comparisons across cultural boundaries can suitably be made. All "early modern" societies had some sort of schooling system in place, which is the reason why I chose this topic. Nevertheless, I will confine myself to education in Japan, in the Edo Period (1600-1868) and not say anything about the Netherlands. There is, however, a thread running through my argument which is based on a comparative perspective, namely, that Japan had no universities, i.e., officially chartered institutions of higher learning that were given the exclusive privilege of awarding doctorates. If I had not known about Europe, but only about Japan and China, I would never have noticed.

A quick overview of what Japanese education was like in the Edo Period might be useful. Various perspectives are possible; the most obvious one is to distinguish four different kinds of education. First, basic education, i.e., teaching the basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic. Second, professional education: teaching the skills necessary for the performance of specific jobs. Third, elite education: teaching the accomplishments needed to qualify as a member of the, or an, elite. Fourth: indoctrination, the inculcation of desirable virtues.

A second perspective would be institutional. In Japan, we find the so-called *terakoya*, "temple outhouses." These were private establishments where basic education was given. Then we find the so-called *shijuku*, private academies run by a master who taught whatever he was a master in. Third, we find the so-called *hankō*, domainal schools established by individual domains.[1] Fourth, we have Buddhist temples, and fifth, we have the family.

A third perspective would be historical. Originally, in the beginning of the eighth century, a court academy, *Daigakuryō*, had been set up after the Chinese model and had for some time operated as an institution where pupils were admitted, taught and examined along meritocratic lines. Before long, however, the ingrained aristocratic bias of Japanese society reasserted itself, and parallel teaching establishments were set up by the various aristocratic lineages for their own offspring. Examinations became a mockery, as any kind of bureaucratic advancement was based on birth and not on merit. The Daigakuryoō lingered on till 1177, when after a last fire, it was not rebuilt.

During the Middle Ages, no officially endorsed schools existed, with the dubious exception of the Ashikaga School. Dubious, because it is unclear what kind of official support this school enjoyed before and after what the school tradition calls, its "restoration" by Uesugi Norizane (died 1455) in 1432. Norizane was a high ranking *bakufu* official (*kantō kanrei*), but it is unclear whether he was acting in this capacity. What is clear, is, that from 1432 onwards, the Ashikaga School was run as an independent school and operated by members of the Zen sect. The curriculum, however, was not Zen, but Confucian, and culminated in divination according to the *Yijing* and basic medicine. The future patrons of its alumni would be the warriors in Eastern Japan, and divination and medicine were the kind of subjects they were most eminently interested in. In the fifteenth century the school enjoyed great fame. The Jesuit missionaries speak of it as the "Estudios" or "Universidade de Axicanga," frequently mention meeting the brilliant people who had graduated from there (and who invite them to come to Ashikaga in order to spread the gospel[2]) and describe it in glowing terms as "Japan's oldest and most important, famous university. There Buddhist monks gathered from all over the country, wishing to obtain a degree and in that way to preserve their authority within their own monastery and to become famous preachers. At that university there were teachers of all the various sects and rituals for the gods and buddha's, and those who taught Chinese characters."[3]

In the introduction of his *History of Japan*, Frois discusses ten terms he will use throughout his book, claiming that they might give rise to misconceptions with those readers who did not know Japan. The tenth term is "university." "One should not think," he writes, "that Japanese universities do enjoy the same authority, nobility, learning, revenues, or status as those of Europe. The reason is that most Japanese students are Buddhist monks or are studying to become one. The thing on which they spend most of their time, and expend great care and attention, is to learn the Chinese and Japanese characters, that are almost infinite in number and at times have fifteen or twenty distinct meanings. In addition they learn the things pertaining to their sects, which is their theology; and a number of the moral customs taken from the books of a number of spiritual men and ancient philosophers who lived in China, but this not through ingenuity nor through formalized argumentation, but in the manner of doctrine (i.e., by rote, W.J.B.); and a thing or two of astrology and medicine. And for all these sciences, there is in the whole of Japan not more than one single university and public school, which is located in the Kantō in the province of Shimotsuke, in a place called Ashikaga. And what one learns in the other provinces, in the monasteries of the bonzes, is something individual and private, almost without any splendour or magnificence."[4]

In other words, when we come to the Edo Period, there was no continuous

tradition of state-sponsored education. The last vestiges had already disappeared half a millennium ago, and what remained was a rosy myth lingering in the brains of those who were susceptible to such visions. In the Edo Period, too, involvement of the authorities in education remained minimal. The only type of schools that were established and funded by the *bakufu* or by the domains, the han, were the *hankō,* "domainal schools." Admittance to these schools was restricted to male members of the samurai class, and it took a century and a half before the domains began establishing such schools on any significant scale. In the seventeenth century, only very few of the 260-odd domains had established a *hankō*. More followed in the course of the eighteenth century, with a noticeable increase towards the end of that century, and it was only at the very end of the Edo Period that the majority of the domains had established such a school. In figures: nine percent of the domains had established a *hankō* in 1703, fifty-one percent had done so in 1814, and seventy-three percent in 1865.[5]

Finally, a fourth perspective could be brought to bear, which would be the ideological background or religious affiliation of those who funded the teaching: Was it Buddhist? If so, which sect? Or was it Confucian? Or was it sponsored by a popular organization of mixed Confucian and Buddhist inspiration called *Sekimon Shingaku*? Or did the school pride itself on teaching "Japanese Studies" (*Kokugaku*)?

When we match the types of education with types of educational institutions and ideologies, we arrive at the following picture. Basic education was done at home, in the family, and/or in the *terakoya*, and/or in Buddhist temples for the very young novices. The main stress lay on *tenarai*, which meant mastering the Japanese syllabic scripts and those characters everyone needed to know, in various kinds of styles such as cursive, square, etc., through copying specific textbooks made for the purpose. The genre was traditionally known as *ōraimono*. As a rule, these books did not try to teach more than characters, names of things, styles of letter writing, and some encyclopaedic knowledge, but ideologues tried to break in on this market and capture the young, innocent minds by composing new text books of their own devising, to be copied in place of the traditional ones.[6]

Professional education was given in private academies, the *shijuku*. There were in fact only two professions open to ambitious young man (and a few women, too) for which one could qualify through completing a course of education. These were the medical profession, and a career as a teacher of one of the many intellectual, martial, and polite accomplishments for which a market existed, such as Confucian and Chinese studies (*Kangaku*), Japanese studies (*Kokugaku*), writing poetry in Chinese or Japanese,

drinking tea, mathematics, Dutch Studies (*Rangaku*), or fighting with sword or halberd. Note that there were no schools for law – the law was not an independent profession, and the study of law was part of Chinese or Japanese studies and had very little practical impact. The Buddhists, of course, had their own schools that were attached to the chief temples of the various sects for the formation of their own religious specialists.

Elite education and education in the polite accomplishments, was imparted in private academies and in the domainal schools, the *hankō*. The primary aim of elite education was to learn Chinese, in the same way as European schools first of all taught Latin and Greek. The standard curriculum was the Neo-Confucian one, taken over from China: first the Four Books, than the Five Classics, than the Histories, esp. Shiji and Hanshu, and the poetic anthologies, beginning with the Wenxuan. The Chinese Classics had been the iron core of East-Asian education for a millennium and a half before the Edo Period even began, as Virgil and the Bible were in Europe. The Neo-Confucian curriculum, that gave a privileged position to the Four Books and presupposed a new set of commentaries for all the Classics, was conceived in the thirteenth century and had become standard under the Yuan Dynasty (1275-1368).

After mastering the basic erudition, the students could branch out for themselves. The most obvious thing to do would be to start writing poetry and literary prose. But one could also make life more difficult for oneself and sit down to write history or philosophical treatises, or to edit and annotate the basic texts. What you could also do, was to enrol in other academies, in order to master other accomplishments. This was not at all unusual. When Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801),[7] the scion of a well-to-do provincial merchant family, went to study in Kyoto, he visited several different private academies at the same time or consecutively, studying medicine in one, Confucian texts in a second, and classical Japanese literature in a third.[8]

In the *hankō* things were somewhat different. The domainal schools were intended to give an elite education to the *samurai* of the domain, but since the pupils were warriors, typically, a two-fold curriculum was in place. On the one hand, the pupils were trained in martial arts, and on the other hand, they were taught the core curriculum of the Chinese Classics. However, over time and between the various domains, differences were enormous. In some places, the sons of higher-ranking *samurai* did not attend the school, in others they did. In some a few select commoners were also admitted, in others commoners were excluded. Some had examinations in place, others did not. Towards the end of the Edo Period, there were even a few domains where such practical subjects as medicine (the Dutch variety) or institutional

Japanese history[9] were introduced, but this was a very, very late occurrence.

The Buddhist schools, too, taught the elite core curriculum, next to such professionally required subjects as sutra reading and the execution of rituals and the practice of meditation and other ascetic disciplines. The elite curriculum was not central to their enterprise, but in view of the high social position that, owing to the patronage by the *bakufu*, the Buddhist religion enjoyed, it was unavoidable that all middle and high ranking clerics should possess this basic erudition, in order to qualify as members of polite society.

Finally, we have what I would call "preaching." It is a moot point, of course, whether such indoctrination must be regarded as one of the sub-categories of education, but at least in the Japanese case, it is wiser to do so. Of course, the priests in their temples preached to their flock, and often these sermons were also printed. Some *daimyō* at times hired Confucian scholars to give moralistic sermons to their subjects, which were typically held in temples.[10] And there were a number of lay organisations of mixed Buddhist and Confucian inspiration, the most prominent of which was Sekimon Shingaku, founded by Ishida Baigan (1685-1744) in 1729. This movement turned into a national organisation in the second half of the Edo Period. It had its own meeting houses, where the gatherings of its adherents would take place. The knowledge that was imparted was knowledge of correct ideas and attitudes, and the teaching was accompanied with rituals and meditation-like practices.[11]

The always difficult discussion about the purpose of education and who should pay for it, was in the Japanese case obscured, complicated and compounded by the feudal organisation of the state and the pronounced aristocratic character of society. Put differently, the most obvious reason why the state, which in the Japanese case meant the *bakufu* and the individual domains, should pay for education would be that the state needed qualified personnel; *jinzai*, "human talent," in the parlance of the time. In Japan, however, state personnel qualified by being born, not by being educated. The bureaucracies of the *bakufu* and the domains were staffed with the sons of hereditary vassal families, whose birth gave them access to a certain range of positions within the bureaucracy. Only towards the end of the Edo Period, and only in the lowest bracket of bureaucratic positions, did education begin to matter, as one, but not the single criterion of selection. Moreover, the *samurai* retained their hereditary stipends, regardless of whether they actually fulfilled a position in the bureaucracy. After all, the *samurai* were a standing army, some of whose members in peacetime doubled as bureaucrats. A bureaucratic assignment would earn you some extra income, but did not necessarily give you more status; some assignments were even regarded as downright demeaning,

especially those that had to do with commercial transactions and counting money. It appears that, both for the lords and for the vassals, there was little incentive to make a structural investment of time and money in education.

On an incidental basis, the domains did put up money for the education of individual *samurai*. Typically, these were cases of *samurai* who wanted to acquire specific skills, for instance in medicine, and who upon request were given leave and extra money, on top of their stipend, to go and study in a private academy in Kyoto or Edo. Similar individual grants were given to *samurai* who were interested in Confucian or Dutch studies (medicine, gunnery), and for all I know, the same was also done for gifted swordsmen.[12] Sometimes, also, people with specific skills, of which a domain stood in need, were drafted from outside the own vassal band and given *samurai* and vassal status. In other words, the domains acquired learning on the open market, rather than producing it themselves.

Objectively speaking, the existence of private academies gave an enormous flexibility to the field of higher education. Any modern minister of education would congratulate the Japanese of the Edo Period with the very adaptive, highly flexible, truly market-oriented and customer-centred system they had in place. Japanese feudal authorities, too, apparently felt comfortable with it and saw no reason for change. It is still a minor riddle, therefore, what persuaded them eventually to make a structural investment in education and to establish the domainal schools. It is on this aspect that I shall concentrate in the remainder of this article.

The first question to ask is, who pushed for change. Who tried to persuade the *bakufu* and the domain authorities to invest money where they need not, and how did they succeed? The issue was an old one. It had been on the table ever since the beginning of the Edo Period, and had been put there by the most famous and important Confucian of the first generation, Hayashi Razan (1583-1657). When Razan was still a young man, he had, and recorded, the following discussion with the founder of the Edo *bakufu*, Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542-1616).

The dialogue began with a question by Ieyasu: "Does the Way still exist nowadays in China?" Razan answered affirmatively, and mentioned as evidence that in China there were "schools in each and every place, from the rural villages and from the country districts up to the prefectural capitals. In all these schools they teach the human relations, and their main objective is to correct the hearts of men and to improve the customs of the people." In the time-honoured tradition of East-Asian rulers, Ieyasu changed his countenance at this unwelcome bit of information and spoke of other things.[13] Razan, who knew on which side his bread was buttered, did not come back to

it, either.

This little dialogue tells us two important things: first, that in the educational programme of Razan, schools were not to be used for imparting knowledge, but for teaching the people at large how to behave correctly, and second, that ruler of Japan had as yet not the slightest interest in funding or organising such a programme.

Evidently, pressure for change came from within the ranks of the educators. They wanted their schools to be made "public schools," on which the authorities had stamped their seal of approval and which had been incorporated as part of the civil service.[14] The educators wanted official recognition; in Japanese terms, they wanted to become *kō*, "public," and *kan*, "official," and did not want to remain "private and egoistic,"*shi*.[15] In view of the privileged position East-Asian ideology and practice have always accorded to government service, and of the high value put on being"*kō*" ("public," "in the common interest"), this need not amaze us.

The aspiration was widely shared. Typically, it took the form of requests for government funds and for government charters. I will discuss two examples. The first is the "Petition to Create a School" (*Sō gakkō kei*) that Kada no Azumamaro (1669-1736) submitted to the *bakufu* around 1730, requesting it to found a school for Japanese Studies (*Kokugaku*).[16] In other words, a school that would be dedicated to the study of the Japanese classical corpus as opposed to the Chinese one. Yet, the petition was written in fluent Chinese, and the argument is an excellent example of East-Asian rhetoric. It can be divided into eight parts:

- Part I: The realm is at peace now under the *bakufu*, and the *shōgun* has the leisure to devote himself to the literary arts. Refering to the founding of the school of the Hayashi family (*Kōbunkan*), Azumamaro remarks that through founding this school the Tokugawa Bakufu has gone far beyond either of its two predecessors, the Kamakura (1192-1333) and Muromachi bakufu (1336-1573), in furthering cultural pursuits.
- Part II: Azumamaro had wanted to address a petition to the *shōgun* earlier, but in the end his modesty had prevented him from doing so: "Even if it takes short steps, the turtle still will walk a thousand miles; my dog's and horse's years had not yet reached sixty; how should I know that what today seemed beautiful would not turn out to be ugly tomorrow? How would I know that after me more intelligent people would not appear? If I were to do something stupid now, people might laugh at me, and if I came with immature plans I might be brought to shame."
- Part III: Now, however, Azumamaro has grown old. Something must urgently be done, or "This Culture" might be lost for good. This is a direct reference to Confucius, who according to the *Analects* had said: "If it is the will of Heaven that This Culture perishes, then Heaven will let me die now."[17] Through this reference, Azumamaro in

fact claims that he himself is the embodiment of Japanese culture, as Confucius was of the culture of Zhou. He has become old and time is running out: "If you do not want to destroy *Our Culture*, than *now* is the time to act."

- Part IV: There are other reasons to act now, or it will be too late. The heterodox schools, Confucianism and Buddhism, are flourishing as they have never flourished before. Exaggerating in a way that is almost comical, Azumamaro says: "In every house lectures are given about the Confucian virtues of Benevolence (*ren / jin*) and Duty (*yi / gi*), and even the lowest servants are able to recite Chinese poems. Wherever you go, sutra recitations are held, and even the most stupid servants and maids are able to hold discussions about Emptiness."

- Part V: At the opposite side, however, reliable knowledge of Antiquity and Shinto is all but lost. Again, Azumamaro indulges in a rather exaggerated description of the situation: "With every year that passes, the teachings of our divine emperors (*jinnō no oshie*) are forgotten more completely, and only one tenth of the knowledge of our public institutions (*kokka no manabi*) is left. The law codes have been lost. The Way of Japanese poetry has been forgotten. What today is called Shinto are theories of Yin-Yang fortunetellers and of adherents of the Theory of the Five Elements. They appeal to 'Secret traditions' or to 'oral instruction,' but nearly always these are fabrications of later times."

- Part VI: All of his life, Azumamaro has been fighting against these trends. Again in a direct reference to Confucius' Analects,[18] he says that "Since my youth I did not sleep and did not eat, and I did not think of anything but of ways to drive out the heterodox teachings. With that aim in mind I studied, and that was what I thought of. I wanted to restore the Ancient Way, and not to give up until I had succeeded."

- Part VII: The *bakufu* must help him, with land and money, to found a school. The curriculum that the school will teach will be: Japanese poetry (*waka*), the Six National Histories (*Rikkokushi*), and the Law Codes. He also gives his reasons for each of these subjects: "If the Six National Histories are explained clearly, they will be of great assistance to the government in its efforts to transform the people. If the three Law Codes (*Kōnin-*, *Jōgan-* and *Engishiki*) have become effective again, that will be of great advantage to the imperial throne." And why poetry? His answer to that question is constructed as follows: first, he equates the oldest of the Japanese anthologies, the *Man'yōshū*, with the most ancient Chinese poetical anthology, the *Shijing*, which is one of the Five Classics. Next, he quotes Confucius as to the importance of studying the *Shijing*[19] : Confucius told his disciples that reading the *Shijing* enlarges the vocabulary.[20]

- Part VIII is the peroration, in which Azumamaro makes the following moving appeal:

"I know that I am stupid, and that it would be better if I kept my mouth shut. But I cannot do so. I have to speak, not in my own interest, but in the interest of the texts. Everyone knows that those texts, those few texts that have come to us, are full of errors, and that almost none of them has an adequate commentary. If we do not teach the ancient language, that will do great damage to our empire. If the ancient language is not known, than the meaning of the ancient texts will be unclear. When the ancient meaning is unclear, it will be impossible to restore the Ancient Teachings (*kogaku*). This is the reason for which I am exerting myself. I wholeheartedly believe that the restoration of Our Culture depends on whether you accept my petition or not."

The petition is ingenious and ingenuous at the same time. Ingenious, in sounding a number of notes that the *bakufu* officials would have become used to from Confucian propaganda, and in harping on the point of "So much money for the study of China! Why nothing for the study of Japan?" It is ingenuous, when it asks for the school to be established in Kyoto, not in Edo, and mentions the imperial throne as the prime beneficiary of the projected study of ancient law. The prospect could hardly have thrilled the *bakufu*. The main point of the petition, however, is what Azumamaro does *not* mention, and that is, that he wants the *bakufu's* charter for his brand of National Studies. I daresay he could have founded a school without asking the *bakufu* for permission; he had operated a school in Edo for fourteen years, without asking anybody's leave. Also, he should have been able to find the necessary financing in Kyoto. He was, after all, connected with the wealthy shrine of Fushimi Inari. What he was really after was a declaration from the *bakufu* saying "this is an important subject, the study of which has been officially approved."

Moving though it was, Azumamaro's petition fell upon deaf ears. As is borne out by our second example, the academy of the Hayashi in Edo, the *bakufu* was not at all eager to give its seal of approval to any kind of school or to any kind of educational movement. A short inquiry into the history of the Hayashi academy will show how complicated the process actually was. It is a Gordian knot, in which we can distinguish a number of strands: such as, that the Hayashi were hereditary retainers of the *bakufu* who held a low, but steady position in the *nakaoku*, the living quarters of the Shogun; such as, that the Hayashi were from time to time commissioned by the *bakufu* to make genealogical and historiographical compilations; such as, that the school boasted a Temple of Confucius where the regular biannual rituals were carried out; such as, that the Confucianism they taught was the elite East-Asian core curriculum; such as, that a few *daimyō* and *shōgun* held a personal interest in this privileged branch of learning; such as, that in a feudal society, privileges once given are never withdrawn. In other

words, the school of the Hayashi existed not because of a conscious policy decision of the *bakufu*, but because it fitted; because by many tender filaments it had linked itself to the existing feudal power structure in Edo.

The history of this school began in 1630 (Kan'ei 7), when Hayashi Razan was given a plot of land in the Ueno area by Shogun Tokugawa Iemitsu (1604-1623-1651) and 200 pieces of gold.[21] Razan started building what is called "a house and school buildings" (*shoin jukusha*). The following year, one of his patrons, Tokugawa Yoshinao (1600-1650), Lord of Owari, obliged by "building a Confucius Temple" on the premises and by donating a set of five small statues of Confucius and the other masters: Yan Hui, Zengzi, Zisi, and Mengzi. He also donated twenty-one portraits of former Sages and wrote the board with the name of the temple, which was to be hung in front. **(fig.1, 2)**

In the second month of 1633 the building was advanced enough for Razan to hold the Sekiten Ritual, the traditional ceremony of worship for Confucius. Two months later (Kan'ei 10/4/17), Shogun Iemitsu visited the temple and asked Razan which of the Five Classics one should read first. In answer, Razan took the *Book of Documents*, and read and explained the chapter about the first Chinese Sage King, Yao (*Shujing, Yao dian*). In 1634 Razan received timber that came from the former palace of the Shogun's renegade and unlamented brother Tadanaga (1606-1633), which he used to build a house (*shoin*) next to the temple. This is the second time that the building of a *shoin* is mentioned, this time without the "school buildings" (*jukusha*).[22]

In 1635 the Sekiten Ritual was performed again, and for the first time, Razan also gave the required lecture on the Classics – in this case on Confucius' *Analects*. The following year, the temple received its decisive stamp of approval, when it was visited by members of the Korean embassy then in Edo. They also inscribed one of the scrolls depicting former Sages, that were given to the temple by the Lord of Owari to be used in the ritual of worship.

No doubt, all this happened, but it is the selection of the facts the school history (*Shōhei-shi*) reports that counts. First: consider place and timing. The history does not mention that the Ueno area, a tract of high ground to the northeast of the Shogun's castle, was at that time the scene of extensive building activity undertaken by the *bakufu*. The most important constructions were the eastern headquarters of the Tendai Sect, the Kan'ei Temple, and a shrine for the deified founder of the shogunal house, Tokugawa Ieyasu. The gift of a small plot to the Hayashi fitted in with this overall construction scheme. All retainers of the Shogun, great and small, built their houses on land allotted to them by the *bakufu*, and the turn of phrase used in the sources indicates precisely that. The plot is called a *takuchi*, plot for a house, in the school history, and in

his writings Razan refers to it as his *bessō*, his "country house" – "country" of course meaning outside the castle.[23] The purpose of Iemitsu's gift is variously described as "building a school" (*motte kōgaku no chi to nasu*), and as "founding a Confucius Temple" (*motte seibyō wo itonamu*), but to what extent these words reflect Iemitsu's intent, and to what extent Razan's decision, is unclear. My guess would be that the gift was made, not for any of these purposes, but in acknowledgement of Razan's rank and merit as a retainer of the *bakufu*.

Second: consider what and how. Since the sources do not mention any specific instructions by the Shogun, probably the allotment of timber that allowed Razan to build his "school" was a routine allocation made by lower officials. The building of a Confucius temple was a project that was sponsored by the Lord of Owari, not by the *bakufu*, and the performance, still rather deficient, of the Sekiten Ritual in this temple was a private initiative of Razan. In neither case was he acting under instructions. On the other hand, it was the temple that interested the Shogun sufficiently to make him stop by on his way back from visiting other temples in the area, and it was the temple that attracted the foreign visitors.

Within the context of the fledgling Confucian movement in Japan, these were important statements. Citing the example of his sensei Fujiwara Seika (1561-1619),[24] Razan showed that Confucianism was not just a set of texts that should be studied, but a way of life; that Confucianism was a matter, not only of learning, but also of the appropriate rituals and clothing. Razan also staked his claim as the successor of the ancient Court University, where a Confucius temple had existed and where the Sekiten Ritual had been executed.[25] The visit by the Korean scholars was important, for their apparent approval proved that Razan's Confucius temple was the real thing. Continentals, who had perhaps even visited China, knew such things better than the Japanese. With his temple, Razan undoubtedly made his mark in the field. The question is, however, to what extent his actions reflected *bakufu* policy.

During the long reign of Ietsuna (1641-1651-1680), some sort of a routine established itself. The entries for these years mention the execution and gradual elaboration of the Sekiten Ritual. From 1659 onward it was performed twice a year, as it should be, and in 1664 for the first time it was accompanied by music. The first sign that a *school* is operating on the premises we find under the year 1666, when a curriculum was determined and a ranking system of the students was instituted.[26] According to one source, in 1673 there were thirty-eight students, differing in age from forty-seven to fourteen.[27] The entries also give an exhaustive account of *bakufu* subsidies. In 1651 the temple was repaired at public expense; in 1655 the Shogun gave Razan a copper-clad storehouse for his books, which turned out to be no match for the

devastating Meireki Fire of 1657. The fire destroyed all of Razan's books, which caused the great man to die of chagrin. The following year, his son Hayashi Gahō (1618-1680) received a number of books from the *bakufu* and 500 gold pieces to buy new books. In 1660 the *bakufu* donated another five hundred pieces of gold, with which the Confucius Temple was rebuilt on a grander scale. Here we find the telling sentence: "Even though is was called private construction, in fact it came under the responsibility of public officials."[28]

What was undoubtedly official, was the founding of the Bureau for Historiographical Compilation (*Shikan*) on the premises in 1664. Gahō was officially ordered to complete the history of Japan which his father had commenced two decades earlier. An effort was made to collect materials, and subsidies were given for buildings, collaborators, and clerical help. When the compilation, called *Honchō tsugan* ("Comprehensive Mirror of Our Court"), is finished in 1670 Gahō asks the *bakufu* whether he might keep half of the monthly subsidy he received for his collaborators in order to defray the living costs of the students of his school; the *bakufu* lets him keep the whole subsidy. This is the first time that this part of the activities of the Hayashi is subsidized.

Things slide along in this way for the next two decades, with entries mentioning occasional gifts, repairs (third repair at public expense in 1674), and visits by high-ranking warriors. Then comes the year 1688, and with it a new departure. In this year, Gahō's son, Hayashi Hōkō (1644-1732), decides to present the sacrificial meat of the Sekiten Ritual of the second month to Shogun Tokugawa Tsunayoshi (1646-1680-1709). The gesture must have caught Tsunayoshi's fancy. He has Hōkō summoned twice that year, the second time telling him that ever since the days of his youth he has had a great interest in Confucian studies, and that he wants to visit Hōkō's temple. His phrasing is interesting. "I have heard," he says, "that your ancestor built a Confucius Temple within your family school (*kajuku*), and that without interruption you have sacrificed twice a year. This pleases me greatly." At the same time, Hōkō is also instructed to draw up the ritual for a visit by Tsunayoshi to the temple, after the precedent set by his father Iemitsu's visit way back in 1634. **(fig.3)**

Tsunayoshi's visit takes place in the same year, 1688 (Genroku 1/11/21). First there was a ceremony in the Confucius Temple, described in loving detail, for if there was one thing Confucians loved, it was a good ritual. After the ritual was finished, the party repaired to Hōkō's *shoin*, where the Shogun orders Hōkō to give a lecture on the *Yaodian* (the same text Razan had lectured on to Iemitsu), and after the lecture he offers a banquet with Nō performance. He is in such good spirits that he even dances himself. At the end, there is an exchange of presents, and then the Shogun departs, early in the

afternoon.

This set the pattern for the following years. Similar visits are repeated on Genroku 2/2/21 (1689) and 3/3/21 (1690). Later this year, Hōkō is apprised of the Shogun's decision to move the whole complex – house, school and temple and all – to a different location. Two reasons are given. One is, that the temple had been built by the Lord of Owari, not by the *bakufu*, and therefore had never been properly embedded in the ritual calendar of the Shogun's court. The other, that the area where the complex was located, was infested by Buddhists. "One does not keep incense and ill-smelling weeds in the same box. How, then, could Buddhism and Confucianism share the same territory?" A new temple shall be built, in order to "show clearly that the state and our house revere Confucianism."[29] A few months later, the Shogun wrote the name of the temple, *Dai-Sei-Den*, on a wooden board and gave it to Hōkō. The compiler of the school history remarks that the way in which Tsunayoshi presented the board (he sent it together with a few slices of dried abalone) showed that he considered it to be a gift. The writer would have liked it to be otherwise, for he insists that the construction of the temple, though a gift to the Hayashi, was an example of "public and private working in tandem."[30]

The following year (1691), on the day of the Sekiten ceremony (2/11), the Shogun visits the new Confucius Temple and participates in the ritual. Then he repairs to a reception room, where he gives Hōkō fields with an average yield of ten *koku* of rice to cover the costs of the sacrifices; and he could keep what had been given earlier, the stipends for the students. Hōkō must have been elated as he sat himself down to listen to a lecture on the scriptures by the Shogun in person. This was also a first on this occasion, and in the following years it became part of the ceremony. The lecture was followed by the usual banquet, Nō performance, and exchange of presents. All in all, a momentous occasion, which lasted from early in the morning till well into the afternoon, or from the Hour of the Dragon to the Hour of the Monkey.

Tsunayoshi kept up his annual attendance until 1705, visiting the temple sixteen times in all. His heir, Ienobu (1663-1709-1712), visited twice, in 1707 and 1710, but that was the end of it. No other Shogun would ever participate in the Sekiten Ritual again, let alone, lecture on the Classics. A casual visit, on their way to the hunt, was the best later Shogun could do, and the Hayashi had to wait for such a visit till 1796 (Kansei 8/10/15). Signs of official concern and recognition, too, were minimal, as is shown by the paucity of relevant entries in the school history, and by telling signs such as, for instance, that in 1757 (Hōei 7) the head of the school Hayashi Hōkoku (1721-1773) had to stoop to writing a memorandum in which he reminded the *bakufu* authorities of the precedents regarding repairs and subsidies. It took three years before

the *bakufu* finally reacted to the memo and ordered the necessary repairs, and another eight months, before the repairs effectively started. Still, one had to count one's blessing, for this was the first time in sixty years that the Confucius Temple was repaired at all. Similarly, in 1771 (Meiwa 8), no rice was forthcoming from the fields[31] that Tsunayoshi had given all those many years ago, and the Hayashi asked the authorities to substitute a levy on all the *daimyō*, to be paid in ceremonial swords (*gitō*) and nuggets of silver (*ginjō*). This was permitted, but only high *bakufu* officials and a few *daimyō* paid up. The order was repeated in the following year and this time, on the day before the Sekiten Ritual, "all *daimyō* sent their servants to bring the swords and nuggets." The money came in good stead, for at the end of the same month the temple burnt down, and for the time being the ritual had to be carried out in the office building (*chōdō*), which was specially decorated for the purpose. Official support for the rebuilding of the whole temple was promised half a year after the fire, but begun a year later, in 1773, and was completed only in 1774. The School History was disenchanted with the result: "No sculptures and no lacquer; the whole setup was extremely modest and plain." The Hayashi struggled on, with another fire and even less satisfactory repairs in 1787, until 1790 (Kansei 2).

In this year, 1790, the whole situation changed completely. Up till then, the temple had received official support, even though it had been denied official status, and the school had been ignored almost completely. Whatever interest the Shogun and the *bakufu* had shown, had been directed towards the temple. But all this changed overnight in Kansei 2. It is almost funny to read in a *bakufu* directive of the fifth month of this year, that "ever since the beginning of the seventeenth century," the Hayashi had been "instructed" to uphold the orthodox teaching of Zhu Xi (1130-1200). In a more ominous vein, the directive continues: "Could it be that the degeneration of orthodoxy has caused the rise, in recent days, of newfangled theories and the growing popularity of heretical teachings, to the detriment of public morality?" Henceforth, strict rules must be enforced and dangerous thought amongst the students must be forbidden. Two outsiders are appointed to help and supervise the Hayashi. Collaborate with them, and stamp out heresy, not only in your own school but also in other schools. Preach the orthodox teachings and educate men of talent.[32] Although the directive still speaks of the "supervision of the temple" (*seidō no torishimari*), it is clear that all of a sudden the actual content of what the Hayashi taught has been moved into the limelight.

This ban on the study of heterodox schools of Confucianism was a departure from all previous *bakufu* policy. The one who was responsible – who cut, so to say, the Gordian knot and made clear what the whole establishment was there for – was Matsudaira Sadanobu (1758-1829). Sadanobu had the power to do so, as he was the

leader of the Council of Elders (*rōjū*) and assistant (*hosa*) of the Shogun. He also had the incentive to do so, for he was a great intellectual in his own right, with an interest in, and an understanding of Confucian ideas about education.[33] For the Hayashi, the reforms were a mixed blessing. On the one hand, they had to put up with quite a lot of interference by the *bakufu*; on the other, their school was finally acknowledged as the official *bakufu* academy.

There was a larger context to Sadanobu's initiative. In this period, one domain after another was establishing its domainal school. The *bakufu*, too, needed an educational institution of its own; it solved the problem by the simple expedient of appropriating the private academy of the Hayashi. After the *bakufu* took over, the name was changed from Kōbunkan to Shōheikō and the composition of the student body was transformed. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, commoners and *samurai* from all over the country had been admitted, but as a result of the Kansei reforms, admittance became restricted to direct retainers of the *bakufu* only.[34]

Two further reasons may be adduced to explain the the take-over of the academy of the Hayashi and, more specifically, the "ban on heterodox learning." On the one hand, as I said, the phenomenon of *hankō* had spread too widely for the *bakufu* to ignore it any longer; there were eighty of them by now, over one third of which had been built during the last twenty years. Sadanobu may well have felt that some sort of regulation, of "thought control" was in order. Apparently, it was unfeasible for the *bakufu* to issue direct orders to the domains, but it could set an example by endorsing the prominent position of one specific branch of Confucian thought, in the hope that the domains would follow suit. This is the objective reason. But there was also a subjective reason, which was perhaps more basic, and that was Sadanobu himself. In him we have, finally, a high *bakufu* official who was also an educated intellectual; who, as an intellectual, had gone through the study of the Confucian core curriculum; who, as a result, had absorbed a new way of thinking about education; who, moreover, as a *daimyō* had already practised this new way of thinking about education in his own domain.

In the handbooks, the usual reason given for the establishing of *hankō* is that they were intended to educate *jinzai* ("human talent"). As society grew more and more complicated and as the international situation grew more and more threatening, so the argument runs, the bakufu realized that *jinzai* were what Japan needed. This argument, however, will not do. If you take a look at the curricula of the *hankō*, it is clear that in practice *jinzai* were people educated in the traditional core curriculum. This, I think, is a sure indication that a different way of thinking about education had spread, gradually but pervasively, throughout the country. This way of thinking was Confucian in origin,

and it was characterised by the assumption that education was not to be judged for the immediate practical usefulness of the skills acquired, but for the social benefits that stemmed from the self-cultivation of the individual. These benefits, it was claimed, would ultimately be more important and more useful to society, more "practical," so to say, than the pedestrian advantages the feudal authorities had been thinking of up till then.[35]

Sadanobu is an excellent example of this way of thinking. His works contain any number of pronouncements along the lines of "learning is the study of the Way; the Way are the Five Human Relations and the Five Virtues; the end of learning is to practise the Way." As an aid to his own *samurai* he later composed a checklist of good deeds, that they could use in the "Meetings for Accumulating Good" (*Sekizenkai*) that he had promoted, as an aid in discussing each others' behaviour.[36]

When this view of "learning," which is pure, orthodox Confucian ideology, coincided with pressure on the part of the educators towards upgrading their schools into "public" schools, *hankō* were established.

One conclusion is that the use of public money to fund education of the "elite" type or of the "indoctrination" type is an index of the extent to which the Confucian ideology had been successful in capturing the hearts and minds of the warriors. The rate of founding of the *hankō* indicates that this occurred rather late in the Edo Period. *A second conclusion* is, that with this view of education it will be difficult to find a workable demarcation criterion to distinguish education from indoctrination, and that Confucian education tended towards goals (cultivation of the person, transformation of the people) that in a European context would or might be regarded as religious.

NOTES

1. See Richard Rubinger, *Private Academies in Tokugawa Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), p. 5, for a table of all types of schools. As an index of types, the list is probably exhaustive, but the figures, certainly the absolute figures, are unreliable. Umihara Tōru, *Kinsei shijuku no kenkyū* (Kyoto: Shibunkaku, 1983), p. 17, remarks that in the materials Rubinger has used, "almost all martial schools, and many of the medical and Buddhist schools have been left out." To the same effect, Rubinger, *Private Academies*, pp. 229-230.
2. See e.g. Matsuda Kiichi & Kawasaki Momota, transl., *Furoisu Nihonshi*, Vol. 4 (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1978), p. 40; Luis Frois, *Historia de Japam*, Jose Wicki S.J. (Ed.), Vol. 2 (Lisboa: Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa, 1981), p. 177.
3. Matsuda & Kawasaki, *Furoisu Nihonshi*, Vol. 5 (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1978), p. 296.
4. Matsuda & Kawasaki, *Furoisu Nihonshi*, Vol. 1 (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1977), p. 85;

Frois, *Historia*, Vol. 1 (Lisboa, 1976), p. 9.

5. See W.J. Boot, *De Filoloog als Politicus* (Amsterdam: Gieben, 1985), p. 15: "In the last two decades of the eighteenth century, twenty-one and twenty-eight new schools were founded respectively, twice or thrice as many as the highest figures in the preceding period. In 1703, nine percent ..." Cf. R.P. Dore, *Education in Tokugawa Japan* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965), p. 71; Umihara Tōru, *Nihonshi shōhyakka: Gakkō* (4th ed., Tokyo: Kondō Shuppansha, 1983), p. 50.
6. One of the more notorious examples is the *Rikuyū engi taii*, composed by Muro Kyūsō in 1722 at the orders of Tokugawa Yoshimune, and distributed to *terakoya*; see Sawada, Janine, *Confucian Values and Popular Zen. Sekimon Shingaku in Eighteenth-Century Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993), p. 179. See also ibidem, pp. 117-123, for an analysis of Teshima Toan's attempt to substitute his *Shinjitsugokyō* for the older textbook *Jitsugokyō*.
7. See Umihara, *Shijuku*, p. 123.
8. See the table in Rubinger, *Private Academies*, p. 13, for an impression of the variety of subjects catered for by *shijuku*, and their relative weight.
9. I.e., the *Nihongi* and the ancient imperial codes – *Yōrōryō* and commentaries, *Engishiki*, etc. – which were written early in the eighth century. See Dore, *Education in Tokugawa Japan*, pp. 153-160, esp. pp. 155-156 and p. 159.
10. See Aoki, Michiko Y., & Margaret B. Dardess, "The Popularization of Samurai Values. A Sermon by Hosoi Heishū," *Monumenta Nipponica* 31, 4 (1976), pp. 393-413.
11. See Sawada, *Confucian Values and Popular Zen*; Shibata Minoru, Shingaku, Tokyo: Shibundō, 1967.
12. Rubinger, *Private Academies*, pp. 24-38, describes this phenomenon in terms of a system, the *yūgaku* system.
13. See *Bakufu mondō*, *Razan Rin-sensei Bunshū* 31 (Vol. 1, pp. 340-343); text also in NST Vol. 28, pp. 205-208.
14. In the words of Karashima Ensei (1754-1839), "'Schools' are offices of education" (*gakkō to iu mono wa kyōiku no yakusho nareba...*) (*Gakusei wakumon, Nihon kyōikushi shiryō* 22, p. 2).
15. See the discussion in Umihara, *Shijuku no kenkyū*, pp. 5-6. An apt illustration of my thesis is that almost none of the many, many private academies actually called themselves *shijuku*; Umihara counts only five, very late examples (op. cit., p. 7).
16. According to *Kokushi daijiten* s.v. Kada no Azumamaro, there are two theories, namely, (1) that Azumamaro entrusted the letter to his nephew and heir Kada no Arimaro (1706-1751) when the latter went to Edo in 1728 (Kyōhō 13), and (2) that it was written only in 1731 (Kyōhō 16). The text has been handed down in two versions, to be found respectively in Kanpei Taisha Inari Jinja (Comp.), *Kada zenshū*, Vol. 1 (rpt, Tokyo: Meicho Fukyūkai, 1990), pp. 1-3 and pp. 4-6. See also the annotated version, ibid., pp. 7-24. My paraphrasis is based on all three versions.
17. *Lunyu* IX:5.
18. *Lunyu*, XV:31.
19. *Lunyu* XVII:10.
20. *Lunyu* XVII:9.
21. Unless otherwise indicated, I follow the chronological account contained in the second chapter of *Shōhei-shi*. This comprehensive description of temple and school was composed

by Inuzuka Innan (1750-1813), who was educated in the school and was employed by the *bakufu* as a Confucian scholar. The work was supposedly finished in 1794, but the last entry in the second chapter dates from 1800. I have used both available editions: *Nihon kyōiku bunko: gakkō-hen* (Tokyo, 1910-1911), pp. 28-179, and *Nihon kyōikushi shiryō* Vol. 7 (rpt, Kyoto: Rinsen Shoten, 1980), pp. 13-36 (second chapter only).

22. It is debatable whether the word *shoin* should be taken in the sense of the Chinese *shuyuan*, "private academy" > "school," or in the sense of "a house built in *shoin* style." In view of the fact that the *shoin* is contrasted with the *shukusha* ("dormitories"?) and the Confucius Temple, which would be integrated parts of a Chinese-style *shuyuan*, I would prefer to interpret *shoin* as "house," always keeping in mind, of course, that rooms in this house could be used for teaching the few disciples Razan had at the time.
23. Letter from Razan to Ishikawa Jōzan; see *Razan Rin-sensei bunshū* 7 (*Razan-sensei Bunsh*ū Vol. 1, pp. 91b-92a).
24. Fujiwara Seika had both pioneered the execution of the Sekiten Ritual, and introduced the Chinese-style ritual clothing called *shin'e* (Ch. *shenyi*).
25. See I.J. McMullen, "The Worship of Confucius in Ancient Japan," in: P.F. Kornicki & I.J. McMullen (Eds), *Religion in Japan: Arrows to Heaven and Earth* (University of Cambridge Oriental Publications No. 50, Cambridge, 1996), pp. 39-77.
26. *Shōhei shi* 2, under Kanbun 6.
27. *Jukusei joshi ki*, quoted in Yokoyama Tatsuzō, *Nihon kinsei kyōiku shi* (Tokyo: Dōbunkan, 1904), pp. 58.
28. *Shōheishi* 2, under Manji 3: *shikyo to iu to iedomo, jitsu wa kan'yaku ni kakaru.* (NKSS Vol. 7, p.12)
29. The text reads ... *motte kuni takaku (koku sū) ie takaki (ka shō) no gi wo akiraka ni subeshi*, which could also be translated as "in order to show clearly the augustness of the state and the eminence of our house." In the NKB edition of the text, however, the characters are juggled around: ... *motte kokka sūshō no gi wo akiraka ni subeshi.* According to the examples in the dictionaries, *sūshō* is used as a verbal compound, so in the other version, too, a verbal, rather than an adjectival translation of *sū* and *shō* should be preferred.
30. A whole note is appended to the phrase "... and gave it to Hōkō together with dried abalone." It reads: "According to the original custom, when one gave someone a present, one always gave abalone with it. Now the Shogun gave these characters that he had written personally, and he added abalone. The meaning is almost the same as giving a gift. From this one can see that the construction was undertaken by the *bakufu*, but that it shades off into a private gift to the Hayashi. That is what one calls a mixture of public and private initiative."
31. Apparently there were two problems with the fief: the tax was fixed, and had hence become less in real terms, and there was a drought. (SHS 2, under Meiwa 8/12/4)
32. Instruction quoted and paraphrased from *Kokushi daijiten* Vol. 3, s.v. "*kansei igaku no kin.*" Cf. translation in Ooms, Herman, *Charismatic Bureaucrat. A Political Biography of Matsudaira Sadanobu, 1758-1829* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1975), pp. 133-134.
33. For this so-called *Kansei igaku no kin*, see Rudolph, Petra, *Matsudaira Sadanobu und die Kansei Reform. Unter besonderer Berucksichtigung des Kansei Igaku no Kin*, Bochum, 1976; Backus, Robert L., "The Relationship of Confucianism to the Tokugawa Bakufu as

Revealed in the Kansei Educational Reform," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 34 (1974), pp. 97-162; id., "The Kansei Prohibition of Heterodoxy and Its Effects on Education," HJAS 39, 1 (1979), pp. 55-106; id., "The Motivation of Confucian Orthodoxy in Tokugawa Japan," HJAS 39, 2 (1979), pp. 275-338; Ooms, *Charismatic Bureaucrat, passim.*

34. Rubinger, *Private Academies*, p. 33; Rudolph, *Matsudaira Sadanobu und die Kansei Reform*, pp. 149-150; Ooms, *Charismatic Bureaucrat*, p. 145.

35. See Tsujimoto Masashi, *Kinsei kyōiku shisōshi no kenkyū* (Kyoto: Dōhōsha, 1990; rpt. 1992), esp. pp. 3-14.

36. See Ooms, *Charismatic Bureaucrat*, pp. 23-36; 129-133, esp. 131. For the Sekizenkai, see ibid., p. 62.

fig.1

fig.2

The Chinese Sage the "Yellow Emperor" and Confucius. Painting by Kanō Sansetsu as part of his series "Portraits of Sages and Confucian Scholars from Consecutive Generations." (Tokyo National Museum)

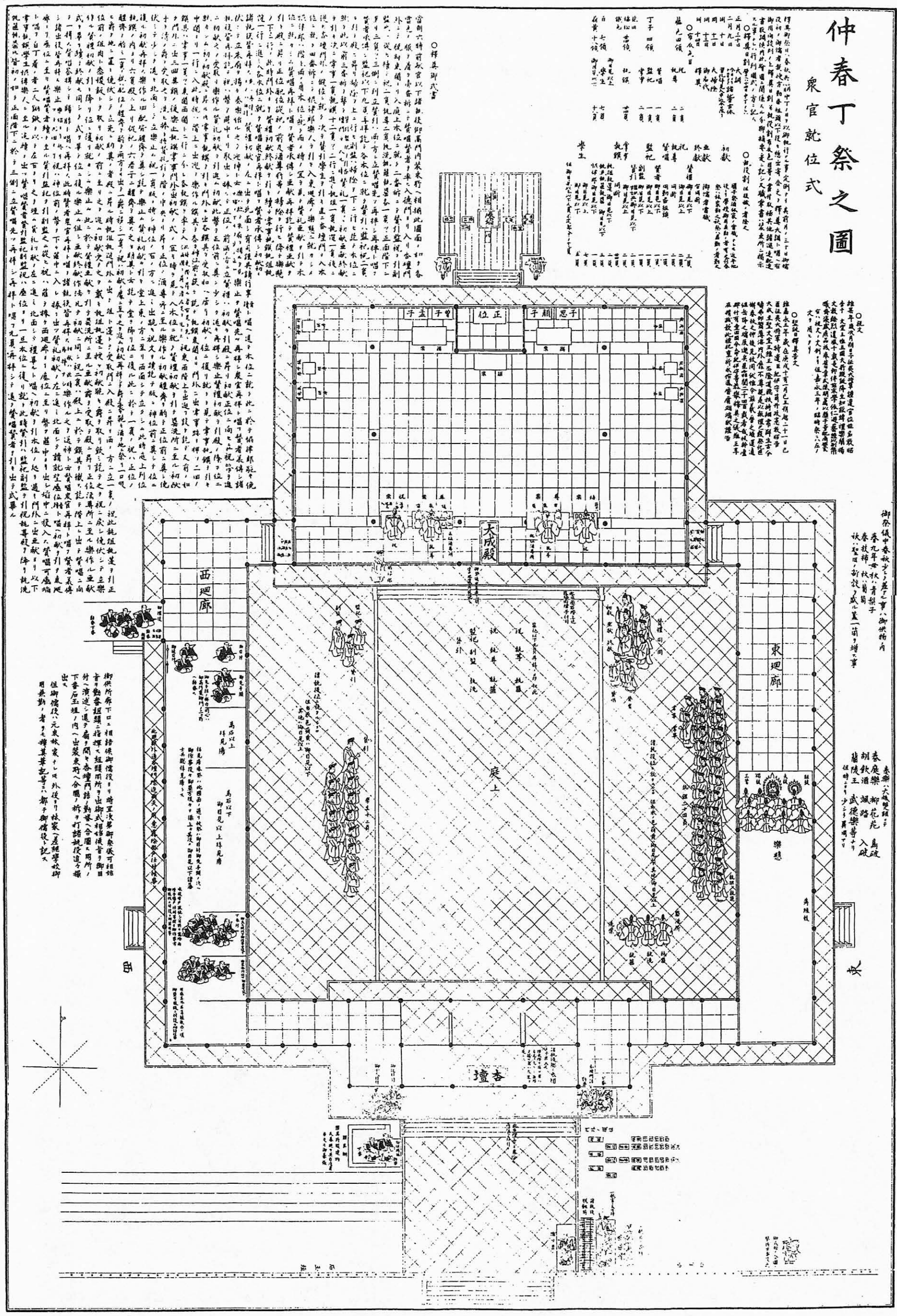

fig.3

Diagram of the (Sekiten) festival as it was celebrated in the Confucius temple of the Shōheikō, indicating the positions of the various officers. The diagram refers to the celebration in the second month; it is not dated. (Kyoto Kōgei Sen'i Daigaku)