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Domain Shinto in Tokugawa Japan

Domain Shinto as a Testing Ground of Early Modern Shinto

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This article develops the introduction to this Special Section by addressing the usefulness and scope of the term "Domain Shinto." It starts with a discussion of the *terauke* system and the question of how anti-Christian religious inspection was related to Domain Shinto. The article goes on to qualify the alleged influence of Yoshida Shinto on Domain Shinto, demonstrating that this influence was only indirect and that the common term for Yoshida Shinto, *yuiitsu shintō*, did not always signify the teaching of the Yoshida. The article finally discusses the quest of local lords for ritual autonomy as a consistent feature of the various forms of Domain Shinto.

Keywords: *terauke seido*, anti-Christianity, Yoshida Shinto, Yoshikawa Shinto, *yuiitsu shintō*, *ryōbu shintō*, Yoshikawa Koretaru, Hagiwara Kaneyori, ritual autonomy

It is probably impossible to determine one guiding ideology within the so-called Great Peace of the Tokugawa regime, which spanned roughly from the seventeenth to the mid-nineteenth century. Rather, different ideological currents competed for supremacy. However, a certain measure of uniformity was present in the guise of anti-Christianity. Anti-Christian dogmatics were not only a *sine qua non* for any theological discourse, anti-Christianity also provided the basis for a kind of loyalty pledge to Tokugawa rule, exemplified by the system of temple certifications (*terauke seido* 寺請制度). Under the pretext of fighting Christianity, this system forced every Japanese to become a certified member (literally "patron," *danka* 檀家) of a Buddhist parish in order to confirm his or her non-Christian religious status. Thus, for the first time in Japanese history, the question of religious belief became part of a political endeavor to ensure and enforce the political loyalty of the entire populace.

Ironically, the period when the *terauke* system gradually took shape, the seventeenth century, was also the first time in Japanese intellectual history when explicit anti-Buddhist reasoning became conceivable. Starting from neo-Confucian schools, anti-Buddhist discourse led among other things to a reconsideration of the nation's pre-Buddhist past,

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which was imagined as a time of "pure Shinto," often associated with the notion of Japan as a "divine country" (*shinkoku* 神国).[1] While such nostalgic ideas later turned against both Buddhism and Confucianism in the form of nativism (*kokugaku* 国学), leading seventeenth century intellectuals regarded Shinto and Confucianism as virtually identical, united in their opposition to Buddhism. Proponents of this Shinto-Confucian syncretism also included members of the ruling elite. Although they were free to criticize Buddhism, they were still subject to the general obligation to join a Buddhist community. What we call "Domain Shinto" comprises a range of efforts to resolve this contradiction between theory and practice.[2]

The characteristics of Domain Shinto come to the fore most clearly during the Kanbun 寛文 era (1661–1673), particularly through roughly simultaneous religious reforms occurring after 1666 in the domains of Okayama 岡山, Mito 水戸, and Aizu 会津 (hereafter referred to as the Kanbun reforms). While they privileged shrines of pedigree and tutelary village shrines, their overall aim was to reduce the numbers of both Buddhist temples and so-called illicit shrines (*inshi* 淫祠) in a most radical way. These reforms were initiated and organized by strong-minded domain lords in a style comparable to "enlightened absolutism" (as it later occurred in Europe), albeit strictly confined to their respective domains, hence *Domain* Shinto. The most spectacular case is probably Okayama, where *terauke* was turned into *shintō-uke* 神道請 (or *shinshoku-uke* 神職請), that is, religious certification by Shinto shrines. Mito and Aizu experimented with similar reforms of *terauke*, but for Shinto priests only. Most of these attempts had to be withdrawn in 1687, when the *bakufu* explicitly demanded that religious certification be done by Buddhist temples only. The period from the inception of the Kanbun reforms in 1666 to their partial withdrawal in 1687 is therefore, in our conception, the peak of Domain Shinto (although this periodization is most applicable for Okayama).[3] Extending this metaphor, we could also call the Kanbun reforms the tip of an iceberg—our Domain Shinto—whose full dimensions, both temporal and spatial, are still being surveyed.

This article expands on the outline of Domain Shinto offered in the introduction to this Special Section by dealing specifically with the question of how we might posit Domain Shinto in relation to Tokugawa religion in general, including Confucianism, Buddhism, and other forms of Shinto, as well as in reference to religious legislation. The first section is devoted to Buddhism, focusing on the knotty problem of whether anti-Buddhist rhetoric, a salient feature of Confucian Shinto and, by implication, of Domain Shinto also, should be regarded as fully in line with the religious policies of the Tokugawa *bakufu*, or whether it implied some sort of political insubordination that eventually resulted in Domain Shinto's decline.

The second section deals with Domain Shinto's relations with established currents of Shinto in this period, in particular Yoshida Shinto 吉田神道. I will take a look at religious terminology in the early Edo period, arguing that Yoshida Shinto was not as ubiquitous

1 Sonehara Satoshi 曽根原理, for instance, has stressed the continuity in the application of the term *shinkoku* in letters of diplomacy written by Hideyoshi (1591), the ban on Christianity by Ieyasu (1614), and later eulogies to Ieyasu by his successors (Sonehara 2021).

2 On the genesis of this concept, see the introduction to this Special Section.

3 As shown by Brigitte Pickl-Kolaczia in her contribution to this Special Section, Shintoization in Mito was less radical but more enduring. It spanned at least two generations of daimyo and continued well into the eighteenth century (also see Pickl-Kolaczia 2021).

as the widespread use of its terms may suggest. I go on to show the difference between the traditional, "medieval" approach to Shinto embodied by the Yoshida, and the new Confucian approach embodied by the Yoshida-trained Yoshikawa Koretaru 吉川惟足 (also known as Koretari; 1616–1695), who became an important Domain Shinto intellectual. According to the medieval paradigm of the Yoshida, the sacred traditions of Shinto (whatever they actually consisted of) should remain secret, while Koretaru's Confucian paradigm demanded that they be made public. In this section, I also provide a brief overview of the historical process by which Yoshida practices found their way into the Domain Shinto of Aizu.

I go on to discuss the non-Buddhist funeral rites that Domain Shinto leaders designed for themselves and their families. I compare the Confucian rites of Okayama and Mito with the Yoshida-inspired rites in Aizu, arguing that they were motivated by a common quest for ritual autonomy. My conclusion is that if there was any contradiction between Domain Shinto and the central government at all, it evolved from the desire of Domain Shinto lords to sacralize their rule in the form of a self-contained ritual system outside the control of both Buddhist temples and *bakufu* administration.

Terauke and Domain Shinto's Relation to Buddhism

In recent decades, increasing research on the *terauke* system has led to a clearer image of how and when Buddhism became a stabilizing factor in Tokugawa rule. We have come to understand that before the Shimabara Rebellion (*Shimabara no ran* 島原の乱, 1637–1638), anti-Christian sectarian inspection (*shūmon aratame* 宗門改) was applied in former Christian communities only. Important way points in its implementation nationwide include the establishment of the Office for Religious Inspection (*shūmon aratame yaku* 宗門改役) in 1640 and the decree of Kanbun 4(1665).11.25 to conduct religious inspection in all domains.[4] Eventually, the *terauke* system also included the legal obligation to give alms and perform funeral services at Buddhist temples in order to qualify as a good Buddhist parishioner, but this was an even later development.

Earlier scholars of Tokugawa religion, however, tended to trace all these elements back to the founder of Tokugawa rule, Ieyasu 徳川家康 (1543–1616). This was largely because of a law on religious inspection, dated 1613, that set out the *terauke* system in great detail, including the obligation of Buddhist parishioners to receive a Buddhist funeral. The historicity of this law, reproduced in the authoritative *Tokugawa kinreikō* 徳川禁令考, was unquestioned until the 1990s, when scholars began to detect anachronisms.[5] In fact, according to Tamamuro Fumio 圭室文雄, the text is a forgery that actually represents legal norms of the eighteenth century. According to this revised view, it was crafted to confer greater legal weight to the mandating of duties to Buddhist parishioners.[6]

The existence of different models of *terauke* development is important to keep in mind when talking about the significance of the Domain Shinto reforms from 1666 onward. Should they be regarded as an expression of open criticism of the *terauke* system? Were they directed against Buddhism as a whole? Did they involve a critique of the whole government system? In approaching these questions, it makes an enormous difference whether the *terauke*

4 Elisonas 1991, p. 370; for a recent summary of *terauke* development, see Hur 2021.
5 The *Tokugawa kinreikō* is a collection of Tokugawa laws compiled by legal scholars during the Meiji period.
6 Tamamuro 2001, pp. 265–266; see also Hur 2007, pp. 221–222.

system is at an experimental stage at the time the reforms took place, or whether it had already been firmly established for half a century.

My own understanding of the Kanbun reforms was long based on the older model of *terauke* development. It was underpinned by an article written by Beatrice Bodart-Bailey with the telling title "The Persecution of Confucianism in Early Tokugawa Japan," an interpretation that can also be found in her monograph on the "Dog Shogun," Tokugawa Tsunayoshi 徳川綱吉 (1646–1709).[7] Her theories are of particular relevance for our topic since she bases her evaluation on the reign of Ikeda Mitsumasa 池田光政 (1609–1682), interpreted by us as a Domain Shinto leader.

Bodart-Bailey's analysis starts from the famous firsthand report by Engelbert Kaempfer (1651–1716), who stayed in Japan for two years (1691–1692) and wrote about Mitsumasa in surprising detail. Kaempfer portrays Mitsumasa as an enlightened Confucian ruler who, while oppressing Buddhism, installed, among other things, a kind of common education system based on Confucian teachings.[8] However, as Kaempfer continues,

> . . . the emperor and the shogun were so angered about this matter that they were about to deprive this honest patriot of his inherited fief and would have done so had he not taken the precaution of retiring in favor of his son to prevent his family from falling into disgrace.[9]

Thus, Kaempfer sees the case of Mitsumasa as an example of the adverse circumstances Confucianism faced in the early Tokugawa period. In order to evaluate this observation, Bodart-Bailey finds confirmation in a text by Arai Hakuseki 新井白石 (1657–1725), written some thirty years after Kaempfer's journey.[10] Like Kaempfer, Hakuseki deplores the general decline of Confucianism and links it to the clash between Christianity and Buddhism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Since the government had chosen to fight Christianity with the help of Buddhism, even Confucians were forced to pose as Buddhist believers and could not spread their teachings freely. Those who criticized Buddhism were suspected of adhering to Christianity, or, as Hakuseki put it, "even superior persons mistook those who spoke about Confucianism for followers of Christianity."[11] Bodart-Bailey admits some subjective hyperbole in such depictions, but adds the cases of suppressed Confucian intellectuals like Kumazawa Banzan 熊沢蕃山 (1619–1691) and Yamaga Sokō 山鹿素行 (1622–1685), as well as ritualists such as Nonaka Kenzan 野中兼山 (1615–1663) in order to conclude that early Edo Confucians were indeed outsiders, and that official support of Confucianism by the *bakufu* started only from the time of Shogun Tsunayoshi onward.[12]

This thesis has serious implications for any evaluation not only of Ikeda Mitsumasa, but also of other Kanbun reformers, that is, our Domain Shinto agents. In Bodart-Bailey's view,

7 Bodart-Bailey 1993; Bodart-Bailey 2006, pp. 50–68.

8 This is in fact a reference to schools called *tenaraisho* 手習所, which were indeed established on a domain-wide scale during Mitsumasa's reign. They eventually lost their support due to economic and political pressure.

9 Cited from Bodart-Bailey 1993, p. 307.

10 *Honsaroku kō* 本佐録考, a short essay discussing the *Honsaroku* 本佐録, a moral instruction attributed to Honda Masanobu 本多正信 (1538–1616), a retainer and advisor of Tokugawa Ieyasu.

11 Bodart-Bailey 1993, p. 301.

12 For a critical evaluation of these findings, see Walthall 2007.

they were "rebellious," since they opposed the prevailing *terauke* system, which demanded not only temple registration, but also "supporting the temple financially, attending Buddhist festivals, and receiving a Buddhist burial."[13] This implies that the Kanbun reforms occurred when the *terauke* system had already reached maturity. Such a supposition, however, accords precisely with the outdated understanding of *terauke* development mentioned above, an understanding based on the supposed existence of a law that is indeed cited by Bodart-Bailey.[14]

According to my present understanding, the Kanbun reforms were triggered in a different way by the *bakufu* legislation. In addition to the fact that nationwide *terauke* was made mandatory only in 1665, we must consider that the *bakufu* was also interested in reducing the number of religious institutions. To this end it prohibited the construction of new temples or shrines in decrees issued from 1631 onward. These orders were repeated frequently during the Kanbun era. This was clearly to counterbalance the privileges Buddhist temples were gaining from their role in the anti-Christian inspections.[15] The severe reduction in the number of Buddhist temples in Okayama, Mito, and Aizu—one of the most radical Domain Shinto measures commonly known as *jiin seiri* 寺院整理 or "retrenchment of temples"—was therefore backed by official legislation.[16]

At the same time, the Kanbun reforms did not follow a consistent plan to replace Buddhism altogether. Stefan Köck's detailed reconstruction of the events in Okayama shows, for example, that the famous transfer of religious inspection to the custody of Shinto shrines (*shintō-uke*) was not part of Ikeda Mitsumasa's original agenda. Initially, he intended to install *shintō-uke* as an alternative for those who did not adhere to Buddhism, particularly for Confucians like himself and Shinto priests. *Shintō-uke* only became a domain-wide institution in Okayama after Mitsumasa took steps to eliminate the Fujufuse 不受不施, a subsect of Nichiren Buddhism also considered heretical by the Tokugawa.[17] Before their persecution in late 1666, they had provided more than 40 percent of the Buddhist clergy in the domain. According to Köck, Mitsumasa's oppression of this unwanted Buddhist group was so radical that it resulted in a lack of manpower for the *terauke* system. Only at this point did *shintō-uke* offer a solution to the question of how to conduct anti-Christian inspections without Buddhist monks. In this radical form, *shintō-uke* existed only under the reign of Mitsumasa. Under his son and successor Ikeda Tsunamasa 池田綱政 (1638–1714), the practice gradually reverted to *terauke*, starting in 1674. In Mito and Aizu *shintō-uke* existed as well but on a lesser scale. Similar to Mitsumasa's original intentions in Okayama, the Shinto-variant of *terauke* was meant for shrine priests and Confucians only. When the *bakufu* demanded in 1687 that religious certification be done exclusively by Buddhist temples, Mito and Aizu followed suit.[18] In Okayama, however, *shintō-uke* for shrine priests continued to be practiced.[19] This indicates that *shintō-uke* was not a consistent feature of the Kanbun reforms, as secondary sources in Western languages generally insinuate.

13 Bodart-Bailey 1993, pp. 302, 311.
14 Bodart-Bailey 1993, p. 302, and Bodart-Bailey 2006, pp. 53–56.
15 Maeda 2002, p. 339; Hur 2007, p. 248.
16 Hur 2007.
17 Köck 2021, p. 170; see also Köck's contribution to this Special Section.
18 Pickl-Kolaczia 2021, pp. 180–184.
19 Köck 2021, p. 173.

The tendency to generalize from the Okayama Kanbun reforms must be put into perspective in other respects as well. It is true that retrenchments in Mito also started in 1666 and affected more than 50 percent of all Buddhist institutions. But the purge there was less abrupt and mainly concerned temples without a traditional parish, that is, temples that were useless for *terauke*. In other words, Mito did not disregard the need for Buddhist infrastructure to conduct anti-Christian inspections.

All this leads us to the conclusion that the Kanbun reforms were less anti-Buddhist and controversial than they are depicted in Bodart-Bailey's analysis or, to a lesser degree, in Herman Ooms's classic depiction of Tokugawa ideology.[20] In particular, they were not directed against *terauke* as such, but instead modified the mandatory *terauke* in ways that accorded with the anti-Buddhist Shinto-Confucian worldviews of the respective daimyo. Thus, they corresponded to a trial-and-error phase of *terauke*. Since Christianity had been virtually extinguished by this time, the *terauke* system was no longer directed against real Christians but against an imaginary Christian threat. The Kanbun era was in fact the period when the government used this threat as a pretext for controlling the religious institutions and ways of thinking of the populace all over Japan. Domain Shinto was no exception in this respect. Anti-Christian inspection provided the pretext for the aims of Domain Shinto leaders as well. Based on a Confucian understanding of religion, they reduced the numbers of temples *and* shrines. The simultaneous strengthening of certain select shrines, on the other hand, curtailed the institutional power of Buddhism, an effect not in itself at variance with Tokugawa interests. In this sense, Domain Shinto can be seen as a testing ground for a kind of sacred kingship, a style of government that gave the respective lord absolute power over both the secular and the sacred. From the 1670s, however, the ruling elites seem to have shifted towards a consensus that effective religious control of the population could not be done without the proactive involvement of Buddhism.

Bypassing Yoshida Shinto

As mentioned in our introduction, the rise of Yoshida Shinto in early modern Japan is often directly related to phenomena such as the Kanbun reforms that we classify as Domain Shinto. John Breen and Mark Teeuwen, for instance, maintain that in "Aizu in the north, Mito in the east, and Okayama in the west of Japan, Yoshida authority was established virtually overnight."[21] Luke Roberts even proposes that "daimyo tried to force . . . people under their rule to adhere to an exclusivist Yoshida Shinto."[22] These statements, however, overshoot the mark. As I will discuss in the following paragraphs, the relationship between Yoshida Shinto and Domain Shinto was indirect and ambivalent.

Yoshida Sources of Authority

Yoshida Shinto dates back to Yoshida Kanetomo 吉田兼倶 (1435–1511), a traditional Shinto priest and scholar at the imperial court who claimed to possess a pure Shinto from the Age of the Gods that had never "tasted a single drop" of foreign teachings.[23] This notion certainly

20 Ooms 1985, pp. 192–193. For a detailed bibliographical overview, see the introduction to this volume.
21 Breen and Teeuwen 2010, p. 54.
22 Roberts 2012, p. 140.
23 Scheid 2001, p. 249.

foreshadowed the anti-Buddhist critique of Shinto-Confucian scholars.[24] However, the specific form of Shinto that Kanetomo passed on to his successors had little in common with a Shinto-Confucian "Way" for the entire populace. The core of his "One-and-Only Shinto" consisted of a system of secret rites crafted on the model of esoteric Buddhism, rites primarily intended for the use of a small circle of people and family.[25]

The actual authority of the Yoshida rested on their traditional functions in the imperial Office for Shrine Deities (Jingikan 神祇官), which Yoshida Kanetomo cleverly enlarged by means of invented traditions. Over the sixteenth century, Kanetomo's successors established relations with various shrines in the provinces by distributing certificates of shrine rank (*sōgen senji* 宗源宣旨), priestly licenses (*shintō saikyojō* 神道裁許状), and protective talismans (*chinsatsu* 鎮札) that increased the prestige of local shrines and allowed them to change traditional customs according to their needs. These documents and ritual implements appeared to derive from ancient court rituals, but in fact the Yoshida sold them on their own initiative, without further imperial endorsement. Thus, the Yoshida acted as a quasi-private company within the quasi-state framework of the court. While this business resulted in a growing number of Yoshida-related shrines, the prices for these licenses were much higher than ordinary village communities were able to afford, and the priests who were indeed licensed were only introduced to bits and pieces of Yoshida ritualism.[26] Nevertheless, in 1665 the *bakufu* acknowledged the Yoshida's position as the only institution with authority over shrines outside the scope of the imperial court, when it issued the first Law for Shrine Priests (Shosha Negi Kannushi Hatto 諸社禰宜神主法度, or the Shrine Clauses). This greatly enhanced the Yoshida trade in pseudo-imperial shrine rank certificates and licenses.

In addition, the Yoshida held privileged access to the so-called classics of Shinto, the mytho-historical accounts of the "divine age" (*jindai* 神代, also read as *kami no yo*) contained in chronicles like the *Kojiki* 古事記, *Nihon shoki* 日本書紀, and *Kuji hongi* 旧事本紀. These texts were of crucial importance for Japanese Confucians as they came to be regarded as historical documents from which the existence of a Japanese Way could be deduced. Access to these sources was, however, difficult for people outside the courtly elites. Although the first printed versions became available in small numbers from the early seventeenth century onward, reading and understanding the archaic language of these texts required the training of court scholars.[27] And court nobles, including the Yoshida, jealously watched over the preservation of their secret intellectual capital. The mythological stories of the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* were known to some extent, since they had been incorporated into shrine chronicles outside the sphere of the imperial court, but, as Confucians at the time noted, such later shrine histories were inevitably imbued with Buddhist eschatology. As such, in the early Edo period actual knowledge of imperial mythology was limited to specialists at the imperial court.

24 There is even a personal connection between the Yoshida and Confucianism, since one of Kanetomo's sons was adopted by the Kiyohara 清原, a family of Confucian learning (*myōgyōdō* 明経道) at the imperial court; he then headed that family as Kiyohara Nobukata 清原宣賢 (1475–1550). Nobukata's son was later readopted, becoming the head of Yoshida Shinto as Yoshida Kanemigi 吉田兼右 (1516–1573).

25 For a comprehensive analysis of this system, see Scheid 2001.

26 Bardy 2021; Inoue 2013; Maeda 2002.

27 The first two volumes of the *Nihon shoki* (dealing with the divine age) were printed by the court in 1599 (Kornicki 1998, p. 130); the first print edition of the *Kojiki* appeared in 1644.

Confucian intellectuals repeatedly criticized the "selfish use" of religious authority by the Yoshida, but it is doubtful whether the Yoshida were even aware of such criticism. Conversely, even Confucian-inspired priests were dependent on the Yoshida when they sought legitimation in the world of Shinto shrines.

Two Kinds of Shinto

Among other things, Yoshida Kanetomo introduced new categories of Shinto that gained common currency in the Edo period. In his *Yuiitsu shintō myōbō yōshū* 唯一神道名法要集 (Essentials on name and law of one-and-only Shinto, ca. 1484), he defined his own tradition as *yuiitsu shintō* 唯一神道 (one and only Shinto), which he contrasted with two forms of Buddhist Shinto. One of these he called *honjaku engi shintō* 本迹縁起神道, referring to the vast majority of shrines, which regarded their deities as deriving from an "original Buddha" (*honji* 本地) in the form of "manifest traces" (*suijaku* 垂迹) or avatars. The other form of Buddhist Shinto he called *ryōbu shūgō shintō* 両部習合神道, literally "Shinto combining two parts." This expression referred essentially to esoteric Buddhist interpretations of the Ise Shrines, which equated the double structure of Ise's main sanctuaries (the Inner and the Outer Shrines) to the dual (*ryōbu* 両部) mandala of Dainichi Nyorai 大日如来.[28]

In the Edo period, however, Yoshida Shinto's tripartite construction of Shinto traditions was simplified into a binary pair of *ryōbu* and *yuiitsu*. At this stage, the terms should be translated as syncretic or Buddhist Shinto (in practice, almost all shrines) and pure Shinto. This understanding is plainly reflected in the report of Engelbert Kaempfer, cited above, which describes Shinto as "the most important [religion] in status, but not as regards the number of its adherents."[29] Within Shinto, Kaempfer claims the existence of "two sects":

> The first is called *yuiitsu*, meaning "orthodox," and they keep the ancient belief and customs of their fathers without deviating even the breadth of a hair from the old path of darkness. But there are so few of them that there are more *kannushi* than followers. The second is called *ryōbu*, and they are syncretists. . . . Most adherents of Shinto belong to this sect.[30]

Kaempfer got most of his information about religious matters from scholars with Confucian backgrounds who must have had some interest in Shinto as a whole and in the orthodox "Juitz" sect (to quote Kaempfer's original spelling) in particular.[31] At the same time, his understanding of "sects" was clearly based on a Eurocentric model of religion. Therefore, claims for the actual existence of two sects of *ryōbu* and *yuiitsu* must be taken with a grain of salt.

Kaempfer's principal dichotomy, however, is confirmed by Japanese sources as well. An early witness is the Zen monk Bonshun 梵舜 (1553–1632), a member of the Yoshida family who became Tokugawa Ieyasu's leading informant in Shinto matters.[32] Bonshun reports

28 Teeuwen 1996.
29 Bodart-Bailey 1999, p. 103.
30 Bodart-Bailey 1999, p. 108.
31 Bodart-Bailey 1999, p. 15; Antoni 1997, p. 97.
32 Bonshun acted as the Buddhist administrator (*bettō* 別当) of Toyokuni sha 豊国社, the shrine for the deified Hideyoshi, which existed from 1599 to 1616 and was run by the Yoshida. Formally a member of the Rinzai

in his diary in 1613 that he was questioned by Ieyasu about the "difference between *ryōbu* and *yuiitsu*."[33] This question may have been related to Ieyasu's own deification, which was performed immediately after Ieyasu's demise in 1616 by Bonshun according to the *yuiitsu* rites of his family.[34] In the following year, however, Ieyasu's cult was transferred to Nikkō 日光 under the supervision of Tenkai 天海 (1536?–1643), another religious advisor of Ieyasu.[35] In the process, the cult took on a distinctly Buddhist Shinto format seen as *ryōbu*, as can be testified, for instance, in the writings of Hayashi Razan 林羅山 (1583–1657). Despite his anti-Buddhist rhetoric, Razan was also a professional Buddhist monk in the service of the Tokugawa. At some point in time, he became involved in the management of Nikkō. In this context, he called Ieyasu's divine spirit a "deity combining the two parts, dimming its light with dust" (*ryōbu shūgō wakō dōjin no kami* 両部習合和光同塵神).[36] This expression combines Kanetomo's term with an alternative metaphor for the conception of *honji suijaku* 本地垂迹.[37] Razan regarded Ieyasu's spirit to be a Buddhist Shinto deity, but disregarded Kanetomo's differentiation between *honjaku* and *ryōbu*.[38]

In Bonshun's case, the term *yuiitsu* was clearly a reference to his own brand of Yoshida Shinto. However, there are several cases in the seventeenth century where *yuiitsu shintō* was used differently. A well-known example is the campaign to restore Izumo Taisha 出雲大社, which was eventually returned to its former glory in 1667. This restoration must be included in the phenomena of Domain Shinto, since it entailed a local separation of Shinto and Buddhism—probably the first case of this in Japanese shrine history—undertaken with the explicit support of the daimyo, Matsudaira Naomasa 松平直政 (1601–1666).[39] Under the motto "Restore One-and-Only Shinto" (*yuiitsu shintō saikō* 唯一神道再興), Buddhist elements at Izumo Taisha, such as subsidiary chapels and icons, were removed from the shrine's precincts, and the shrine's traditional ties to Gakuenji 鰐淵寺, the supervising temple of Izumo, were cut.[40] In this case, *yuiitsu* did not refer to Yoshida Shinto, since there is no trace of any intervention by Yoshida priests at Izumo.[41] Rather, it signified Izumo's own supposedly pre-Buddhist practice. *Yuiitsu shintō* was interpreted quite literally as a "kami only tradition." Moreover, we also encounter the expression "Shinto combining two parts" (*ryōbu shintō*) in the context of Izumo. This expression was used, for instance, in a eulogy to Naomasa stating

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臨済 temple Nanzenji 南禅寺, Bonshun was also affiliated with the powerful Nanzenji abbot Sūden 崇伝 (1569–1633), Ieyasu's most important religious advisor.

33 Hagiwara 1975, p. 687.

34 Boot 2000, pp. 149–150.

35 For details, see Boot 2000; Sugahara 1996. For a more recent evaluation, see Sonehara 2021.

36 Taira 1966, pp. 52–53.

37 That is, the buddhas are too bright for humans to look at them and thus "dim their light with dust." The metaphor is itself of Daoist origin but was conventionally applied to explain the need of the buddhas to reveal themselves only as "traces."

38 Razan thereby also disregarded the doctrine of *Sannō ichijitsu shintō* 山王一実神道 created for Ieyasu by Tenkai and his followers. However, outside the sphere of scholastic discourse even among these Tendai monks, Ieyasu's cult was loosely associated with "*ryōbu shūgō*" (Sugahara 1996, p. 65, n. 4).

39 See Teeuwen 2021, who also sees the restoration of Izumo as a Domain Shinto phenomenon.

40 Nishioka 2000, pp. 202–205.

41 There is, however, an indirect influence by Hayashi Razan via his student Kurosawa Sekisai 黒澤石斎 (1612–1678) (see also the contribution by Inoue to this Special Section).

that he "put all his efforts into replacing *ryōbu* and reviving the customs of old at Kizuki Taisha."[42] Thus, *ryōbu* was clearly understood as the opposite of *yuiitsu*.[43]

Synonyms for the *ryōbu-yuiitsu* dichotomy also existed. *Ryōbu* was sometimes called *ryōbu shūgō* 両部習合 (as in Kanetomo's original definition) or simply *shūgō*, while *yuiitsu* could be replaced by *sōgen* 宗源, literally "original source," a term also used as a self-description by Yoshida Shinto. For instance, the preface of the *Shintō shūsei* 神道集成 (1670), which documents religious reforms in Mito during the Kanbun era, contrasts "pure *sōgen*" with "filthy *ryōbu*," applying value statements similar to those in the aforementioned eulogy to Matsudaira Naomasa.[44] Here too, the term *sōgen* is not confined to Yoshida Shinto but designates a more general, ideal form of ancient Shinto.

The fact that the *ryōbu-yuiitsu* dichotomy did not correspond to the original definitions of the terms did not go unnoticed by the Yoshida. The *Shingyō ruiyō* 神業類要, an apologetic Yoshida Shinto text written in 1779, puts it the following way:

> Today, "shrines of two parts" (*ryōbu no yashiro*) has become the usual term for shrines administrated by both priestly lineages and Buddhist shrine monks. However, it is a mistake if, by analogy, shrines that are administrated solely by priestly lineages are called "one-and-only shrines" (*yuiitsu no yashiro*). When we say *yuiitsu*, we do not mean "single" as opposed to the "combination of two parts" (*ryōbu shūgō*); we mean *sōgen shintō* 宗源神道. . . . Keep well in mind that *yuiitsu* is not [just] the opposite of *ryōbu*.[45]

This passage reminds the reader that *yuiitsu* refers to Yoshida (*sōgen*) Shinto, not to any other Shinto current claiming to be different from *ryōbu*. At the same time, this criticism reveals that *yuiitsu* had in fact become a slogan for the (re-)creation of self-contained shrine traditions independent of Yoshida Shinto.

Domain Shinto agents usually either sided with such *yuiitsu* movements or initiated them, as in the case of Izumo Shrine. They also used Yoshida expertise for, for instance, the shrine renovation projects detailed by Inoue Tomokatsu in his contribution. Nevertheless, this did not mean that Domain Shinto agents themselves became adherents of Yoshida Shinto. Shrines of the *ryōbu* category, on the other hand, were sometimes called "illicit shrines" (*inshi*), a label that classified them as targets for elimination. Thus, early modern sources on Shinto exhibit a great flexibility in their terminology. The analytic concept of Domain Shinto should make it easier to avoid confusion in these cases, particularly when Yoshida terms are used outside the scope of Yoshida influence.

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42 *Tokugawa shoka keifu* 徳川諸家系譜, vol. 4, cited from Nishioka 2000, p. 189. Izumo Taisha was known as Kizuki Taisha until the Meiji period.

43 The issue gets even more complex in the case of Hiesha 日吉社. Yoshida Shinto obviously had a strong influence on the group of priests who tried to emancipate themselves from supervision by the Tendai temple complex of Mount Hiei 比叡. This resulted in a legal conflict in 1685, after which the Hie priests were forced to cut their affiliations with *yuiitsu*, that is, Yoshida Shinto (Teeuwen 2021). Nevertheless, some priests still adhered to a Shinto only tradition, which they now labeled Miwa-ryū Shinto (Satō 1993, pp. 143–146).

44 ST 1, p. 4. For a detailed discussion of this preface, see the contribution of Inoue to this Special Section.

45 *Shingyō ruiyō* in ST 95, *Ronsetsu hen* 8, pp. 233–234.

Yoshikawa Koretaru and Domain Shinto in Aizu

As we have seen, Yoshida Shinto created a kind of shrine network all over Japan by selling licenses and rank certificates to local shrines. Initially, these shrines were forced to assume a type of *yuiitsu* identity by adopting specific rites from the Yoshida tradition. From the time of Yoshida Kanemi 吉田兼見 (1535–1610) onward, however, commercial aspects gained priority over doctrinal issues and the Yoshida even licensed *ryōbu* shrines without insisting on a removal of their Buddhist elements.[46] In addition to this trade, the Yoshida also maintained a genuine "Shinto-only" lore protected by strict rules of secrecy, but its transmission remained confined to the family and select members of the court aristocracy.

This situation changed only due to a series of personal coincidences. A key figure in this respect was Yoshikawa Koretaru, a merchant with purported *buke* 武家 ancestry from Edo. As a kind of amateur scholar of mythology, he managed to make personal contact with Hagiwara Kaneyori 萩原兼従 (1588–1660), at that time the highest authority of Yoshida Shinto. Hagiwara was in possession of the secrets that constituted the Yoshida's tokens of legitimacy and could only be passed on to one person at a time.[47] For various reasons, Koretaru was chosen as the "vessel" to transmit these secrets to future Yoshida generations. This he did, if only partially: in violation of Hagiwara's original plan, he also leaked them to members of the Tokugawa elite and their Confucian tutors, in particular to Daimyo Hoshina Masayuki and his Confucian advisor Yamazaki Ansai 山崎闇斎 (1619–1682).[48] In all probability, Masayuki was largely ignorant of Shinto before his encounter with Koretaru in 1661.[49] Similarly, Yamazaki Ansai, who joined Masayuki's intellectual "salon" at about the same time, only became immersed in Shinto matters after he had received Koretaru's instructions. In the end, this resulted in the creation of Ansai's own brand of Confucian Shinto, known as Suika Shintō 垂加神道, which was to become a major intellectual trend from the later seventeenth century onward.[50]

Koretaru himself also left a couple of treatises on Shinto heavily influenced by Confucian ideas. They became the core of what is now known as Yoshikawa Shinto.[51] Koretaru's main asset, however, was the fact that he had been initiated into Yoshida secrets of a more ritual nature, known under labels such as *himorogi-iwasaka denju* 神籬磐境伝授. There is still a great deal of mystery about these rituals, but unlike later Confucian critics, contemporary authorities—the imperial court, the *bakufu*, and concerned daimyo—accepted the professed antiquity of these secrets. They firmly believed that they dated back to the age of the gods and conferred a spiritual authority on their possessors, regardless of whether they were Yoshida priests, Confucian scholars, powerful daimyo, or Edo merchants.

46 Hagiwara Tatsuo's seminal study of medieval shrine ritualism contains very detailed excerpts of Yoshida sources on the beginnings of this trade (see in particular Hagiwara 1975, pp. 655–718). For a good case study of the interactions between the Yoshida and village shrines in the eighteenth century, including local "shrine monks" (*shasō* 社僧), see Bardy 2021.

47 Hagiwara was the oldest grandson of Yoshida Kanemi, the dominant Yoshida figure during the reigns of Hideyoshi and Ieyasu. The fact that Hagiwara as the logical heir of the Yoshida house became the head of Hideyoshi's shrine and opened up a branch family (Hagiwara 1975, p. 684) indicates that initially Hideyoshi's shrine promised even more prestige than the traditional Yoshida functions at court.

48 The go-between figure who introduced Koretaru to Masayuki was Hattori Ankyū 服部安休 (1619–1681), a samurai scholar who had also received instructions from Hayashi Razan.

49 Hayashi 2021, p. 135.

50 Ooms 1985, chapter 7.

51 Scheid 2002; ST 97, *Ronsetsu hen* 10; Taira 1966.

Why Hagiwara Kaneyori passed on these tokens of Yoshida legitimacy to an outsider is a complicated story. According to the biography of Yoshikawa Koretaru, Hagiwara himself was inspired by a kind of Confucian consciousness. He is quoted as saying:

> The Way was never transmitted from our family to another one, which has led to a decline of the Way. Since it is the Way of the realm (*tenka* 天下), its vessel must be sought far and wide.[52]

Whether this quotation can be taken at face value is of course doubtful, but the biography is probably correct in reporting that Hagiwara continued to pass on secrets to Koretaru even after the latter had started his career as a Shinto advisor to the Tokugawa elite. Prior to that, Hagiwara himself seems to have initiated Tokugawa Yorifusa 徳川頼房 (1603–1661) of Mito, the father of Mitsukuni, into some Yoshida rituals and established contact with Mito priests.[53] In other words, a precedent for Koretaru's actions existed, and it is plausible that Hagiwara purposefully chose Koretaru to continue nurturing the seed of Yoshida Shinto that he himself had sown in the east.

On the other hand, Hagiwara's relations with the main Yoshida lineage were strained. In his youth, he was made the head of a new branch family created to run the ill-fated shrine of Toyotomi Hideyoshi 豊臣秀吉 (1537–1598).[54] When this shrine was expunged in 1616 in the aftermath of Ieyasu's elimination of the Toyotomi lineage, Hagiwara Kaneyori only barely escaped exile. After this loss in status, Hagiwara rebuilt his position as scholar and guardian of the Yoshida house with some success. Yet, when he met Koretaru in 1653, he was struggling with an intra-family problem: Yoshida and Hagiwara had only infant heirs at their disposal and a debate was underway as to who would be better suited to receive the secrets of the house. Replacing the heir with a non-relative until a suitable successor was available was a provisional solution that had been previously applied in the Yoshida house.[55]

These circumstances brought Yoshikawa Koretaru into possession of two things: first, an understanding of the "divine age" that surpassed even the knowledge of historian scholars such as the Hayashi, and second, a ritual competence that was tied to the mystic aura of Yoshida secrets. Koretaru passed these two elements on to a number of Shinto adepts, who thus not only acquired knowledge of Japan's divine past, but also gained access to "genuine" Shinto rituals, in particular death rituals first conducted for Hideyoshi in 1599 by Yoshida priests.[56] The creative adoption of these funeral rites *cum* deification enabled Yamazaki Ansai, for instance, to establish a cult for his own deified spirit while he was still alive.[57] More importantly, they inspired Hoshina Masayuki to order a Shinto funeral in his will and a subsequent deification as Hanitsu Reishin 土津霊神 (or Hanitsu Reisha 土津霊社), through rituals performed by Yoshikawa Koretaru. Due to their origin in Yoshida Shinto, these

52 *Aremidō sensei gyōjō*, cited in Taira 1966, p. 11. This text, which is also known as *Yoshikawa Areminoya sensei gyōjō* 吉川視吾堂先生行状 (The Accomplishments of Master Yoshikawa of the Aremi Hall), was written shortly after Koretaru's death by his disciples under the guidance of his adoptive son and successor, Yoshikawa Yorinaga 吉川従長 (1654–1730).

53 Taira 1966, p. 9.

54 Hagiwara was in fact a grand-nephew of the aforementioned Bonshun.

55 See Scheid 2001, pp. 100–102.

56 Scheid 2004.

57 Ooms 1985, pp. 231–232; Hayashi 2021, pp. 142–143.

rites were closer to the precedent of Hideyoshi than to the Shinto-Buddhist deification of Masayuki's own ancestor, Tokugawa Ieyasu.[58]

It seems plausible that Ikeda Mitsumasa and Tokugawa Mitsukuni, who initiated Confucian death rituals for themselves and their families in their domains, may have also preferred Shinto rites had they had access to them.[59] Due to the Yoshida regime of secrecy, however, this was only possible thanks to the bold breach of courtly taboos by Yoshikawa Koretaru. Koretaru may have been motivated by selfish interests, as the Yoshida later claimed, but his breach was also based on a new understanding of Shinto as a moral "Way" and a public good. According to Koretaru's biography, he had already revealed this new interpretation in 1657, in a meeting with Tokugawa Yorinobu 徳川頼宣 (1602–1671), daimyo of Wakayama, that marks the start of Koretaru's career as Shinto teacher to the Tokugawa. On that occasion, Koretaru explained the difference between ceremonial Shinto dealing with shrine matters and his own teaching, *rigaku shintō* 理学神道, which emphasized "morality, family, and ruling the country" (*shūshin seika chikoku* 修身斉家治国).[60] This Confucian mindset, which combined Shinto with the art of governance, was instrumental in spreading "Shinto only" ideas and practices beyond the old elites of court society.

As regards the Yoshida themselves, their infamous trade with *sōgen senji* shrine ranks was not tied to a specific ideology, let alone a moral Way. It was simply the marketing of prestigious titles. Incidentally, this business developed on a large scale only after the Kanbun era and was particularly successful in eastern Japan in the early eighteenth century.[61] As mentioned above, the Shrine Clauses of 1665 were certainly a prerequisite for this development. This legislation, however, may be a side effect of Domain Shinto. It occurred at a time when Hoshina Masayuki had received his first initiations into Yoshida Shinto by Yoshikawa Koretaru while still wielding considerable influence on the central government. It is known that not only the Yoshida, but also the imperial court protested when they got wind of this breach of Yoshida taboos. The legal recognition of Yoshida privileges might thus be explained, at least in part, by Masayuki's need to compensate the Yoshida for their loss.[62]

In this way, Domain Shinto paved the way for the spread of Yoshida ideas and practices throughout the country. However, this development was not planned by the Yoshida themselves or by the agents of Domain Shinto, nor was it enforced from above. Rather, it was due to a new need for self-contained Shinto ritualism, triggered by the idea that Shinto shrines had to be freed from Buddhist supervision.

58 Tsugaru Nobumasa 津軽信政 (1646–1710), daimyo of Hirosaki 弘前 in today's Aomori Prefecture, was another daimyo who was deified according to Yoshida rites. He was deified in 1695 as Takateru Reisha 高照霊社 by Koretaru's successor Yoshikawa Yorinaga; see ST 97, *Ronsetsu hen* 10, pp. 83–86.

59 In fact, the Ikeda added Shinto deifications *à la* Yoshida/Yoshikawa to their Confucian ancestor cults under Mitsumasa's successor Tsunamasa, as noted by Stefan Köck in his contribution to this Special Section.

60 Taira 1966, pp. 21–22.

61 Maeda 2002, pp. 332–338; Inoue 2007, pp. 164–167.

62 There is only circumstantial evidence for this connection, but Taira Shigemichi emphasizes in this context that Koretaru was requested in Hagiwara's last will and testament to "revive the Yoshida house." This may have been realized in 1665 in the form of the Shrine Clauses, which coincide with a visit of the young Yoshida scions in Edo. The *Tokugawa jikki* 徳川実記 also mentions that on this occasion, the idea arose of reviving Hideyoshi's Toyokuni Shrine, which had been in the custody of the Hagiwara (Taira 1966, p. 41).

Ritual Autonomy

As we have seen, the retrenchment of shrines and temples during the Kanbun reforms was less controversial than hitherto believed, since the reforms were compatible with the overarching ideological agenda of extinguishing Christianity and controlling the religious beliefs of the populace. On the other hand, the importance attributed by Domain Shinto leaders to non-Buddhist funerals, ancestor cults, and deifications created fissures inside the ruling elite of shogun, *bakufu* officials, and leading local lords—the so-called *bakuhan* 幕藩 regime. The first tensions emerged in 1650 in the context of Tokugawa Yoshinao's funeral. Yoshinao had been the daimyo of Owari 尾張 and was an uncle of both Mitsukuni and Masayuki. As described in detail in Inoue's contribution to the Special Section, he can be regarded as a role model for later Domain Shinto lords, since he worked in close cooperation with Hayashi Razan to reestablish ancient shrines in his domain. In line with his Confucian convictions, he ordered that his funeral be conducted exclusively in a Confucian way. *Bakufu* officials, on the other hand, considered the reading of Buddhist sutras indispensable for the funeral of a Tokugawa leader and overruled his last will, resulting in a mixture of Confucian and Buddhist rites at his funeral.[63] Mitsukuni, among others, criticized this decision.[64]

Ikeda Mitsumasa and Tokugawa Mitsukuni subsequently managed to replace the Buddhist ancestor cults of their families with Confucian rites. These were introduced gradually and confined to their own domains, as both daimyo were obviously aware of possible *bakufu* intervention. More controversial was Hoshina Masayuki's Shinto funeral in 1673, already noted above. Masayuki was a grandson of Ieyasu from a minor branch of the family. He had exerted considerable influence on the government as the "guardian" (*hosa* 補佐) of the child Shogun Ietsuna 徳川家綱 (1641–1680, r. 1651–1680). It is certainly no coincidence that this political constellation enabled Domain Shinto to produce its most remarkable reforms. Nevertheless, Masayuki's will mandating a Shinto funeral met with similar opposition by *bakufu* officials as had the Confucian funeral of his uncle in 1650.

After complicated negotiations led by Yoshikawa Koretaru, Masayuki's Shinto funeral was tolerated on the condition that all of the rituals were carried out in Aizu rather than Edo, although the latter is where Masayuki had spent most of his life, including his last days.[65] His deification at the newly built Hanitsu Jinja 土津神社 required a further two years of lobbying and was granted under similar conditions. Two generations later, Aizu went a step further by asking the Yoshida (not the Yoshikawa!) to promote Masayuki's spirit from a *reishin* 霊神 to a *daimyōjin* 大明神 title (the same divine title that Hideyoshi had received). While the Yoshida approved this elevation, senior councilors (*rōjū* 老中) of the *bakufu* objected when they were informed in 1735, arguing that this action was "selfish and showed disrespect to Tōshōgū 東照宮." This implied that an exalted title such as *daimyōjin* for a deified lord would call into question the uniqueness of the Tōshōgū, the site of Ieyasu's apotheosis. Aizu was consequently only allowed to use the *daimyōjin* title within the domain and among house retainers, but not in communication with outsiders or with the *bakufu*.[66]

63 *Aremidō sensei gyōjō* in ST 97, *Ronsetsu hen* 10, p. 472; see also the contribution by Inoue to this Special Section.
64 Tamamuro 1968, pp. 871–873.
65 Hayashi 2021, pp. 138–142; Roberts 2012, pp. 143–150; Scheid 2002, pp. 315–316.
66 Roberts 2012, pp. 148–149.

In the cases of Tokugawa Yoshinao and Hoshina Masayuki, it was high *bakufu* officials such as senior councilors and magistrates of temples and shrines (*jisha bugyō* 寺社奉行) who voiced objection to the ritual extravagances of their posthumous cults. These officials held domains of their own, although most of them were of so-called *fudai* 譜代 (vassal) status, with their territorial privileges due to long-standing vassal relationships to the Tokugawa. In particular, the *fudai* Sakai Tadakiyo 酒井忠清 (1624–1681), who served as Great Councilor (*tairō* 大老) from 1666 to 1680, seems to have regarded innovations that we now classify as Domain Shinto with suspicion.[67] This is said to have arisen from Tadakiyo's particular aversion to Confucian learning, but it could be also related to a structural "balance of power."[68] While *fudai* houses had access to the highest posts in the government, they were denied the position of shogun. In contrast, the Tokugawa branch families—in particular the Three Houses (*go-sanke* 御三家) of Kii 紀伊, Owari, and Mito—had the explicit task of providing shogunal successors for the main lineage if needed, but were excluded from high administrative posts.[69] Thus, the *fudai* bureaucracy kept a watchful eye over all daimyo under Tokugawa rule, including lords from the extended Tokugawa family. They formed a natural conservative element within the *bakuhan* power structure, in particular in the area of ritual propriety.

As concerns the propriety of ancestor cults, a tacit convention existed that daimyo cults should not compete with the ceremonial or spatial dimensions of Ieyasu's Tōshōgū. Established Buddhist institutions became natural allies in maintaining this standard, in particular the Tendai 天台 school, which oversaw both Tōshōgū in Nikkō and Kan'eiji 寛永寺, one of the two Tokugawa funerary temples (*bodaiji* 菩提寺) in Edo. Domain Shinto, on the other hand, adopted ritual procedures which were distinct from Buddhism or Buddhist Shinto (*ryōbu*), and turned the worship of the local lord into a "Way" meant as a model for the entire Tokugawa realm. Confucianism and Shinto provided ideological and ritual foundations for these cults, but unlike Buddhism, they lacked the institutional power to be recognized by the shogunate as authorities in matters of religious orthodoxy and political hierarchy. Therefore, new "Ways" of Shinto-Confucian ancestor worship raised suspicion among the *bakufu* administration. New ways meant claims to authority beyond the established cooperation between Buddhism and the state. And indeed, it remained ambiguous whether Shinto-Confucian daimyo cults contributed to the prestige of the Tokugawa regime in general or to the increased status of the respective local lord. In this sense, Domain Shinto contained a subversive element deriving from its quest for ritual autonomy.

Another point where Domain Shinto was at variance with the *bakuhan* structure the *fudai* sought to maintain relates to Confucian meritocracy. Ikeda Mitsumasa, for instance, installed "talented men" from other provinces in his own domain, leading to conflicts with his own house vassals.[70] Similarly, in the case of the funerals of Tokugawa Yoshinao

67 In the case of Okayama, it is probable that Tadakiyo personally urged Ikeda Tsunamasa to withdraw his father's most unusual innovations (Bodart-Bailey 2006, p. 65; McMullen 2021, p. 128), even if Köck proposes alternative scenarios in his contribution to this Special Section.

68 Bodart-Bailey 2006, p. 65.

69 According to Hall, this structure developed from the specific house rules of the Matsudaira 松平, the extended Tokugawa family (Hall 1991, pp. 163–169).

70 See McMullen 2021, as well as the contribution by Köck to this Special Section.

and Hoshina Masayuki, some of their house vassals clearly opposed these departures from Buddhist tradition. House vassals thus constituted another conservative element in Tokugawa society, since they jealously watched over the preservation of their feudal rights of inheritance that also pertained to their offices. Vassals in the domains and *fudai* in the *bakufu* were similar in this respect. Taking this into consideration, it seems plausible that the opposition, which eventually caused the failure of Domain Shinto's "enlightened absolutism," arose mainly from the intermediate echelons of the warrior elite, who felt threatened by Confucian meritocratic principles and insisted on feudal inheritance.

Conclusion

The present article starts from a series of most radical religious reforms initiated in the Kanbun era of the later seventeenth century in the domains of Okayama, Mito, and Aizu. These reforms are seen as the tip of an iceberg we refer to as Domain Shinto, meaning a number of Shinto-related religious policies introduced inside and outside the three domains. This expansive conception leads us to a new understanding of the reforms' significance, both at the time and within the span of Japanese religious history. I argue that the *terauke* system, which was also extended to the entire country in the Kanbun era, influenced these reforms in ways other than is commonly understood. All Domain Shinto leaders were in line with the anti-Christian policies of the *bakufu*, but they also all tried, to varying degrees, to make non-Buddhist forms of anti-Christian certification an option. At the same time, the full integration of anti-Christianity and Buddhism was not yet completed in the Kanbun era, and consequently Domain Shinto was not as controversial as generally assumed. Rather, it served as a testing ground for new forms of ruler legitimization from an ultimately Tokugawa-centric perspective.

One point that may be raised against the concept of Domain Shinto is the fact that the Kanbun reforms were not intended as reforms of Shinto. When we put the focus on the minds of Domain Shinto's primary agents, Confucianism may indeed have been the prime motivation. Their understanding of Shinto, on the other hand, was vague and amounted to not much more than a glorification of Japan's pre-Buddhist past. At the same time, we must bear in mind that Shinto and Confucianism were in no way mutually exclusive at that time. If we look at the concrete measures highlighted in the articles of Inoue, Köck, and Pickl-Kolaczia in this Special Section, we indeed find Confucian daimyo paying an unexpected amount of attention to the details of shrine organization. In terms of religious history, the Kanbun reforms had a greater impact on Shinto as they produced precedents, such as the forceful separation of shrines and temples that we can later observe at the national level. Both intellectually and institutionally, Domain Shinto created space for non-Buddhist religious activities, which was successively filled with innovations in the realm of shrine worship.

This leads us to the relationship between Yoshida Shinto and Domain Shinto. While scholars have often regarded Yoshida Shinto as the driving force behind the Kanbun reforms, my understanding arrives at the opposite conclusion, namely that Yoshida Shinto was actually a passive beneficiary of these reforms. The traditional understanding is based on straightforwardly equating *yuiitsu shintō* with Yoshida Shinto, but closer inspection reveals that the label *yuiitsu* was also applied to shrine emancipation movements outside the scope of Yoshida influence. *Yuiitsu* could therefore encompass phenomena that I would classify as Domain Shinto. Domain Shinto was thus a factor in the nationwide rise of Shinto. Yoshida

Shinto profited from this development, despite the fact that it adhered to medieval patterns of secret transmission that Domain Shinto, or the Confucian ideology underpinning it, sought to overcome.

In addition to a non-Buddhist mode of anti-Christian ideological control, Domain Shinto leaders also sought to introduce non-Buddhist ancestor cults and funerals. It is this aspect of Domain Shinto that reveals the greatest potential for conflict with *bakufu* religious policies, since these ancestor cults resulted in a quest for ritual autonomy that contradicted the unspoken laws of ritual propriety. This put the ritual innovations of Domain Shinto, whether inspired by Shinto or by Confucianism, in opposition to the conservative Buddhist mainstream of the time, which was upheld, I conjecture, by the *fudai* daimyo and many vassals of Domain Shinto leaders themselves. In other words, Domain Shinto lords faced largely tacit opposition from the lower echelons of warrior society to their reforms.

In order to describe the wider relationship between Domain Shinto and more conservative forms of religion in the early Edo period, I would like to take up an observation made by Herman Ooms. In his *Tokugawa Ideology*, Ooms draws a distinction between "the ritual mode of ideological expression" in the Tokugawa mainstream—referring in particular to the Tōshōgū cult of Ieyasu—and the "discursive mode" of Shinto-Confucian "schoolmen"—who include, as I conceive them, the ideologues of Domain Shinto.[71] Perhaps this observation could be generalized as a shift from "medieval" to "early modern" modes of ideological expression. According to medieval conceptions, ultimate authority was attributed to ritual systems that developed around "secrets" at their centers. These secrets could be ritual formulas or objects or both, but in any case, they had to be conferred in the form of initiations from a bearer of authority to a qualified successor. "Teachings" played only a secondary role in this process. Authority was tied to the possession of symbolic objects guarded by secrecy.[72] This "ritual mode of ideological expression" found its most refined form in esoteric Buddhism, but it was found in other traditions as well, such as Yoshida Shinto. In contradistinction to such conceptions of sacred authority, neo-Confucian intellectuals insisted on the concept of a "Way" that centered on a "teaching" revealing a "truth" that could and should be communicated to as many people as possible, since it was a public good. Confucian Shinto of the seventeenth century reflected this conceptualization. It defined Shinto as the Way of Japan every Japanese should follow (even if it was hard to determine what kind of truth Shinto contained). Domain Shinto was, as we have seen, the experimental application of Confucian Shinto in certain domains, domains that in retrospect appear to have been laboratories of a new, "discursive mode" of ideological expression. In this sense, Domain Shinto differed from the Tokugawa mainstream, which relied almost entirely on long-established esoteric modes of sacred authority. Thus, Domain Shinto was not at variance with Tokugawa mainstream ideology in terms of content, but in terms of modality.

This "discursive" approach notwithstanding, esoteric modes of transmission retained their significance in Confucian Shinto as well. Although this goes beyond the period discussed above, we can equate the end of Domain Shinto with the rise of nativism in the eighteenth century. The latter directed its criticism much more consistently against the esoteric remnants of medieval Shinto, including ritual innovations by Domain Shinto leaders.

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71 Ooms 1985, p. 193.

72 For details of this medieval "culture of secrecy," see Scheid and Teeuwen 2006.

Seen from this angle, Domain Shinto ultimately had to give way to the "discursive modes" of ideological expression that it had itself accompanied into the religious-political arena of the early modern period.

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