From the Editor
編纂者のメッセージ

In this issue we present the final set of essays from the State of the Field conference held in the spring of 2000 at The Ohio State University. The two substantive appraisals focus on political/institutional history and socio-economic history. These are followed by a summary of concerns reflected throughout the discussions at the conference.

The essays we have published through this and the last two issues of EMJ represent our most ambitious effort to date. Response from readers, in the form of requests for additional copies, has been impressive and very rewarding for all of us who have been a part of this effort. Several of these essays have been translated and/or reprinted already.

The magnitude of this effort raises two important questions. The first concerns what might be done in future issues that will be of similar interest to readers. One possible approach would be to plan future issues in whole or in part around clearly identified themes. To this end, the editors issue a **CALL FOR PROPOSALS FOR THEMATIC ISSUES OF *EMJ***. Proposals should 1) indentify a well-defined theme and potential contributors, and 2) a guest editor who will be in charge of soliciting contributions, assuring their submission to referees and for publication on time, and who will take a substantial role in copy editing.

A second concern has become clear during preparation of the three State of the Field issues: There are parts of our work that deserve more attention than the current staff involved in production of *EMJ* – Lawrence Marceau and Philip Brown – have been able to devote to them. In particular, this involves copy editing in preparation of the journal for print and preparation of files (e.g., bibliographies from the State of the Field series) for posting on our web site.

As part of efforts to deal with the first issue, **we have established a basic style sheet for the journal** that will appear in the back matter of every issue and on our web site. Final submissions (after revisions based on comments from the editors and outside referees) must conform to these guidelines. In addition, we are actively **looking for colleagues to help with copy editing and preparation of files for posting on the EMJNet web site**.

Finally, EMJNet was originally created based on the idea that it would give us extra opportunities to do interesting and innovative things, either on our own or in conjunction with the annual meetings of the AAS. In the past two years, EMJNet has sponsored regular panels at the AAS and has also held independent round table discussions at each of the last two annual meetings, one on *bunjin* culture and society organized by Cheryl Crowley and the other on the theme of Blood in Tokugawa culture, organized by Bettina Gramlich-Oka. A panel for the EMJNet meeting in association with the 2004 AAS annual meeting in San Diego is now largely complete (more in the fall issue of *EMJ*), but **proposals for additional EMJNet activities for the next AAS meeting can still be considered**.

Readers with an interest in proposing a thematic issue of the journal, activities for the forthcoming AAS, or volunteering to assist with editing and manuscript preparation (both printed and internet) should contact Philip Brown at Department of History, 230 West 17th Avenue, Columbus OH 43210 or at brown.113@osu.edu. Proposals for EMJNet's meeting in conjunction with the AAS annual meeting need to be submitted by September 15, 2003.

As always, we continue to encourage subscribers and readers to submit materials for publication with *EMJ*. Scholarly articles are routinely sent out to colleagues to be refereed, but in addition, we have published a variety of other kinds of work in the past: translations of documents, essays on early modern Japan studies in different countries (France and Russia, with others recently solicited), articles on teaching and the use of computers in Japanese studies and research. We continue to seek a broad array of materials that go beyond what scholarly journals ordinarily publish but which clearly serve the development of early modern Japanese studies.

The Political and Institutional History of Early Modern Japan[*]
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Introduction[1]

Western studies of late sixteenth to mid-nineteenth century political and institutional history have increased greatly in number and sophistication over the past quarter century. Scholars now explore domain and village politics as well as those associated with the Emperor and Shogun. They employ an array of documentary evidence that increasingly extends beyond the records of great figures and Shogunal administration (the *bakufu*) into the realms of village archives and handwritten manuscript materials. Analytical frameworks now encompass those of anthropology, sociology, and political science. The number of scholars has increased substantially and there may now be something close to a critical mass that encourages an increased diversity of interpretation and level of debate within the field.

Despite such advances, there are significant issues that remain. The field is still relatively small and that means that much work, some of it very basic, remains. Most notably, studies of the mid-seventeenth to early nineteenth century are relatively few in number. Most studies focus on the formation of a stable central authority or, more typically, the end of the Tokugawa Shogunate. While there are some very good recent studies that may lay a foundation for filling this void, in the political histories there is little sense of some substantive tie between the ends of the era that lends it some sense of unity. In the realm of political history the center of gravity is clearly located at the interstices of the Tokugawa (1600-1868) to Meiji (1868-1912) transformation. Since post-World War II scholars often identified

connections between the late Tokugawa era and post-Meiji developments, they found it attractive to characterize Tokugawa Japan as "early modern", but there is much of Japanese history prior to the very late eighteenth century that has never comfortably fit this mold. Some recent works begin to evoke characterizations associated with feudalism rather than early modernity. Given further study of the era, we might conceivably recast the political and institutional history of late sixteenth to mid-nineteenth century Japan as something less than "early modern," something more traditional even if we are not favorably disposed to use words like "feudal."

Before exploring this issue and others, it is important to define the basic parameters of this essay and to define some key terms as employed here.

Defining Terms: I discuss materials that focus on the "early modern" period rather broadly defined, and I use the term here solely as the current, conventional shorthand for this era. I do not employ it with any presumption that it entails a specific set of characteristics such as those that were associated with the "modernization theory" of the nineteen-sixties or any other paradigm. It is not the purpose of this essay to take sides on this conceptual issue, but to encompass the range of positions taken in published work in the field.[2]

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[1] In the citations below, the following abbreviations are employed: *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies HJAS*, *Journal of Asian Studies JAS*, *Journal of Japanese Studies JJS*, *Monumenta Nipponica MN*.

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[2] My usage here is not unusual. For the most part, scholars do not explicitly confront potential substantive use of the term "early modern" in their writings. While the term implies links with "the modern," seldom does either term find explicit definition and informal discussions with Japan scholars reveals a range of definitions, from those that would encompass the Kamakura era to those that would treat Japan's history into the twentieth century as "feudal" rather than anything approaching "modern." Even where scholarly publication directly addresses operational definitions, there is not clear consensus on how to define the term or the era and its characteristics. Shmuel N. Eisenstadt is one of the few social scientists of the "modernization" school who have continued to develop these theories, explicitly rendering them less unidirectional and taking ultimate outcomes of the process as problematic rather than presumed. His work now clearly allows for cultural variation based on a vari-

Into the nineteen-sixties scholars tended to treat the Tokugawa hegemony as defining the boundaries of early modern political history, more recent work has shown affinities between its organizational patterns and those of earlier years, extending back into the mid-sixteenth century. To cite one prime example: While John Hall (1961[3]) marked a clear distinction between the daimyo of the Oda and Toyotomi years (ca. 1570-1599) and those of the era the Japanese historian treats as *kinsei* (commonly translated into English as "early modern"), a more recent tendency elides that difference and extends the birth of more effective patterns of administration back a few decades (e.g., Michael Birt, 1985[4]). At the other

ety of factors including historical experience prior to the commencement of "modernizing." See Shmuel N. Eisenstadt and Wolfgang Schluchter, "Introduction: Paths to Early Modernities – A Comparative View," *Daedalus* 127:3 (Summer 1998) 1-18. This essay focuses especially on developments associated with the emergence of "civil society" and a "public sphere." (Eisenstadt is one of the very few sociologists who have maintained a long-term interest in Japan's historical experience and that of other Asian societies.) David L. Howell, in the same issue, "Territoriality and Collective Identity in Tokugawa Japan," 105-32, identifies this era as "feudal" rather than "early modern" and relies on a very broad Marxist definition of the term as an exploitative, coercive extraction by a variety of means of all surplus from peasants by landowners (see esp. 116-19). This is in marked contrast to the typical usage of "feudalism" as employed by scholars of the 1950s and 1960s, a definition that focused on decentralized political structures. See, for example, the essays in Rushton Coulborn, comp. *Feudalism in History*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956, including an essay by Edwin O. Reischauer. Broader debates on the subject of "feudalism" are sketched by Elizabeth A.R. Brown, "The Tyranny of a Construct: Feudalism and Historians of Medieval Europe," *The American Historical Review* 79:4 (Oct., 1974), pp. 1063-1088. As indicated below, there are even scholars who see "feudalism" and "early modern" as co-existing.
[3] "Foundations of the Modern Japanese Daimyo," *JAS* 20:3 (May 1961): 317-29.
[4] "Samurai in Passage: The Transformation of the Sixteenth-Century Kanto," *JJS* 11:2 (Summer

end of the era as typically defined, there is some recognition that the old ways did not fade as rapidly as early scholarly emphasis on the reforms of the Meiji Restoration (1868) suggested.[5]

Reflecting these developments, I focus on materials that largely deal with the period from mid-sixteenth century to the very early Meiji transition. Other periodizations are certainly possible, and the discussion below touches on some that scholars have suggested either explicitly or implicitly. This approach not only permits discussion of the wide range of definitions (often only implicit) that Japan scholars and others have brought to the term "early modern" Japan, it also permits inclusion of the early stages of developments that provided the building blocks of the Tokugawa political order.

Within this chronological framework I treat works that deal explicitly with "political history" and "institutional history," very broad and amorphous categories for classifying historical studies despite the fact that they are often taken as the core of the broad range of historical studies. One can argue that all activity is political, for example. Today we recognize that many areas of activity that were not traditionally treated as part of political history have a clear political edge. *Ikki* or "leagues" provide a readily identifiable example. Formed on a temporary basis to protest perceived injustice, they consciously sought to redress official malfeasance, over-taxation, and the failure of domain or *bakufu* governments to provide for the obligatory minimum conditions of economic well being for villagers. The object of such protest is clearly political and designed to change policy, yet would often have been classi-

1985): 369-399.
[5] See, for example, the monographic works of Karen Wigen, *The Making of a Japanese Periphery, 1750-1920*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995; David L. Howell, *Capitalism from Within: Economy, Society, and the State in a Japanese Fishery*. Berkeley, CA. University of California Press, 1995; and Edward E. Pratt, *Japan's Proto-Industrial Elite: The Economic Foundations of the Gono*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University Press, 1999. Other periodical literature also develops this perspective.

fied as social history (the history of the actions of commoners, ordinary folk as opposed to major political leaders and elites) in the nineteen-sixties and nineteen-seventies. Similarly, we all recognize that villages, for example, have enduring structures of organization and governance. Are they to be considered part of a social history, or part of institutional history? Those who would classify this field of study as social history, like the adherents of the nineteen-sixties classification of *ikki* as social history, in effect stress a dichotomy between high and low society. In this view, institutional and political history dealt with high-level concerns, the activities of royalty, presidents, national armies, and the like, not the *hoi polloi*.

I have chosen to examine studies of politics and institutions at all levels. In the discussion that follows, for example, no effort is made to treat popular disturbances (*ikki*) comprehensively, but only to comment on their political dimensions as scholars have explored them. We will be concerned with the general level of commoner input into domain and Shogunal policy, but not with the classification and patterns of protest. These subjects are left to Professor Esenbel's essay on social history in this issue of *EMJ*. Studies of local institutions are discussed regardless of level, e.g., village governance, rural administration within domains, and other formal organizations, but not studies of informal organizations or economic organizations such as rural credit networks. I shall treat studies of the political - institutional context and policy side of economic activities, but not works related to the organization of individual enterprises. Intellectual movements may also have political implications, but we will treat intellectual histories only at the point where they are converted into significant efforts to challenge or change political practice. Such an effort at differentiation is admittedly imprecise and perhaps arbitrary, but it reflects concern with the links between political power or organizations and society at large.

By political history I mean the history of competition over who has the right to exercise and the actual exercise of administrative, governmental power. Political power is used to varying degrees to distribute the wealth a society produces but also exercises sanctions that define the boundaries of acceptable behavior. The former function is largely one of taxation, but it can also include regulation of publicly shared facilities such as irrigation networks, defense, and the like, or public relief in times of famine. The latter function is largely composed of activities and regulations we associate with the legal system in all its aspects: administrative law, civil law, and commercial law.

Some might argue that there can be no institutional history and that individuals and groups make history; while not contesting the premise that individuals and groups make history, there are also frameworks built on formal regulation and custom that influence people's expectations and behavior. Within these frameworks they work, and against them they may rebel. While these frameworks may be delineated explicitly through a constitution or law, they may also reflect more informal but consistent patterns of political behavior. No one, for example, mandated that daimyo spend the legal maximum on their retinues as they traveled between Edo and their home provinces as part of their obligation of regular visits to the Shogun's capital, yet such behavior was a regular part of these excursions. Economists, political scientists, and sociologists as well as those we might designate as social science historians, broadly recognize the existence of such patterns that extend beyond a specific issue or law. In addition, scholars tend to cast their studies in ways that imply or explicitly generalize beyond the case(s) at hand. Given these predispositions, it seems reasonable to retain "institutional" as a descriptive term here.

Birth of the Field

Institutional and political analysis of Japan from the late sixteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries has mushroomed in the last quarter of a century. Viewed from the perspective of the twentieth century as a whole, the smattering of studies by such early twentieth-century scholars as Neil Skene Smith and John Henry Wigmore did not spark a consistent flow of research. Even in the immediate post-war era, the period when some of the giants of the field first appear, the flow of studies was intermittent. A consistent pattern of publication only emerges well into the nineteen-seventies for both periodical and monographic literature.

The period from the end of World War II to the beginning of the nineteen-seventies produced some very important monographs and articles despite their limited number. Their energetic and prolific authors became the founders of the field: John W. Hall, Marius B. Jansen, Thomas C. Smith, and Dan F. Henderson. Others, while not so prolific (at least at that stage of their careers), still played a significant role in the development of the field: E.S. Crawcour, Charles Sheldon, Conrad Totman.

The number of publications in the political and institutional fields increased beginning in the nineteen-sixties, but many of these essays and books fall into two categories. The first is the publication of survey texts. These were designed to introduce Japanese history to American audiences, reflecting both its position in the cold war arena as "America's unsinkable aircraft carrier" and, by the end of the sixties, to explain and tout its remarkable economic recovery and emerging prominence in the world economy and the realm of technological advancement. As the nineteen-seventies dawned, this interest in Japan even found its way into high school curricula; some states such as New York, added a Japan unit to its new, mandatory ninth grade social studies (Afro-Asian Culture Studies) curriculum.

Many survey texts began with the Meiji Restoration, giving virtually no attention to pre-modern antecedents and even acknowledgement of the groundwork laid by Tokugawa institutional and political changes was sometimes omitted. Those texts that did attempt to "cover" more of Japan's history often crammed 1200 years of political and cultural change into only half of the book, and the early modern era typically comprised an even smaller percentage of the whole. Indeed, a number of texts continued to treat pre-Meiji Japan as "feudal" despite the relatively long-standing disenchantment with that characterization among leading American scholars of the late nineteen-sixties.[6]

A second clutch of publications attempted to crack the sharp divide between Tokugawa and the Meiji transformation. The Tokugawa essays in the Princeton series on Japan's modernization typify this approach.[7] These essays often sketched a background for those studies that formed the core concern of each of these volumes, post-Restoration Japan. These essays were not without in-depth scholarly antecedents. Thomas C. Smith had already published his study of domain industrialization and his now-classic *Agrarian Origins of Modern Japan,*[8] for example. But most of these publications were surveys painted in quite broad brushstrokes, and clearly designed to serve the needs of the larger modernization series rather than to illuminate the history of politics and institutions during the three-hundred year period which preceded the Meiji Restoration. A number of other publications during the nineteen-sixties and nineteen-seventies duplicated this pattern (e.g., the James Crowley [1970[9]] and Arthur Tiedemann [1974[10]] essay collections).

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[6] It is fair to say that the nineteen-sixties and nineteen-seventies boomlet in the publication of survey texts and essays fell off quite sharply since that time. Although other texts appeared by Mikiso Hane, Peter Duus, and Kenneth Pyle, only in the past several years have we again had a burst of survey texts appear on the market in rapid succession: Conrad D. Totman, *A History of Japan,* Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, 2000; James McClain, *Japan, a Modern History,* New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2002; Andrew Gordon, *The Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present,* New York : Oxford University Press, 2003. To this list can be added Totman's earlier *Early Modern Japan,* Berkeley: University of California, 1993.

[7] Marius B. Jansen, ed., *Changing Japanese Attitudes Toward Modernization,* 1965; William W. Lockwood, ed., *The State and Economic Enterprise in Japan: Essays in the Political Economy of Growth.* 1965; R. P. Dore, ed., *Aspects of Social Change in Modern Japan,* 1967; Robert E, Ward, ed. *Political Development in Modern Japan,* 1968; James William Morley, ed. *Dilemmas of Growth in Prewar Japan.* 1971; Donald H. Shively, ed., *Tradition and Modernization in Japanese Culture,* 1971; all published Princeton: Princeton University Press.

[8] *Agrarian Origins of Modern Japan.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1959.

[9] James B. Crowley, ed. *Modern East Asia: Essays in Interpretation.* New York: Harcourt Brace & World, 1970.

[10] Arthur Tiedemann, ed., *An Introduction to Japanese Civilization.* New York: Heath, 1974.

Chronological Patterns of Emphasis

The concerns of these early works – the Meiji transformation and Japan's modern history – continue to shape student and recent academic interest. This is manifested in studies treating the im-pact of Japan's nineteenth century transformations of course, but it is also reflected in many studies that confine themselves chronologically to Tokugawa subjects (e.g., Luke Roberts, 1998[11]). A recent review of books and monographs published in the preceding decade alone showed that almost half of the publications were either directly concerned with the Meiji transformation or laying the foundation for the Meiji transformation and post-Meiji developments.[12]

A second chronological focus has been the subject of more intermittent interest, the transformations of the late sixteenth century that led ultimately to the founding of the stable and long-lived Tokugawa hegemony. The initial publications in this field were limited to articles. The editors of *Studies in the Institutional History of Early Modern Japan* (1968[13]) not only collected earlier articles on domain formation and development, they also commissioned a number of important new studies. While there was considerable excitement surrounding the publication of this collection, Hall's *Government and Local Power* (1967[14]), and Toshio G. Tsukahira's *Feudal Control in Tokugawa Japan* (1967[15]), the themes associated with the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries did not get substantial additional attention in extended treat-ments until the nineteen-eighties. The publication of *Japan Before Tokugawa: Political Consolidation and Economic Growth, 1500-1650* (1981[16]), while comprised almost entirely of articles in which the principle author was a highly-regarded Japanese scholar, marks the beginning of a more consistent pattern in treating this era. Mary Elizabeth Berry's *Hideyoshi*[17] and James McClain's *Kanazawa: A Seventeenth Century Japanese Castle Town*[18] appeared in 1982. Neil McMullin's *Buddhism and the State in Sixteenth-Century Japan* (1985[19]) was the third major monograph to appear at this time. The publication of these extended studies was accompanied by a small flurry of institutional studies, often, scholarly articles, by these authors and others such as Michael Birt,[20] Beatrice Bodart-Bailey, [21] William Hauser, [22] Bernard

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[11] *Mercantilism In A Japanese Domain: The Merchant Origins Of Economic Nationalism in 18th - Century Tosa*. Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, 1998.

[12] Philip Brown and Taniguchi.Shinko, "Amerika ni okeru Nihon kinsei-shi kenkyū no dōkō," (in Japanese), *Nihonshi Kenkyū* (May, 2000) 53-70.

[13] John W. Hall and Marius B. Jansen, eds. *Studies in the Institutional History of Early Modern Japan*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968 (hereafter cited as *Studies*).

[14] *Government and Local Power in Japan, 500-1700: A Study Based on Bizen Province*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1966.

[15] Cambridge, Massachusetts: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1966.

[16] Hall, John Whitney, Nagahara Keiji, and Kozo Yamamura, eds., Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981

[17] Cambridge, Massachusetts: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University Press, 1982.

[18] New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982.

[19] Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985.

[20] "Samurai in Passage: The Transformation of the Sixteenth-Century Kanto," *JJS* 11:2 (Summer 1985): 369-399.

[21] Bodart, Beatrice M., "Tea and Counsel: The Political Role of Sen Rikyu," *MN* 32:1 (Spring 1977) 49-74; "The Laws of Compassion," *MN* 40.2 (Summer 1985), 163-189; "The Significance of the Chamberlain Government of the Fifth Tokugawa Shogun," in Harold Bolitho & Alan Rix, eds. *A Northern Prospect: Australian Papers on Japan*, Canberra: Japanese Studies Association of Australia, 1981, 10-27; "Tea and Politics In Late-Sixteenth-Century Japan," *Chanoyu Quarterly* (Kyoto) 41 (1985) 25-34; " A Case of Political and Economic Expropriation: The Monetary Reform of the Fifth Tokugawa Shogun," *Papers on Far Eastern History* (Canberra) 39 (March 1989) 177-189; "Councilor Defended; Matsukage Nikki and Yanagisawa Yoshiyasu," *MN* 34:4 (Winter 1979) 467-478; "Tokugawa Tsunayoshi (1646-1709), A Weberian Analysis," *Asiatische Studien/Etudes Asiatiques*, XLIII:1 (1989), 5-27.

[22] "Osaka Castle and Tokugawa Authority in Western Japan," In Jeffrey P. Mass and William B. Hauser, Eds. *The Bakufu In Japanese History*, Stan-

Susser,[23] Willem Jan Boot,[24] Philip Brown,[25] Reinhard Zollner,[26] and Kozo Yamamura.[27] These works examined land surveys, consolidation of domain power and finances, the *bakufu*'s use of castle re-construction to consolidate its control over daimyo, and other subjects. While hardly a torrent, a steady flow of books and articles on aspects of the politics, law and institutions of this era continued in the nineteen-nineties.

If the late Tokugawa developments comprise the most intensive era for Western political and institutional studies, and the period from the es-

tablishment of peace through the seventeenth-century consolidation of political authority in the hands of Shogun and daimyo represent an emerging, increasingly visible field, what of the middle years of the Tokugawa period? Two periods have received some concentrated attention. The first is the era surrounding the Kansei Reforms. We have monographic political biographies of Tanuma Okitsugu (J. W. Hall, 1955[28]) and Matsudaira Sadanobu (Herman Ooms, 1975[29]; Petra Rudolph, 1976[30]) as well as two articles on related subjects by Robert Bakus (1989[31]) and Isao Soranaka (1978[32]). The second concentration of studies focuses on Tokugawa Tsunayoshi. The "Dog Shogun" and his peculiar image have attracted Beatrice Bodart-Bailey (1985, 1989[33]), Donald Shively (1970[34]), and Harold Bolitho (1975[35]). Nonetheless, Tsunayoshi's charms

ford: Stanford University Press, 1985, 153-172.

[23] Including his works from the late 1970s: "The Cadastral Surveys of the Sengoku Daimyo," *Study Reports of Baika Junior College* 26 (1977): 35-46; "The Policies of the Oda Regime," *ibid.*, 28 (1979) 1-16; "The Toyoyomi Regime and the Daimyo," in *The Bakufu in Japanese History*, 129-152.

[24] Willem Jan Boot, "The Deification of Tokugawa Ieyasu," *Japan Foundation Newsletter,* 14:5 (Feb. 1987) 10-13.

[25] "Feudal Remnants" And Tenant Power: The Case Of Niigata, Japan, In The Nineteenth And Early Twentieth Centuries," *Peasant Studies*, 15:1 (Fall, 1987), 1-26; "Land Redistribution Schemes in Tokugawa Japan: An Introduction," *Occasional Papers of the Virginia Consortium for Asian Studies* 4 (Spring 1987), 35-48; "Practical Constraints on Early Tokugawa Land Taxation: Annual Versus Fixed Assessments in Kaga Domain," *JJS* 14.2 (Summer 1988), 369-401; "The Mismeasure of Land: Land Surveying in the Tokugawa Period," *MN* 42.2 (Summer 1987), 115-155.

[26] "Kunigae: Bewegung und Herrschaft in der Tokugawa-Zeit,"In: Antoni, Klaus; Portner, Peter; Schneider, Roland, eds. *Referate des VII. Deutschen Japanologentages in Hamburg, 11.-13. Juni 1987*. Hamburg: Gesellschaft fur Natur- und Volkerkunde Ostasiens, MOAG, Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft fur Nat 1988, 323-330.

[27] "From Coins to Rice: Hypotheses on the Kandaka and Kokudaka Systems," *JJS* 14.2 (Summer 1988), 341-367; "Returns on Unification: Economic Growth in Japan, 1550-1650," in John Whitney Hall, Nagahara Keiji, and Kozo Yamamura, eds. *Japan Before Tokugawa: Political Consolidation and Economic Growth, 1500-1650*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981, 327-372.

[28] John W. Hall, *Tanuma Okitsugu, 1719-1788: Forerunner of Modern Japan*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University Press, 1955.

[29] Herman Ooms, *Charismatic Bureaucrat: A Political Biography of Matsudaira Sadanobu, 1758-1829*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975.

[30] Petra Rudolph, *Matsudaira Sadanobu Und Die Kansei-Reform: Unter Besondere Berucksichtigung Des Kansei Igaku No Kin*, Bochum: Brockmeyer 1976.

[31] Robert L. Backus,"Matsudaira Sadanobu and Samurai Education," in C. Andrew Gerstle, ed. *18th Century Japan: Culture and Society*. Sydney, N.S.W., Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1989, 132-152.

[32] Isao Soranaka. "The Kansei Reforms-Success Or Failure?" *MN* 33.1 (Spring 1978),151-164.

[33] Beatrice Bodart-Bailey. "The Laws of Compassion," *MN* 40.2 (Summer 1985), 163-189; "A Case of Political and Economic Expropriation: The Monetary Reform of the Fifth Tokugawa Shogun," *Papers on Far Eastern History* (Canberra) 39 (March 1989) 177-189; "Tokugawa Tsunayoshi (1646-1709), A Weberian Analysis," *Asiatische Studien/Etudes Asiatiques*, XLIII: 1 (1989), 5-27.

[34] Donald Shively, "Tokugawa Tsunayoshi, the Genroku Shogun," in Albert M. Craig & Donald H. Shively, eds., *Personality in Japanese History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970, 85-126.

[35] Harold Bolitho, "The Dog Shogun," in Wang Gungwu, ed. *Self and Biography: Essays on the*

have proved insufficiently enticing to stimulate a full monographic treatment.

One senses that rather fortuitous circumstances led to this clustering of interest, for these works – whether we look at the late eighteenth century or Tsunayoshi's era – do not play off each other in a significant way, and although Hall was once quite taken with Tanuma, his planning of volume four of the *Cambridge History of Japan* relegated treatment of Tsunayoshi, Tanuma, and Matsudaira Sadanobu to a single fifty-page chapter which also included discussion of the Shotoku era, Tokugawa Yoshimune, the Kyōhō Reforms, and the Hōreki era – a good century of political developments.[36]

This well reflects the problems that Western scholars have had in coming to grips with the political and institutional history of the mid-Tokugawa.[37] The fact that the Tenmei, Bunka and Bunsei eras – eras of some substantial reform efforts at least in a number of the domains – are also not singled out for much attention in either Volume 4 or Volume 5 of the *Cambridge History* further reinforce the lack of a strong, attractive theme underlying mid-period institutional and political history.[38] Even the theme of popular protest (*ikki*), the subject of about a half-dozen recent monographs, does not fill the gap. In contrast to the early Tokugawa, which is a story of pacification and consolidation of political authority in new and rebuilt institutions, and the nineteenth century, which is the story of crisis and collapse, the late seventeenth to early nineteenth centuries lack a discernable political identity.

Individual and Society in Asia. Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1975, 123-139.

[36] John Whitney Hall, and James L. McClain, eds. *The Cambridge History of Japan*, Vol. 4: *Early Modern Japan,* Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991 (hereafter *CHJ*).

[37] Discussions with colleagues in Japan suggest similar issues, although there are certainly more book-length works on the period. The problem seems to lie in where and how to find an overarching theme to the era.

[38] Marius B. Jansen, ed. *Cambridge History of Japan*, Vol. 5: *The Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

This is not to say that the situation is intellectually terminal in some sense: Conrad Totman's *Early Modern Japan* (1993), Luke Roberts's study of Tosa (1998[39]), and Mark Ravina's examination of three large domains (Yonezawa, Tokushima, and Hirosaki; 1999[40]) indicate that we have a story of attempts to come to grips with an increasingly tense relationship between natural resources, population size, urban development and the consequences of efforts to squeeze as much as possible from nature's storehouse. Such studies indicate that within these parameters members of the samurai class struggled mightily, and sometimes very violently, over policy, threats to their status and to loss of income. In addition, through the example of Tosa, Roberts indicates the possibilities for non-samurai classes to exert effective influence on the formation of domain policy.

While the field of political and institutional history has grown considerably, especially in the last decade or so, a cautionary note is in order. In spite of the growth, the publication record reflects a continued heavy reliance on translations of the work of Japanese scholars. Our purpose here is not to explore this aspect of Japanese studies in the West, but a few well-known recent examples are worth noting as illustrative. As mentioned above, *Japan before Tokugawa* contains primarily work by Japanese scholars. Non-Japanese scholars solely author only two articles. While Volume 5 of the *Cambridge History of Japan* contains only one article by a Japanese scholar, Volume 4 relies heavily on translations of the work of Nakai Nobuhiko, Furushima Toshio, Tsuji Tatsuya, Bitō Masahide, Wakita Osamu, and Asao Naohiro. More than half of the articles in *Osaka: The Merchants' Capital of Early Modern Japan* (1999[41]) are translations of work by Japa-

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[39] Luke Roberts, *Mercantilism In A Japanese Domain: The Merchant Origins Of Economic Nationalism in 18th - Century Tosa*. Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, 1998.

[40] Mark Ravina, *Land and Lordship in Early Modern Japan*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999.

[41] James L. McClain, and Wakita Osamu, eds. *Osaka: The Merchants' Capital of Early Modern Japan*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press,

nese scholars. Examination of *Edo & Paris: Urban Life and the State in the Early Modern Era* (1994[42]) also draws on the research of a number of Japanese scholars. Other works could readily be added to this list, but would only serve as unnecessary reinforcement of the point these examples make.[43]

This phenomenon has a very positive side. It exposes students in the West to a wider array of subjects than would otherwise be possible. In the long run, one hopes that publication of such work will stimulate non-Japanese scholars to explore new subjects. In addition, these publications bring Western scholars into broader contact with the Japanese scholarly world. The benefit here is not just one of exposing ourselves to subjects as yet unexamined by Western scholars, but also one of revealing some of the distinctive characteristics of western scholarly conception and interpretive style.[44] Yet even granting this benefit, there is no escaping the fact that Japanese scholars are called upon to "cover" subjects in which Western scholars have not yet published due our small numbers.

Trends in the Field

I. Diversification: From Top to Bottom

Shogun and Emperor. Traditionally, historians place the development of the institutions of central government and contests for control of them at the heart of their institutional and political history. Post-war treatment of late sixteenth to mid - nineteenth century Japan began with the same emphasis. Except during the movement toward the re-establishment of a peaceful national order, attention focused overwhelmingly on hegemons, Shogunal institutions, and the relationships of emperor, domains and daimyo to them. Early examples of political and administrative history (Boxer's *The Christian Century in Japan: 1549-1650*, 1951[45] and Brown's *Money Economy in Medieval Japan: A Study in the Use of Coins*, 1951[46], which treats the Tokugawa era in part, despite its title) focus heavily on the roles of Hideyoshi and the Tokugawa when they analyze policies related to the *kinsei* era. Thomas Smith's "The Introduction of Western Industry to Japan During the Last Years of the Tokugawa Period," (1948[47]) examined the role of daimyo efforts in the field of technological transfer in mid-nineteenth century. Hall's *Tanuma Okitsugu, 1719-1788: Forerunner of Modern Japan* (1955) and Donald Shively's "Bakufu versus Kabuki," (1955[48]) examined policies and reform movements in a *bakufu* setting. This emphasis on the center becomes much more pronounced when we include the numerous books and articles that deal with the movement toward the Meiji Restoration (e.g., Beasely 1972,[49] Craig, 1959 and 1961,[50] Sakata and Hall, 1956,[51] Jansen,

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1999.

[42] James L. McClain, John M. Merriman, and Ugawa Kaoru, eds., *Edo and Paris: Urban Life and the State in the Early Modern Era*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994.

[43] Although a number of the essays in these collections deal with political and institutional history, these collections go well beyond the confines of those fields. In this sense, my observation concerning the heavy reliance on Japanese scholarship extends to many other fields.

[44] If there has been a downside, it lies in the very long delay between the introduction of new perspectives in Japan and their dissemination in Western publications.

[45] C.R. Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan: 1549-1650*, Berkeley: University Of California Press

[46] Delmer Brown, *Money Economy in Medieval Japan: A Study in the Use of Coins*, New Haven: Yale University Press.

[47] Thomas C. Smith, "The Introduction of Western Industry to Japan During the Last Years of the Tokugawa Period," *HJAS* II (1948), 130-152.

[48] Donald Shively, "Bakufu versus Kabuki," *HJAS* 18:3-4 (December 1955), 326-56.

[49] W. G. Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972.

[50] Albert Craig, "The Restoration Movement in Choshu," *JAS* 18 (1959), 187-198; *Choshu In The Meiji Restoration, 1853-1868*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University Press, 1961.

[51] Yoshio Sakata & John W. Hall. "The Motivation of Political Leadership in the Meiji Restora-

1961,[52] Smith, 1961,[53] etc.).

These studies generally presume that Shogunal edicts and authority were pre-eminent and employed as a model pretty much throughout the land. T. G. Tsukahira's work on the *sankin-kōtai* (1966) suggested the degree to which even control of the person of the daimyo could serve to constrain vast financial resources that might have been devoted to creating a military base sufficient for launching a challenge to the Shogunate. Peppered throughout survey texts and through many scholarly works by Hall (1966, 1981, 1991[54]), Elison (1981[55]), Bolitho (1991[56]), Totman (1967[57]), Yamamura (1981), Berry (1982), and Zollner (1987[58]), land surveys, the inspectorate (*metsuke*), the Laws of the Military Houses, and fief transfer and attainder are all sketched as effective devices for keeping daimyo in their proper place and forcing them to implement *bakufu* policies.

tion," *JAS* 16.1 (1956); reprinted in John Harrison, ed., *Japan*, Tuscon, Arizona: University of Arizona Press, 1972, 179-198.

[52] Marius Jansen, *Sakamoto Ryoma and the Meiji Restoration*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961.

[53] Thomas C. Smith "Japan's Aristocratic Revolution," *Yale Review* (1961), 370-383; reprinted in Jon Livingston et al., *Imperial Japan, 1800-1945*, New York: Pantheon) 1973, 91-101.

[54] John Whitney Hall, "Hideyoshi's Domestic Policies," in *Japan Before Tokugawa*, 194-223; "Japan's Sixteenth-Century Revolution," in George Elison and Bardwell L. Smith. *Warlords, Artists, and Commoners: Japan in the Sixteenth Century*. Honolulu: University Press Of Hawaii, 1981, 7-21; "Introduction [early modern Japan]," in *CHJ*, Vol. 4, 1-39.

[55] George Elison, "The Cross and the Sword: Patterns of Momoyama History" and "Hideyoshi, the Bountiful Minister," both in *Warlords, Artists, & Commoners*, 55-86 and 223-244 respectively.

[56] Harold Bolitho, "The Han," in *CHJ*, Vol. 4, 183-234.

[57] Conrad Totman, *Politics In The Tokugawa Bakufu,1600-1843*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University Press, 1967 (reprinted by University of California Press, 1988).

[58] Reinhard Zollner, "Kunigae."

Although still focused on the Tokugawa elites, Harold Bolitho (1974[59]) uncovered unexpected fractures in the unity of the Tokugawa administrative structure. Harootunian (1969[60]), Koschman (1987[61]), Webb (1968[62]), and Earl (1964[63]) found cracks in the ideological foundations so carefully constructed and institutionalized at the start of the period and which Arai Hakuseki had hoped to build into a stronger central government in the early eighteenth century (see Kate W. Nakai, 1988[64]). Each of these studies focuses on long-term developments in political thought and action that laid a foundation for the Meiji Restoration.

These studies on the more routine relationship between Shogun and Emperor are worthy of note, especially since this sort of study is rare. Bob T. Wakabayashi (1991[65]) has argued that the Imperial institution was routinely more important than Western historians have traditionally assumed and he explored the role of dual sovereignty in a more constructive light than did studies of late Tokugawa court-*bakufu* relations. Lee Butler (1994) re-examined the Shogunal edicts that were designed to regulate the behavior of the Emperor and then extended his study to view fifteenth to seventeenth century characteristics of the Em-

[59] Harold Bolitho, *Treasures Among Men: The Fudai Daimyo in Tokugawa Japan*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974.

[60] Harry D. Harootunian, *Toward Restoration*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970.

[61] J. Victor Koschman, *The Mitō Ideology: Discourse, Reform and Insurrection in Late Tokugawa Japan, 1790-1864*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987.

[62] Herschel Webb, *The Japanese Imperial Institution in the Tokugawa Period*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1968.

[63] David M. Earl, *Emperor and Nation in Japan: Political Thinkers of the Tokugawa Period*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1964.

[64] Kate W. Nakai, *Shogunal Politics: Arai Hakuseki and the Premises of Tokugawa Rule*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University Press.

[65] Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi, "In Name Only: Imperial Sovereignty in Early Modern Japan," *JJS* 17:1 (Winter 1991) 25-57.

peror and aristocracy.[66]   Both attempt to see the Emperor in contexts other than in his position as focal point for anti-*bakufu* malcontents and suggest very significant roles for Emperor and court long before late Tokugawa.

Much early work through the nineteen-seventies sought the sources of the Restoration and its radical shift from apparent conservatism to radical reformation of the political and social order by government fiat.   In addition to studies already introduced, Smith (1961, 1967[67]), Dore (1962[68]), Frost (1970[69]), Hall (1970[70]), Najita (1970[71]), Sakai (1970[72]). Totman (1970, 1975, 1980, 1982, 1983[73]), Wilson (1970, 1982, 1992[74]),

[66] Lee Butler, "Tokugawa Ieyasu's Regulations for the Court: A Reassessment," *HJAS* 54:2 (May 1994), 509-552; *Emperor and Aristocracy in Japan, 1467-1680*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University Press, 2002.

[67] Thomas C. Smith, "'Merit' as Ideology in the Tokugawa Period," in *Aspects of Social Change in Modern Japan*, 71 – 90.

[68] Ronald P. Dore, "Talent and the Social Order in Tokugawa Japan," *Past and Present: A Journal of Historical Studies* 21 (April 1962).

[69] Peter Frost, *The Bakumatsu Currency Crisis*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Council On East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1970.

[70] John W. Hall, "Tokugawa Japan, 1800-1853," in James B. Crowley, ed. *Modern East Asia: Essays in Interpretation*. New York: Harcourt Brace & World, 1970., 62-94.

[71] Tetsuo Najita, "Oshio Heihachiro (1793-1837)," in Albert Craig & Donald Shively, eds., *Personality In Japanese History*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970, 155-179.

[72] Robert K. Sakai, "Shimazu Nariakira and the Emergence of national Leadership in Satsuma," in *Personality In Japanese History*, 209-233.

[73] Conrad Totman, "Political Reconciliation in the Tokugawa Bakufu: Abe Masahiro and Tokugawa Nariaki, 1844-1852," in *Personality In Japanese History*, 180-208; "Tokugawa Yoshinobu And Kobu Gattai--A Study Of Political Inadequacy," *MN* 30:4 (Win 1975) 393-403; "Fudai daimyo and the Collapse of the Tokugawa Bakufu," *JAS* 34, no.3 (May 1975) 581-591; *The Collapse of The Tokugawa Bakufu, 1862-1868*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980; "From Reformism to Trans-

Steele (1976, 1982[75]), Bolitho (1977, 1983, 1985[76]), Fraser (1977[77]), D. Brown (1981[78]), Huber (1981, 1982, 1983[79]), Koschman (1982[80]),

formism: Bakufu Policy, 1853-1868," in Tetsuo Najita, and J. Victor Koschmann, eds. *Conflict In Modern Japanese History: The Neglected Tradition*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982, 62-80; "The Meiji Resoration: From Obsolete Order to Effective Regime," in Harry Wray and Hilary Conroy, eds., *Japan Examined: Perspectives On Modern Japanese History*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1983, 72-78.

[74] George M. Wilson, "Pursuing the Millennium in the Meiji Restoration," in *Conflict in Japanese History*, 177-194; *Patriots and Redeemers in Japan: Motives in the Meiji Restoration*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992; "The Bakumatsu Intellectual in Action: Hashimoto Sanai in the Political Crisis of 1858," in *Personality In Japanese History*, 234-263.

[75] M. William Steele, "The Rise and Fall of the Shoogitai: A Social Drama," in *Conflict in Japanese History*, 128-144; *Katsu Kaishu and the Collapse of the Tokugawa Bakufu*. Ph.D. Thesis, Harvard University, 1976.

[76] Harold Bolitho, "Aizu, 1853-1868," *Proceedings of the British Association for Japanese Studies* (Sheffield) 2, pt.1 (1977), 1-17; "The Meiji Restoration," in *Japan Examined*, 59-65; "Abe Masahiro and the New Japan," in Jeffrey P. Mass and William B. Hauser, eds. *The Bakufu In Japanese History*, 173 - 189.

[77] Andrew Fraser, "Political development in the Awa (Tokushima) domain: the final decade, 1860-1870," *Papers on Far Eastern History* (Canberra) 15 (Mar 1977) 105-161; "Local Administration: The Example of Awa-Tokushima," in Jansen, Marius B. & Gilbert Rozman, eds., *From Tokugawa to Meiji*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986, 111-132.

[78] David Douglas Brown, *From Tempo to Meiji: Fukuoka Han in Late Tokugawa Japan*. University of Hawaii, Ph.D. Thesis, 1981.

[79] Thomas M. Huber, *The Revolutionary Origins of Modern Japan*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1981; "Men Of High Purpose and the Politics of Direct Action, 1862-1864," in *Conflict In Modern Japanese History,* 1982,107-127; "The Choshu Activists and 1868," in *Japan Examined*, 66-71.

[80] J. Victor Koschmann, "Action as a Text: Ideology in the Tengu Insurrection," in *Conflict In*

Flershem (1983, 1988, 1992 [81]), Fedoseyev (1985 [82]), Jansen (1985, 1989 [83]), Latyshev (1985[84]), Yates (1987, 1994[85]), McClain (1988[86]) and Quah (1988[87]) all treat aspects of this issue.[88] This brief listing, in combination with previously mentioned titles, however, also suggests that study of the Restoration movement has been of

less intense concern since the mid-nineteen-eighties.

Official organization and control of merchant organizations and the problems both merchants and the Shogunate had in maintaining their exclusive privileges also comprised a subject of early scholarly attention. Charles Sheldon (1958[89]) first approached the question in the context of official control of large merchants such as Zeniya Gohei. William Hauser (1974[90]) introduced a more nuanced approach when he demonstrated the degree to which un-licensed merchants were successful in challenging official cotton monopolies in the Osaka region.

More recent "local" studies have revealed similar contests even within local domains (Wigen 1995 [91] ; Pratt 1999 [92]). Constantine Vaporis (1994[93]) has examined Tokugawa efforts to maintain and control a national road system that provided the main trunk lines that linked major political and commercial centers. As Hauser revised Sheldon, Vaporis is also more sensitive to the constraints of *bakufu* power than Tsukahira.

Two areas are notable for having engendered few studies: the position of the military as a formal organization and the court system for delivering law and justice to the subjects of the realm, including to the daimyo. The former received much popular attention with the publication of Noel Perrin's *Giving Up the Gun* (1979[94]) and James Clavell's novel, *Shogun* (1980). Clavell's work even spawned a volume of scholarly essays designed to address issues raised by

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Modern Japanese History, 81-106.

[81] Robert G. Flershem, "Kaga Loyalists, 1858-1868," *Proceedings of the Fifth International Symposium on Asian Studies*, Hong Kong: Asian Research Service, 1983, 121-143. Flershem, Robert G. & Yoshiko N. Flershem, "Kaga's Tardy Support of the Meiji Restoration: Background Reasons," *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan* (Tokyo), 4th series, 3 (1988), 83-130; "Kaga's Restoration Politics: The Toyama and Daishoji Aspects," *ibid*. 4th Series, 7 (1992), 1-42.

[82] Pyotr Fedoseyev, "The Significance of Revolutionary Transformations," in Nagai Michio & Miguel Urrutia, eds., *Meiji Ishin: Restoration and Revolution*. Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 1985, 52-7.

[83] Marius B. Jansen, "Meiji Ishin: The Political context," in Meiji Ishin: Restoration and Revolution, 3-19; "The Meiji Restoration," in *CHJ*, Vol. 5, 308-366.

[84] Igor Latyshev, "Meiji Ishin: Unaccomplished Bourgeois Revolution," in *Meiji Ishin: Restoration And Revolution*, 43-51.

[85] Charles L. Yates, "Restoration and Rebellion in Satsuma: The Life of Saigo Takamori (1827-1877)." 1987: Ph.D. dissertation in East Asian Studies, Princeton University; "Saigo Takamori in the Emergence of Meiji Japan," *Modern Asian Studies* 28:3 (1994), 449-74.

[86] James L. McClain, "Failed Expectations: Kaga Domain on the Eve of the Meiji Restoration," *JJS* 14.2 (1988), 403-447.

[87] Esther Quah, "Factors Leading to the Collapse of the Tokugawa Bakufu," *Journal of the History Society* (Singapore) (1987-1988) 5-7.

[88] For a more detailed analysis of the recent scholarship on this and related issues, see Albert M. Craig, "The Meiji Restoration: A Historiographical Overview," in Helen Hardacre, ed. *The Postwar Development of Japanese Studies in the United States*, Leiden, Boston, Koln: Brill, 1998, 115-142, which also carries the story farther into Meiji than attempted here.

[89] Charles D. Sheldon, *The Rise of the Merchant Class in Tokugawa Japan, 1600~1868*, Locust Valley, NY: Augustin, 1958.

[90] William B. Hauser, *Economic Institutional Change in Tokugawa Japan: Osaka and the Kinai Cotton Trade*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1974.

[91] *The Making of a Japanese Periphery*.

[92] *Japan's Proto-Industrial Elite*.

[93] Constantine Nomikos Vaporis, *Breaking Barriers: Travel and the State in Early Modern Japan*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University Press, 1994.

[94] Noel Perrin, *Giving Up The Gun: Japan's Reversion To The Sword, 1543-1879*. New York: Godine, 1979.

the novel and television series/movie (Smith 1980[95]). Scholarly follow-through in the form of serious and extended studies has been very limited, however. The works of Stephen Turnbull survey samurai throughout the ages, but place most of their emphasis on pre-Tokugawa materials. John M. Rogers (1990[96]) treats martial training in an age of peace and Oguchi Yujiro (1990[97]) examines the circumstances of *hatamoto* and *gokenin*. Rogers' doctoral thesis and Howland's historiographical essay on samurai class, status and bureaucratic roles (2001[98]) hold out the possibility of future serious publication in this area.

In the early twentieth century the Tokugawa legal system proved highly interesting to scholars of comparative law but have not drawn much attention in the post-war era.[99] Dan Fenno Henderson is the most prolific of the clutch of scholars who have looked at the operation of law and the courts on the ground level. He is most known for his work on the Tokugawa era precedents using conciliation (1965), but has also written on the evolution of legal practice (1968), agreements and governance (1992) and village-level contracts (1975).[100] John Haley (1991[101])

devotes only one chapter to the Tokugwa era, but stresses the limits of the legal system, a system that forced villagers to handle many issues in their own, often informal, way. J. Mark Ramseyer (1996[102]), like Haley and Henderson's study of conciliation, devotes only a section of his work to the Tokugawa era, but he introduces a new perspective, that of rational choice theory, to argue that Tokugawa law provided substantial protections for those often seen as exploited. Herman Ooms (1996[103]) has examined local uses of law (especially in status manipulation), and while he touches on criminal law, that field remains largely unexplored in Western language literature. Dani Botsman, however, has begun to focus on this subject (Botsman, 1992[104]).

Domains. Study of the structure and politics of domain administrations have been of sporadic interest for some time, but have received more concentrated attention in the past decade. For the period of domain formation, Hall's previously noted work on stages in the evolution of daimyo rule (1961) and the development of castle towns (1955[105]) have been very influential. The first wave of domain studies was largely confined to article - length publications. Jansen's work on

[95] Henry Smith, II, ed. *Learning From "Shogun": Japanese History and Western Fantasy*. Santa Barbara, California: Program in Asian Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara, 1980.

[96] John M. Rogers, "Arts of War in Times of Peace: Swordsmanship in Honcho Bugei Shoden, Chapter 5," *MN* 45.4 (Winter 1990), 413-447; *The Development of the Military Profession in Tokugawa Japan*, Ph.D. Thesis, Harvard University, 1998.

[97] Yujiro Oguchi, "The Reality Behind Musui Dokugen: The World of the Hatamoto and Gokenin," Gaynor Sekimori., transl., *JJS* 16.2 (Summer 1990): 289-308.

[98] Douglas R. Howland, "Samurai Status, Class, and Bureaucracy: A Historiographical Essay," *JAS* 60:2 (May, 2001), 353-80.

[99] The works of John Henry Wigmore and Neil Skene Smith are the best known.

[100] Dan F. Henderson. *Conciliation and Japanese Law: Tokugawa and Modern*. Seattle: University of Washington Press., 1965 (esp vol. I); *Village Contracts in Tokugawa Japan: 50 Specimens with English Translations and Comments*, Seattle: Uni-

versity of Washington Press 1975; "Agreements and Governance in Tokugawa Japan," in Bernard Hung-Kay Luk, ed. *Contacts Between Cultures*. Volume 4. *Eastern Asia: History and Social Sciences*, Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 1992, 231-235; "The Evolution of Tokugawa Law," in *Studies*, 203-230.

[101] John Owen Haley, *Authority without Power: Law and the Japanese Paradox*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.

[102] J. Mark Ramseyer, *Odd Markets in Japanese History*. Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, 1996.

[103] Herman Ooms, *Tokugawa Village Practice: Class, Status, Power, Law*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996.

[104] Dani V. Botsman, "Punishment and Power in the Tokugawa period," Canberra, Australia: Institute of Advanced Studies, Australian National University, 1992.

[105] John W. Hall, "The Castle Town and Japan's Modern Urbanization," *Far Eastern Quarterly* XV: 1 (November 1955), 37-56.

Tosa (1963, 1968[106]), Sakai's on Satsuma (1968, 1970, 1975[107]), Hall's early work on Bizen and much more that appeared after the publication of *Government and Local Power* fall into this pattern.[108] Through the sixties only one monographic domain study appeared (Hall's *Government and Local Power*, 1966) and even that was not specifically a study of late sixteenth to seventeenth century domain formation.

This early work on domain institutions led to a number of dissertations that gave more extended attention to the subject. Les Mitchnick (1972, Chōshū[109]), Franklin Odo (1975, Saga[110]), and Ronald DiCenzo (1978, Echizen, Tottori, and Matsue[111]) completed doctoral theses on *kinsei* domains, but their work was not otherwise published. Indeed, no monographic domain study appeared again until Yale published

James McClain's case study of early castle town development (1982).[112]

From the late 1980s there has been a rising tide of domain studies published as both monographs and articles. John Morris (1988[113]) examined retainer fiefs in Sendai domain, Philip Brown explored domain formation and rural administration in early Kaga (1988, 1993[114]), James McClain (1992[115]) explored festivals and state power in Kanazawa, Luke Roberts (1994, 1997, 1998[116]) has analyzed development of economic policy in Tosa with a focus on mid-period fiscal challenges, Kären Wigen explored related issues as part of her study of Shimo-ina (1995), and Mark Ravina (1999) has also explored samurai rulers' attempts to deal with mid-period economic crises in Yonezawa, Tokushima, and Hirosaki domains. A concern for these and other mid-period issues lies at the heart of the Flershem's (1984) study of reform in Kaga domain.[117] Arne Kalland (1994) focuses on other issues, but includes fairly extensive discussion of the domain political context in his study of Fukuoka-region fishing

[106] Marius B. Jansen, "Tosa During the Last Century of Tokugawa Rule," in *Studies*, 331-348; "Tosa in the Seventeenth Century: The Establishment of Yamauchi Rule," in *ibid.*, 112-130; "Tosa in the Sixteenth Century: The 100 Article Code of Chōsokabe Motochika," *Oriens Extremus* X:1 (April 1963)

[107] Robert Sakai, "The Consolidation of Power in Satsuma-han," in Studies, 131-139; "Introductory Analysis," Haraguchi Torao et al. *The Status System and Social Organization Satsuma: A Translation of the Shumon Tefuda Aratame Jomoku*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1975.

[108] John W. Hall, "From Tokugawa to Meiji in Japanese Local Administration," in *Studies*, 375-86; "The Ikeda House and its Retainers in Bizen," in *ibid*. 79-88; "Materials for the Study of Local History in Japan: Pre-Meiji Daimyo Records," *HJAS* 209:1 & 2 (June 1957), 187-212; "Ikeda Mitsumasa and the Bizen Flood of 1654," in Personality in Japanese History, 57-84.

[109] Les Mitchnick, *Traditional and Transitional Tax systems During the Early Modern Period: A Case Study of Choshu Han, 1600-1873*, University of California, Los Angeles, Ph.D. Thesis, 1972.

[110] Franklin Odo, *Saga - Han: The Feudal Domain in Tokugawa Japan*. Princeton University, Ph.D. Thesis, 1975.

[111] Ronald DiCenzo, *Daimyo, Domain and Retainer Band in the Seventeenth Century: A Study of Institutional Development in Echizen, Tottori and Matsue*, Princeton University, Ph.D. Thesis, 1978.

[112] James L. McClain, *Kanazawa: A Seventeenth - Century Japanese Castle Town*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982

[113] John Morris, *Kinsei Nihon chigyōsei no kenkyū*, Seibundo, 1978.

[114] Philip C. Brown, *Central Authority and Local Autonomy in the Formation of Early modern Japan: The Case of Kaga Domain*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993.

[115] James L. McClain, "Bonshogatsu: Festivals and State Power in Kanazawa," *MN* 47:2 (Summer 1992), 163-202.

[116] Luke Roberts, "The Petition Box in Eighteenth-Century Tosa," *JJS* 20.2 (Summer 1994): 423-458; *Mercantilism In A Japanese Domain: The Merchant Origins Of Economic Nationalism In 18th - Century Tosa*. Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, 1998; "A Petition for a Popularly Chosen Council of Government in Tosa in 1787," *HJAS* 57:2 (December 1997) 575-596.

[117] Robert G. Flershem and Yoshiko N. Flershem, "Kaga: A Domain That Changed Slowly," in Burks Ardath W., Ed. *The Modernizers: Overseas Students, Foreign Employees, and Meiji Japan*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1984, 85-143.

communities.[118]

Although focused primarily on medieval to late Sengoku developments, two other domain-level studies deserve note. Michael Birt (1983, 1985[119]) and Reinhard Zollner (1991[120]) examine the transformation of domain organization in the sixteenth century. Both discuss developments that, through the crucible of widespread civil war, laid foundations for the growth and final stabilization of daimyo rule.

In addition to studies of domain organizational structure, a number of scholars have taken an interest in closely examining the most fundamental aspects of revenue raising for the Tokugawa ruling classes, the land tax system. From a national perspective, Kozo Yamamura (1988) offered an explanation of the change from cash to rice-based assessments of land value for purposes of taxation, Thomas Smith's study of land taxation (1958[121]) first raised the possibility that land taxes did not keep pace with increases in agricultural output and even remained absolutely flat throughout the Tokugawa period. He analyzed data from several domains, but other studies focus more intensively on single domains. Philip Brown examined the accuracy land survey techniques that created the standard of the land's assessed value and three land tax assessment systems, especially in Kaga domain (1987, 1988, etc.[122]). Patricia Sippel (1994, 1998[123]) con-

ducted extensive investigations of the tax policy of the Tokugawa in their role as domain lords and stresses the difficulty of maintaining effective control over an agricultural base rendered unstable by the vagaries of nature. Les Mitchnick's (1972) study is the only extended effort to move beyond the land tax system into other forms of taxation in his study of Choshu, but Constantine Vaporis has explored corvee in a 1986 article that arose from his research on the Tokugawa-controlled system of national roads.[124]

Several studies have taken the investigation of domain economic activities in a different direction – direct exploitation of natural resources. Conrad Totman began to investigate the management of forest resources with two studies in 1984[125], one of which focused intensively on Akita. The culmination of his work (1989[126]) was a major overview of village and domain response to a decline in readily available forest resources. Byung Nam Yoon (1995[127]) took the

[118] Arne Kalland, *Fishing Villages in Tokugawa Japan*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press (Curzon Press), 1994.

[119] Michael Birt, *Warring States: A Study of the Go-Hojo Daimyo and Domain, 1491-1590*, Princeton University, Ph.D. Thesis, 1983.

[120] Reinhard Zollner, "Die Takeda als Feudalherren in Kai no kuni im Spiegel des Koyo gunkan," in Eva Bachmayer, Wolfgang Herbert, Sepp Linhart, Sepp, eds. *Japan, von Aids bis Zen: Referate des achten Japanologentages 26:28. September 1990 in Wien*. Wien: Institut fur Japanologie, Universitat Wien, 1991, 165-180.

[121] Thomas Smith, "The Land Tax in the Tokugawa Period," *JAS* 18.1 (1958), 3-20. Reprinted in *Studies*, 283-299.

[122] Philip C. Brown, "The Mismeasure of Land," "Never the Twain shall meet: European land survey techniques in Tokugawa Japan," *Chinese Science* 9

(1989) 53-79; "Practical Constraints on Early Tokugawa Land Taxation," "A Case of Failed Technology Transfer--Land Survey Technology in Early Modern Japan," *Senri Ethnological Studies* 46 (March, 1998) 83-97, *Central Authority and Local Autonomy, passim*.

[123] Patricia Sippel, *Financing the Long Peace: The Agricultural Tax in the Tokugawa Domain*. Harvard University, Ph.D. Thesis, 1994; "Popular Protest in Early Modem Japan: The Bushu Outburst," *HJAS* 37.2 (1977), 273-322.

[124] Les Mitchnick, *Traditional and Transitional Tax systems During the Early Modern Period: A Case Study of Choshu Han, 1600-1873*; Constantine N. Vaporis "Post Station and Assisting Villages: Corvee Labor and Peasant Contention," *MN* 41.4 (Winter 1986): 377-414.

[125] Conrad Totman, "Land-Use Patterns and Afforestation in the Edo Period," *MN* 39.1 (Spring 1984), 1-10; *The Origins of Japan's Modern Forests: The Case of Akita*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1984.

[126] Conrad Totman, *The Green Archipelago: Forestry In Pre-Industrial Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989.

[127] Byung Nam Yoon, *Domain and Bakufu in Tokugawa Japan: The Copper Trade and Development of Akita Domain Mines*, Princeton University, Ph.D. Thesis, 1995.

investigation of domain economic activities into still another arena, the development of mining resources in Akita. In contrast to limited treatments of gold and silver mining in survey works, Yoon chose to look at copper mining. We still lack extended studies of development of domain monopolies although they do come in for some treatment in works focused on local economic policy and development (e.g., Roberts, 1998 and Ravina, 1999).

Our story thus far has emphasized politics and political organization at the top, first in the efforts to create national stability and solid institutional structures, and with a greater emphasis in recent years, examination of domain organization and politics. If one wished to treat the Shogun and Emperor as the apex of political institutions, even the increased attention devoted to domain organization and policies represents a shift in scholarly attention downward from the top. But recent scholarly gaze has shifted much further down the political hierarchy.

Village, Town and City. Studies at the district and village level have never been entirely absent from the scholarly agenda. Thomas Smith (1952, 1959[128]) did much to lay the foundation for the field, and William Chambliss produced the first extended village study (1965).[129] Anthropologist Harumi Befu (1965, 1966) considered the office of village headman, and Dan Henderson (1975) examined village contracts. William Kelly, another anthropologist, explored institutions of regional cooperation that developed around the need to share and cooperatively administer irrigation resources (1982).[130] Neil Waters (1983) chose to examine a district when he investigated the impact of the Meiji Restoration on ordinary communities.[131] Arne Kalland (1994) departed from the typical focus on agricultural communities to look at fishing villages, also the venue for David Howell's (1995[132]) examination of the development of the Hokkaido fishing industry. While both of these works go well beyond a straight institutional history, descriptions of the relevant institutions and policy debates form an important part of each. The same may be said for Kären Wigen's (1995) study of craft industries in the Shimo-Ina region.[133]

Village – generated institutions have also been the object of some study. Tanaka Michiko's doctoral thesis (1983[134]) explored young men's associations (*wakamono nakama*). Late medieval and Sengoku village institutions that created self-governing patterns and paradigms for village institutions under the Tokugawa settlement have been the focus of Hitomi Tonomura (1992[135]) and Kristina Troost (1990[136]). A number of the examples of corporate control of arable land studied by Philip Brown were purely village creations (1988, etc.), and patterns of land ownership in one village, Chiaraijima have been explored by William Chambliss (1965).[137]

The question of land ownership is fundamen-

[128] Thomas C. Smith, "The Japanese Village in the Seventeenth Century," *Journal of Economic History* 12.1 (1952), 1-20. Reprinted in *Studies*, 263-282.

[129] William Chambliss, Chiaraijima *Village: Land Tenure, Taxation, and Local Trade, 1811-1884*. 1965: Tuscon, Arizona: University of Arizona Press, 1965.

[130] William Kelly, *Water Control in Tokugawa Japan: Irrigation Organization in a Japanese River Basin, 1600-1870*, Ithaca, New York: Cornell China-Japan Program, 1982.

[131] Neil Waters, *Japan's Local Pragmatists: The Transition from Bakumatsu to Meiji in the Kawasaki Region*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University Press, 1983.

[132] *Capitalism from Within*.

[133] *The Making of a Japanese Periphery*.

[134] Michiko Tanaka, *Village Youth Organizations (Wakamono Nakama) in Late Tokugawa Politics and Society*. Princeton University, Ph.D. Thesis, 1983.

[135] Hitomi Tonomura, *Community and Commerce in Late Medieval Japan: The Corporate Villages of Tokuchin-ho*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992.

[136] Kristina Kade Troost, *Common Property and Community Formation: Self-Governing Villages in Late Medieval Japan, 1300-1600*, Harvard University, Ph.D. Thesis, 1990.

[137] Philip C. Brown, "State, Cultivator, Land: Determination of Land Tenures in Early Modern Japan Reconsidered," *JAS* 56:2 (May, 1997), 421-444; "Warichi seido: soto kara mita omoshirosa, naka kara mita fukuzatusa," *Shiryōkan kenkyū kiyō*, (March, 1999): 161-227; Chambliss, *Chiaraijima*.

tally related to how land was registered for tax purposes – primarily seen as a function of hegemons like Hideyoshi and domains. Prior to the 1990s, standard interpretations stressed the role of national land surveys in determining who has the right to exploit farmland and the obligation to participate in the payment of a village's land tax. Kozo Yamamura relied on this analysis when he proposed that seventeenth to nineteenth century Japanese who held superior cultivation rights in effect had rights of nearly modern private possession that assured them of the fruits of investments they might make in land (1979).[138]

Yet in more recent, ground level studies, Philip Brown (1987 ["Mismeasure" and "Land Redistribution Schemes"], 1997, 1999) has argued that the situation is more complex and determination of land rights lay at the domain and village level. In part as a result, in about a third of Japan's villages, villagers exercised corporate control over arable land.   In these villages there was no direct tie between any particular plot of farmland and a village "shareholder" who had the right to manage arable land and pay taxes.

Studies of village institutions have been matched recently by more extensive examination of the institutions of urban centers.   James McClain (1980, 1982, 1992, 1994, 1999)[139], McClain and Ugawa Kaoru (1994)[140], McClain and John Merriman (1994)[141], McClain and Wakita Osamu (1999)[142], and their co-authors in

Edo and Paris: Urban Life and the State in the Early Modern Era (1994; William Coaldrake[143], William Kelly[144]) explore urban institutions.

A common theme has begun to emerge from these studies of local communities: In typical studies prior to the nineteen-eighties which viewed the commoners as largely passive or ineffective in modifying or opposing their seigneurial overlords, recent studies explicitly recognize that commoners had a very active role in creating local institutions and running them.[145]   The role of commoner initiative even in the formation of domain policy is given especially strong emphasis in Roberts (1997), and Herman Ooms (1996) has stressed the way in which some villagers were capable of transforming laws and edicts to serve their own ends or of successfully getting domain authorities to act on their behalf against other villagers.   Some of these themes are also reflected in Mark Ravina's work on domain politics (1999).[146]

Cutting across a number of the themes noted already, the study of popular disturbances, *ikki*, experienced a boom in the 1980s and 1990s, with contributions from Herbert Bix (1986[147]), Selcuk Esenbel (1998), William Kelly (1985[148]), Anne

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[138] Kozo Yamamura, "Pre-Industrial Landholding Patterns in Japan and England," in Albert M. Craig, ed. *Japan: A Comparative View*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979, 276-323.

[139] James L. McClain, "Castle Towns and Daimyo Authority: Kanazawa in the Years 1583-1630," *JJS* 6.2 (Summer 1980), 267-299; "Edobashi: Power, Space and Popular Culture in Edo," in *Edo and Paris*, 105-131; "Space, Power, Wealth, and Status in Seventeenth-Century Osaka," in *Osaka: The Merchants' Capital*, 44-79.

[140] James L. McClain and Ugawa Kaoru, "Visions of the City," in *Edo and Paris*, 455-464.

[141] James L. McClain and John M. Merriman, "Edo and Paris: Cities and Power," in *Edo and Paris*, 3-41.

[142] James L. McClain and Wakita Osamu. "Osaka Across the Ages," in *Osaka: The Mer-*

chants' Capital, 1-21.

[143] William H. Coaldrake, "Building a New Establishment: Tokugawa Iemitsu's Consolidation of Power and the Taitokuin Mausoleum," in *Edo and Paris*, 153-74.

[144] William W. Kelly, "Incendiary Actions: Fires and Firefighting in the Shogun's Cap[ital and the People's City," in *Edo and Paris*, 310-331.

[145] This is a major theme of the essays cited in the preceding paragraph, but also in my work on land redistribution systems (see, for example, "State, Cultivator, Land") and the development of rural administration (*Central Authority and Local Autonomy*).

[146] Roberts, *Mercantilism in a Japanese Domain*; Ooms, *Tokugawa Village Practice*, Ravina, *Land and Lordship*.

[147] Herbert P. Bix, *Peasant Protest in Japan, 1590-1884*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986.

[148] William W. Kelly, *Deference And Defiance in Nineteenth-Century Japan*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.1985.

Walthall (1986[149]), James White (1988, 1992, 1995[150]), George Wilson (1982)[151] and Stephen Vlastos (1986[152]).   Some protests were sparked by domain or *bakufu* policies, especially taxation, but others concerned issues of village governance or attempts to gain administrative redress for the growing influence of the market.   These latter issues form an important part of William Hauser's early study of the Kinai cotton trade.[153]

Finally the interest of historians in the transformation of institutions at all levels during the Bakumatsu-Meiji transition merits notice.   An early collection of essays on the subject edited by Jansen and Rozman (1986[154]) focused on these problems and included essays on the central government by Albert Craig, the military by Eleanor Westney, Gilbert Rozman on urban structures, Richard Rubinger on education, Umegaki Michio on domains and prefectures, Henry Smith II on the transformation of Edo into Tokyo, Andrew Fraser on local administration, Martin Collcutt on policy toward Buddhism, and Marius Jansen on the ruling class.   Neil Waters (1983) and James Baxter (1994) examined district and prefectural transformations in much greater depth.[155]   Other shorter treatments include works by John Hall

and Marius Jansen.[156]

II.   New Perspectives

The field of institutional and political history now has a sufficient history and a large enough contingent of practitioners to have produced some important, competing perspectives.   The most significant of these discussions concerns the characterization of the state from the late sixteenth to mid-nineteenth century.   The oldest characterization cast Tokugawa and its immediate predecessor regimes as feudal, a term typically defined in more often political-structural terms than specified as an economic or Marxian conceptualization when it was defined at all.[157]   By the 1962, John Hall had begun to question that characterization and by 1968, when he and his co-editor, Marius Jansen, sought a title for their collection of new and republished essays, they labeled the period "early modern:" *Studies in the Institutional History of Early Modern Japan*.   In no small part this re-characterization was sparked by their perception that ties between daimyo and Shogun, retainer and daimyo, quickly became depersonalized and routinized in the seventeenth century.   In place of personal ties of loyalty, a stable, very bureaucratic organization lay at the core of domain institutional life.   In the nineteen-sixties this transformation was the wave of the future (based in part on the emerging application of contemporary functionalist-structuralist definitions of modernization to Japan which were heavily influenced by Talcott Parson's, Reinhard Bendix's and others' readings of Max Weber's and Emile Durkheim's work), but some textbooks in the nineteen-seventies continued to refer to pre-Meiji warrior government as "feudal."   Indeed, Joseph Strayer's introductory essay in *Stud-*

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[149] Anne Walthall, *Social Protest and Popular Culture in Eighteenth-Century Japan*, Tuscon, Arizona: University of Arizona Press, 1986.

[150] James White, "State Growth and Popular Protest in Tokugawa Japan," *JJS* 14.1 (Winter 1988), 1-25; *Ikki: Social Conflict and Political protest in Early Modern Japan*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995; *The Demography of Sociopolitical Conflict in Japan, 1721-1846*. Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley, Center for Japanese Studies, 1992.

[151] George M. Wilson, *Patriots and Redeemers*.

[152] Stephen Vlastos, *Peasant Protests and Uprisings in Tokugawa Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986.

[153] *Economic Institutional Change*.

[154] *Japan in Transition*.

[155] Waters, *Japan's Local Pragmatists*; James C. Baxter, *The Meiji Unification Through the Lens of Ishikawa Prefecture*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University Press, 1994.

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[156] Hall, "From Tokugawa to Meiji;" Jansen, "Tosa During the Last Century."

[157] *Feudalism in History* was one of the early post-war efforts to explore feudalism in a comparative historical context based on a single definition of the term for purposes of the project.   David Howell is one of the few scholars who now explicitly embrace a Marxist definition of feudalism as applicable to the Tokugawa.   See "Territoriality and Collective Identity."

ies, comparing Japan and early modern Europe, used both terms, early modern and feudal, without a sense of mutual exclusivity or contradiction.[158]

Regardless of whether the political order and the era were treated as feudal or early modern, the vexing question of how to describe the relationship of political periphery and center has not been resolved. A number of characterizations have been offered, all of which focus in varying degree on the balance between centralization and decentralization in the early modern state. Totman's *Politics in the Tokugawa Bakufu* (1967) and Bolitho's *Treasures Among Men* (1974) explicitly considered the Tokugawa failure to centralize authority along the lines of the strongest European absolutist rulers. Totman, from the publication of *Japan Before Perry* (1981) came to characterize the political order as an integral bureaucracy.[159] Mary Elizabeth Berry (*Hideyoshi*, 1982) treated the political structure as a federal system. Mark Ravina adopted Mizubayashi Takashi's characterization of the state as "compound" and one in which domains not only retained an identity as independent states, but in which relations of authority between daimyo and Shogun on the one hand, and daimyo and retainer on the other are described in terms that represent a rejection of the order as non-feudal: feudal authority, patrimonial authority and seigneurial authority.[160] Luke Roberts saw domains as acting in ways that straddle the line between independent states conducting foreign affairs among themselves and components of a larger, unitary political order.[161] Why these latter characterizations should be preferred over "federalism" or even "confederation" is not entirely clear, for in that federal system with which we are most familiar, the United States, the sense of state identity and negotiations with other states as "foreign" entities is still a prominent characteristic of political life, even in the face of the central government's expanding power. Ronald Toby has taken Roberts and Ravina to task for overemphasizing the autonomy of domain authority, particularly in the context of his view that Tokugawa Japan is an emerging nation-state and domains clearly are functioning within a Tokugawa-dominated political framework.[162]

One suspects that the reason Ravina and Roberts separate themselves from Berry lies partly in the different eras on which each focuses. Berry treats Hideyoshi, the kingpin who laid the foundation for national peace and a stable political order. Ravina and Roberts are interested in later domain-level developments and perspectives. Berry's subject must contend with openly hostile, external opponents in the form of other daimyo alliances led by the Tokugawa, Date and others; the domains in Roberts's and Ravina's studies have a very stable relationship with the Shogunate and other domains, and certainly one that does not come to a military confrontation that would illuminate the degree of forceful control the Shogun might be capable of imposing.[163]

Quite apart from characterization of the structural order in its entirety, Brown (*Central Authority and Local Autonomy*) has attempted to assess the capacity of central political figures, especially Hideyoshi and to a lesser degree, the early Tokugawa, to impose their administrative will on the daimyo through purportedly national policies – land surveys, class separation, for example. Rather than stress state fiat, based on his case

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[158] Joseph Strayer, "The Tokugawa Period and Japanese Feudalism," in *Studies*, 3-14; on the influence of contemporary sociological and economic theory, see the various volumes in the Princeton series on Japan's modernization listed above, note 7.

[159] *Japan Before Perry: A Short History*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981.

[160] "State-building and Political Economy in Early Modern Japan," *JAS* 54:4 (November 1995), 887-1022.

[161] *Mercantilism in a Japanese Domain*.

[162] Ronald P. Toby, "Rescuing the Nation from History: The State of the State in Early Modern Japan." *MN* 56: 2 (Summer 2001), 197-238.

[163] Given the very sparse definition of key terms (such as federalism, feudal, seigneurial, patrimonial) in these works, it is also possible that there is more agreement among these scholars than might appear to be the case. Terms of political analysis like these have a long history of discussion in Western scholarly literature and creating good operational definitions requires rather fuller treatment than most of the literature on early modern Japan provides.

study of Kaga domain and its local administration, he suggests common problems encouraged daimyo to move in similar directions that were manifested in a variety of institutional structures, an argument also made by Ravina for a later period.[164] John Morris (*Kinsei Nihon chigyōsei,* 1990) has also questioned the dominance of central models of administration. His studies suggest that *hatamoto* lords, widely treated as akin to automatons of the Tokugawa, actually display a substantial degree of autonomy in their policies and administrative development.

Two short studies, White's on the legitimate use of force (1988) and Totman's on river conservancy (1992) both suggest that the reach of *bakufu* authority became stronger with the passage of time.[165] While the picture they present contrasts sharply with the image of the Bakumatsu *bakufu* administration as inept, it does not by any means contradict that impression. Both treatments focus on limited areas of operation – quelling civil disturbances and flood prevention – in which domains and *bakufu* were likely to share interests rather than contexts in which they came into conflict.

These studies by White and Totman, and in subtle ways, those of Ravina and Roberts, raise the important question of how the relationship between the domains and Shogun changed over time. Even if the *bakufu* never achieved central control to the degree of eighteenth and nineteenth century England, for example, even if it failed to build sufficient resources to keep itself together to fend off the Restoration, this subject is of great importance and deserves further attention, especially if we are to understand the under-studied political realm of the late seventeenth to early nineteenth century. We can anticipate that changes in these relationships were not uniform across the domains, but that they would vary based on factors such as size, geographical and social distance from the Shogunate, and other characteristics.

Perception of the relative strength of central political authority has important implications for explaining institutional and legal history. If we determine that Hideyoshi's edicts on issues such as class separation were instrumental in generating reforms outside of his own domains, then we not only have evidence for very substantial national administrative authority, we can also explain the motivations for such policies largely by examining Hideyoshi and his advisors. In later periods, we could examine only the motives for Shogunal edicts on the sale of land and people, or specific reform efforts such as the Kyōhō Reforms, strictly in terms of central planners.

If, however, we conclude that central initiatives of this sort are not determinant, then explanations for both divergent and similar domain policies must be sought at lower levels. New questions arise. Which kinds of daimyo were most subject to Shogunal models? How much institutional or policy variation is there throughout Japan on a given issue? Are there indirect influences of Shogunal policies that we can discern (e.g., by regulating the central markets of Osaka, does the *bakufu* encourage the spread of its mercantile practices to the provinces)? The possibility of regional variation in domain institutions and policy has been addressed to some degree in the work of Luke Roberts (e.g., commoner initiative in domain policy), Mark Ravina (e.g., disparate patterns of retainer control), Philip Brown (e.g., village landholding rights) and John Morris (retention of retainer control of fiefs and *hatamoto* administrative autonomy), and some of this perspective has been incorporated in Conrad Totman's survey, *Early Modern Japan,* but the widespread impression remains one in which domains are seen as similarly structured and following largely similar policies. To the degree that future studies bear out the findings of these studies, the impression of *bakufu* administrative, legal and policy patterns as typical would have to be substantially modified.

Finally, the debate over the degree of *bakufu* authority over domains has a bearing on how we view the process of Restoration in the mid-

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[164] Brown describes state-society relations as "flamboyant" (lots of bark, little consistent "bite") rather than typical of a "strong state" as political scientists might describe define it: having a substantial capacity to formulate and implement policies on a wide variety of issues; see Ravina's Land and Lordship.

[165] White, "State Growth," Conrad Totman, "Preindustrial River Conservancy," *MN* 47.1 (Spring 1992), 59-76.

nineteenth century. As pre-1990s interpretations have it, early modern central authority moves from the great power of Hideyoshi and the early Tokugawa to a struggling, internally divided and largely ineffective authority in the Bakumatsu era. If, however, scholarly evaluation of the early Shogun's authority is reduced along the lines suggested by recent studies, we at least sense that the loss of authority and administrative effectiveness was not as great as we had perceived. This may not suggest completely new explanations for the Restoration, but it does indicate a less dramatic decline over the course of the eighteenth century on the one hand while still allowing for some actual enlargement of *bakufu* authority during the period as James White ("State Growth") and Totman ("Preindustrial River Conservancy") suggest. (N.B.: We can look forward to a rather different perspective on the nature of the early modern state and the transition to the new political order of post-Restoration Japan in the forthcoming publication of David Howell's *Geographies of Identity in Nineteenth Century Japan*.[166])

Issues of this sort run deeper than *bakufu* and domain structure or policy issues. Thomas Smith (*Agrarian Origins*) postulated a tendency for villages to abandon hereditary village headship under the pressure of parvenus. Herman Ooms (*Tokugawa Village Practice*) has suggested that increased efforts to create legal restrictions on outcastes grew out of a rural status insecurity that resulted from a blurring of old class lines. Village political conflicts erupted over continued use of common land (*iriai*) by the community as a whole in the face of demands that it be privatized. A number of prominent examples of these and other phenomenon can readily be identified, but an important issue remains: How typical of the general pattern of institutional change were they? As village organizations changed, how effective or ineffective were domain administrations in capitalizing on the changes or managing them? It is almost passé for historians to indicate that large contiguous domains were more effective in controlling their subjects than rulers

of small or scattered domains. Although the logic underlying this argument is attractive (large, contiguous domains offer fewer chances for escape into less heavily regulated communities), the pattern has never been verified and given the increased long-distance mobility of villagers during the eighteenth century, there is even reason to doubt this widely accepted claim.

Such issues suggest that a more systematic approach is needed to assess regional patterns of variation. Simple divisions of Japan into advanced and non-advanced regions, common in characterizations of regional differences in economic history, will not suffice since many subjects of potential interest are not grounded in the market economy. For example, many regions with only modest commercial and economic diversification converted retainers to a stipend and withdrew their seigneurial rights, others did not or did so incompletely. What combination of factors made complete confiscation of such rights desirable and feasible? Household disturbances (*oie sōdō*) wracked a number of seventeenth-century domains. Are there underlying patterns to them that reveal systematic sources of political tension and/or weakness within domains?

Regardless of the answer to these kinds of questions, the current state of English-language scholarship clearly indicates the existence of multiple – sometimes, competing – institutional patterns that discourage simple reliance on motives of the political center to explain either stability or change during the period. Political power was spread throughout different layers of Japanese society, and even if that held by the Shogun was preponderant, it was nonetheless shared.

III. Theories, Methods and Materials

The shifts in focus and interpretation just outlined partly result from a tremendous expansion in the kinds of materials and methods scholars employ and in the theoretical frameworks that stimulate or aid their investigations.

Methods and Theory. While rather traditional approaches to the study of political and institutional history still dominate the field, multidisciplinary methodological and theoretical influences appear in a smattering of works. Kalland (*Fishing Villages*) and Kelly (*Water Control*) pro-

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[166] Berkeley: University of California Press, forthcoming.

duced major studies from an anthropological perspective. Kalland, Howell (*Capitalism from Within*), and Totman (*Green Archipelago*, *Early Modern Japan*, for example take up a concern with the influence of natural environmental factors on man typically understood to be the concern of geographers, and Kären Wigen explicitly argues for the introduction of geographic perspectives into our study of Tokugawa history.[167] Ooms's (*Tokugawa Village Practice*) employs the perspectives of Pierre Bourdieu in analyzing manipulation of law at the local level and his analysis of status issues in local politics, but others in diverse fields find much of value in this sociologist's work. James White's study of monopolization of the use of legitimate force and his clear differentiation of claims to authority from the ability to implement policies ("State Growth") as well as his studies of popular disturbances (*Ikki*, *Demography of Sociopolitical Conflict*) are solidly grounded in concepts and theories of the political scientist. Literary criticism has informed a number of more recent studies of Bakumatsu politics (see, for example, the 1982 studies by Harootunian, Koschman and Steele; Koschman 1987).[168] Gregory Smits takes some of this perspective to heart in his analysis of the ambiguous position of Okinawan political leaders as they dealt with their Satsuma overlords.[169] The wave of interest in sophisticated statistical analysis that characterized a substantial segment of social science history in the nineteen-seventies and nineteen-eighties was not much applied to the problems of Tokugawa political history. Only White

(e.g., *Ikki*), Brown ("Practical Constraints") and Ravina (*Land and Lordship*) have taken advantage of this approach. Even in the realm of theoretical perspectives to which historians traditionally feel more open, Marxism, only David Howell (e.g., *Capitalism from Within*) currently employs an avowedly Marxist perspective.

Biography has not received a great deal of attention, at least relative to the large number of candidates for such treatment one can readily envision. Biographical works are widely scattered across time and few in number. Hall's study of Tanuma (1955), Jansen's of Sakamoto (1961), Herman Ooms's (1975) and Petra Rudolph's (1976) work on Matsudaira Sadanobu, and Masato Matsui on Shimazu Shigehide (1975[170]) have been followed more recently with extended biographies by Berry on Hideyoshi (1982), Totman on Tokugawa Ieyasu (1983[171]), and Kate Nakai's study of Arai Hakuseki (1988). Finally, it was only in 2000 that a book-length study of Oda Nobunaga appeared in English, that of Jeroen Lamers.[172] The list gets extended a bit if we add article-length treatments; nonetheless, we could profitably add to this listing studies of a number of early *kinsei* daimyo, key Shoguns (e.g., Hidetada, Iemitsu, Tsunayoshi), as well as prominent figures in the Restoration Movement, all people who were the movers and shakers of their day.

While seldom the choice for doctoral thesis and first major publication, there can be little doubt that greater availability of biographies has the potential to personalize Japan's historical experience in ways that increase its appeal. The challenge to historians of pre-modern Japan has always been to convey a sense of individual character to figures who left us very little in the way of personal observations, detailed descriptions of their meetings with others or other tracks by which we can explore their personalities.

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[167] Kären Wigen, "The Geographic Imagination in Early Modern Japanese History: Retrospect and Prospect," *JAS* 51.1 (1992), 3-29.

[168] Harootunian, Toward Restoration; Koschman, "Action As Text," Mitō Ideology; Steele "Rise and Fall." The list of publications influenced by literary-critical theory becomes longer when we move outside the realm of political action into the sphere of intellectual and religious history. See the essays by James I. McMullen and Janine Sawada, *Early Modern Japan: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 10:1 (Spring, 2002), 22-38; 39-64 respectively.

[169] Gregory Smits, *Visions of Ryukyu: Identity and Ideology in Early Modern Thought and Politics*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999.

[170] Masato Matsui, *Shimazu Shigehide, 1745-1833: A Case Study of Daimyo Leadership*. 1975: University of Hawaii, Ph.D. Thesis, 1975.

[171] Conrad Totman, *Tokugawa Ieyasu: Shogun*, San Francisco: Heian International, 1983.

[172] Jeroen Lamers, *Japonius Tyrannus: The Japanese Warlord Oda Nobunaga Reconsidered*, Leiden: Hotei Publishing, 2000.

New Materials.   In the realm of research materials, the diversification in subjects studied, the analysis of the actual operation of political institutions and the implementation of laws on the ground level necessarily entailed exploitation of new sources.   The shift from *bakufu* policy-making and pre-Restoration political activities to domain administration and policies itself meant moving beyond collections of primary materials such as *Dai Nihon Shiryō* and similarly massive "national" compendia, to materials collected at the prefecture, city, town and village levels.   The Japanese publication boom in local histories since the end of World War II has greatly facilitated our access to these important sources.   The past two decades also evince movement toward exploitation of non-traditional sources such as archeological artifacts and artwork.[173]   Increased archeological activity by our Japanese colleagues promises further enticement for us to focus greater attention on these kinds of evidence.

We have come a long way from the nineteen-fifties when John Hall could claim new scholarly advances based on the increased ability of Western scholars to employ primary documents in printed form; today, recent studies increasingly engage subjects for which reliance on printed materials alone is insufficient.   Thomas Smith's study of the land tax system ("Land Tax," 1958) and William Chambliss's village study (*Chiaraijima,* 1965) are early examples, Kate Nakai employed some manuscript materials in her political biography of Arai Hakuseki (1988), as did Anne Walthall (*Social Protest*, 1986) and Philip Brown (e.g., *Central Authority*, 1993).   Most of the exciting and innovative aspects of Luke Roberts's work (especially *Mercantilism*, 1998) would have been impossible without examination of hand-written diaries, ordinances, and petitions.   Mark Ravina (*Land and Lordship*, 1999) similarly relied extensively on manuscript materials.

Efforts to examine the fate of policies, administration of justice, and local institutions of landholding and the like increasingly abut the limitations of printed sources.   Printed sources typically select documents representative of particular sorts of records kept by authorities (tending to include the earliest examples) or documents that are clearly pivotal – indicating a major shift in policy, for example.   Even very large compendia of transcriptions tend to be very selective rather than comprehensive.   When serial statistical data are needed one has no recourse but to descend into dusty archives, rummage through indexes of varying utility, and sometimes just peruse unclassified records to uncover appropriate documents with which to construct a series.[174]

At this point it would not be fair to say that the turn to manuscript materials is mainstream, of course, but the trend does seem to be growing not only in the realm of political history but also in other fields.   The studies enumerated above represent a very incomplete complete listing of works reliant on manuscript sources, and younger scholars show an increased interest in exploiting these kinds of sources.[175]   While studies of *bakufu* and domain policy formulation may continue to rely heavily on printed primary sources, other areas of current interest simply cannot be explored effectively based solely on printed sources. Consequently, it is hard to imagine a

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[173] Constantine N. Vaporis, "Digging for Edo: archaeology and Japan's Pre-Modern Urban Past," *MN* 53:1 (Spring 1998): 73-104, "A Tour of Duty: Kurume Hanshi Edo Kinbun Nagaya Emaki," *MN* 51:3 (Fall 1996): 279-307.

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[174] Philip Brown's studies of land taxation, land survey methods and corporate landholding and David Howell's study of Hokkaido fishing (1995), for example, have required use of exactly this kind of data.   Herman Ooms (1996) exploited a number of manuscript materials in sketching the operation of institutions in ordinary village disputes and the manipulation of local and domain institutions by villagers.

[175] I base my conclusions on an Internet survey of primary source use patterns to which 326 individuals responded.   Survey conducted August to October, 2001, and reported in Gakujutsu shiryō riyō no jūsōka to guroobaruka, in Koide Izumi, ed., *Kenkyū to shiryō to jōhō wo musubu: "Nihon kenkyū gakujutsu shiryō jōhō no riyō seibi ni kansuru kokusai kaigi no kiroku*, Tokyo: Kokusai Kōryū Kikin, 2002, distributed by Nihon Toshokan Kyōkai, 12-25, article appendix, 240-255 and "State of the Field: The Odd Couple?   Digital Data and Traditional Primary Sources in Japanese Studies," *Asian Studies Newsletter* 48:1 (February, 2003) 16-17.

decline in the need to exploit manuscript sources. Yet despite this emerging trend, there is no regular program in Western institutions that concentrates on training scholars to read manuscript materials.

Periodization and Connections to Non-Japanese Histories

The preceding sections have raised questions that help us understand the development of Tokugawa administrative organizations, law and legal practice, political disputes and policy shifts in their own context rather than in terms of what the Tokugawa may have contributed to Meiji. The "Tokugawa as Foundation for the Meiji" perspective was in large part the stimulus for the creation of the field. It reverberates through the very earliest work of John Hall, Marius Jansen and Thomas Smith. These individuals and others were sufficiently broad-minded historians so that their own intellectual reach extended much further back in time and they made considerable efforts to develop our awareness of elements of the Sengoku, Shokuhō and Tokugawa past even though such work may have had little direct relationship to the birth of Meiji. Nonetheless, that set of intellectual concerns occupies the largest place in the entire range of Western political and institutional studies for this period.

This tendency to stress the Meiji connection partly reflects the newness of the field. The act of compiling the bibliography for this essay drove home very forcefully the newness of our enterprise. My impressionistic sense is that even by comparison with Chinese political history for a comparable period, a field that also did not "take off" until after World War II, the volume and range of early modern studies is small.

Institutional factors are also at play. For many years the graduate program in Japanese history at the University of Chicago has characterized itself as one focused on Japan's nineteenth and twentieth century history. The Meiji connection has been explicitly institutionalized in this setting, although that connection has not been defined in the same way as it was for the "modernization theory" perspective of the Princeton series. Elsewhere, for much of the post-war period programs at Harvard and Princeton have been guided by figures with a very strong Meiji connection. While we have yet to see how career interests will play out for a number of younger scholars, one can not help but be struck by relatively recent hires for positions advertised as "early modern Japan" that were filled by people whose initial work at least was focused on the Meiji connection or questioned it. In institutions that cannot afford more than one specialist in Japan or East Asia, the pattern of hiring tends to favor modernists or those whose work has a clear Meiji tie.

In reflecting on hiring tendencies of this sort, certain affinities appear to be influential. The process of "modernization" (broadly conceived) is one with which non-Japan specialists feel conversant at some general level. In the institutional realm, it involves processes that are familiar: the emergence of generally stronger central governments, the extension of state interests into the promotion of new technological and business innovation, the transformation of the legal context in which businesses can be organized and promoted, the assumption by governments of a direct role in education, and the like. Similar issues could be listed for other fields of history, too.

When the non-Japan specialists who dominate history departments hire a Japanese historian, they tend to feel they can make at least some general intellectual connections with candidates who specialize in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. I do not wish to take this observation to an extreme, for recent essay collections on urban history suggest that some scholars are making successful connections between Japanese historians and others for earlier periods. Nonetheless, I do sense a pattern of increasing isolation of those Tokugawa specialists who lack the Meiji connection and I believe there is a *de facto* tendency for *non-Japanese historians* to exert a strong pressure on the field of Japanese history to re-define "early modern Japan" as the period from the very late eighteenth through nineteenth centuries.

If part of the tendency to stress Tokugawa history as the foundation for Meiji lies in the predisposition of non-Japanese historians, part of the responsibility may also lie in the approaches of Western, largely American, historians of Japan to their subject. For one, scholars tend not to

translate descriptions of pre-modern Japanese institutions into terms that connect us with historians of other lands. At the most basic level, we typically treat *bakufu* governance as *sui generis*. We make no effort to compare or contrast it with other forms of military government. Indeed, in the late nineteen-sixties the field gave up the one conceptual framework that helped us connect to pre-modern European historians (for example): feudalism. It was replaced for the most part with "early modern," a term that, in its political and institutional implications, is extremely diffuse and vague as applied to Japan. Japan lacked the foreign pressures that encouraged the extended, active "state-making" of the Western world – the context that gave birth to the concept of early modernity in the political sphere in European history. The loss of this intellectual handle has made it more difficult to draw useful parallels to the historical experiences of other regions that form the point of reference for historians who study Western nations/regions generally. While some interdisciplinary conceptualizations have been introduced into the study of the late-sixteenth to mid-nineteenth century institutional and political history of Japan, none has yet proven satisfactory, perhaps because we present the terms – federalism, compound state, etc. – without much discussion of the model we have in mind and without sustained efforts to place them in broad conceptual and comparative context.[176]

I have suggested that (mostly) English language literature presents us with the image of a period often referred to by its ruling house's names (Oda, Toyotomi, and Tokugawa) but that lacks a strong identity in its entirety and lacks ties that link its beginning to its end in the political sphere. Indeed, the period's personality is rather split. The story of Tokugawa political history appears to move directly from robust youth in the early seventeenth century to doddering old age without the benefit of a period of maturity in between.

The structure of the *Cambridge History of Japan* appears to have codified the split. The structure of the volumes treats the late sixteenth

through eighteenth centuries as one unit, and nineteenth and twentieth century Japan as another. The latter part of what was typically treated as a single, pre-modern period is cut out and appended to the modern era as explanatory prologue. In combination with the emerging, more somber evaluations of the Meiji reformation, the nineteenth century increasingly takes on the cast of the "early modern" period" that is manifested in the twentieth century.

The self-descriptive statements sent to me by people who want to join two professional electronic networks I administer (Early Modern Japan Network and H-Japan) reinforce this image of periodization. It is not uncommon for people to say something along the lines of, "I am a specialist in early modern Japanese history. I'm working on Meiji popular movements," or "I specialize in early modern literature and I'm working on late nineteenth century novels." Often graduate students or recent Ph.D.s author these notes, suggesting a consciousness of periodization that is different from that seen twenty years ago. Have they quietly rejected the old periodization as intellectually vapid or have the just never engaged this issue directly during their careers? Regardless of the answer to this question, their statements suggest a definition of "early modern" that extends well into Meiji at the least.

Periodization helps us organize our understanding of history and it should be more than a rigid formula: periodization may legitimately be different when history is viewed from different perspectives. An institutional historian need not employ the same scale in dividing a history as a social historian concerned with Braudelian underlying structures. No scheme is cast in stone. We need not treat pre-Meiji Japan back to the late sixteenth century as a single unit of historical time. We can re-construct our standard models.

The question is how the profession and its individual members go about this process of creating and defining periods, and whether it is undertaken self-consciously.

The discussion here raises two fundamental questions regarding our periodization of "early modern Japan." The first, of course, is whether treating the period from the rise of Oda Nobunaga. Toyotomi Hideyoshi or Tokugawa Ieyasu to the Restoration's eve as a unit of analysis retains

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[176] See, e.g., Philip Brown, review of Ravina's *Land and Lordship* in the *HJAS* 61:2 (December 2001), 428-29.

any utility, at least in the context of political and institutional history. Despite the fact that hegemonic rule and domain structures share some broad characteristics, a number of treatments of the period do not create a very unified picture. Instead, they create a rather segmented one. Can a period that has a scholarly image that lacks a connecting middle stand? The second question is who is going to control the definition of appropriate historical periods? Will it be our colleagues in other fields, or will we find ways to define periods based on the trajectory of Japanese history and then make the efforts needed to defend that conceptualization to our non-Japan colleagues?

Unfinished Business

The problem of the balance between central and local influences (seen in both local studies and the discussion of how to characterize the Tokugawa state), in combination with the pattern of chronological emphases in our studies to date suggests areas in which additional research may be useful. I believe two areas in particular deserve more of our attention.

In the Beginning. First, the period from the rise of Oda Nobunaga through the end of the seventeenth century begs for further investigation. Within this period we have very little study of the adaptation of samurai to the emerging conditions of peace. We have materials that touch on the formal ideological statements of how samurai should act in the new age, but little that deals directly with how the adjustment was made. Analysis of domain house disorders (*oie sōdō*) would help to tell this story, but the issue is broader, involving *rōnin*, factions within domains that were dissatisfied with the limitations the Tokugawa tried to impose on domains, and the like. We have studies of the formation of large domains, Satsuma, Kaga, Tosa, Bizen, Hirosaki, Tokushima, Sendai, and even to some degree the Shogun's domains, but most domains were considerably smaller than these. Do we see somewhat different processes at work in their early institutional and political development? Did they generally have an easier or more difficult time exercising control over their landed retain-

ers? This story not only involves the degree of samurai submission to daimyo control, it also must include study of the relationship of samurai to commoners, study of their role as administrators and managers and as fief holders as well as their role, heretofore neglected, as a standing military force.

Sometimes intimately related to the houshold disturbances is an equally important issue, that of how domains adjusted to a stable relationship with the *bakufu*. Some factions in Kaga, for example, continued to push for more autonomy from the Shogun into the fourth decade of the seventeenth century. In other domains, too, the degree to which different factions were willing to sit in quiet submission is open to question. Were such tensions dealt with only in the context of domain politics, or did the Shogun play an active role? If so, in what ways?

Oie sōdō were also bound up with another source of seventeenth century tension, the disposition of retainer fiefs. While we have gotten comfortable with the image of retainer fiefs being effectively confiscated or controlled by daimyo, work by John Morris (1980, 1988, 1999[177]), Ravina (1999), and Brown (1993) show this process to have been more complicated. The movement was not always a one-way street (Ravina), and even when it was, it might be highly contested (e.g., Kaga), at least in the short run. The degree to which fief-holders retained autonomous powers also varied substantially. All this hints at a dynamic story that remains to be told.

Further, institutional history of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries assumes that a largely homogeneous pattern of district and local administration along with institutions of land rights, corvee and the like were quickly established and changed little. However, this is clearly not the case. In Kaga, village boundaries were redrawn for many villages; district organization and the role of commoners in it changed

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[177] John Morris, "Some Problems Concerning Fiefs in the Edo period," *Transactions of the International Conference of Orientalists in Japan* (Tokyo) 25 (1980) 60-73; "Kinsei ryōshusei shikiron: ka-i ryōshu wo chūshin ni," in J.F. Morris, Shirakawabe Tatsuo and Takano Nobuharu, eds. *Kinsei shakai to chigyōsei*. Shibunkaku 1999, 3-38.

radically from the early years of the domain through mid-century. In areas such as Echigo, evidence indicates that land surveys were conducted in the classic manner and according to standard interpretations these same documents should have created a direct tie between cultivator and specific plots of land. Yet within a year or two villagers were reallocating land under systems that clearly show that such a direct tie was being ignored – if surveyors had attempted to establish it at all.

At the End.   To date, our studies of the Restoration and the movement towards it have focused on the disruption of domain – *bakufu* relations created by Perry and the "opening" of Japan in elite circles.   But the impact of that arrival had a far greater reach.   There is, of course, the sense of curiosity and wonder that commoners experienced in regions where foreigners were housed and traveled, but there is also something quite different: The arrival of unwanted Western ships stimulated an institutional response that reached into many towns and villages across the land, the strengthening of coastal defenses.   At the pinnacle of power strengthening defenses required policy decisions and an element of coordination that the Shogunate had not been required to exercise since the mid-seventeenth century. Did the experience reinforce dissatisfaction with the Shogunate, or do we find fairly effective inter-domain cooperation alongside a dissatisfaction that grows for other reasons?   At the local level, in the coastal regions that were the first line of defense, districts and villages had to be mobilized to provide materials and create or refurbish defense infrastructure.   Were local resources strained and hostilities generated by this process? How did local populations respond?   Do we see evidence of an emerging nationalism or simply a conservative nativism at the local level?

In the Middle: The middle years of the Tokugawa institutional setting also deserve much more attention, as I have already noted.   The response of domains (including the *bakufu*), districts and villages to increased demand, dwindling supplies of natural resources, and slowing increases in per hectare crop output form one significant area of concern.   Some of the re-

sponses to these pressures led to efforts to radically modify existing institutions, once again including the legal structure of landholding rights (Tōdō and Kaga domain come to mind: both toyed with and began policies of a wealth-redistributing land reform).   Luke Roberts (1998) has raised the specter of Osaka merchants being able to keep even a large daimyo like the Yamauchi under their thumbs even though daimyo renunciation of indebtedness to Osaka merchants has been widely recognized.   How much did merchant power compromise the financial and fiscal flexibility of domains in dealing with budgetary red ink?   How effective in relieving budget pressures were domain monopolies and how did they interact with non-monopoly enterprises as the economy diversified in the eighteenth century?   One eighteenth-century *bakufu* response to budget problems was to reduce expenditures by having villagers foot the bill for officials who came to their villages on official business.   While we can sympathize with that motivation, it also seems to open the door to bribery by villagers and extortion by officials. Did the quality and effectiveness of rural administration decline with this reform?

In addition to issues associated with the growing tension between population, resources, and the costs of domain administration, a variety of problems, most common in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, revolve around domain-*bakufu* and domain-subject relationships. Scholars have long assumed that the ability of the hegemons to shift domains like potted plants meant that Shogunal laws could be enforced through fief confiscation and transfer, yet examination of fief confiscation (*kaieki*) and transfer (*tenpu*) data suggests a much less clear-cut picture (Brown 1993; Ravina 1999).   Evidence for the effectiveness of the *bakufu* inspectors (*junkenshi*) as an enforcement tool is also very limited.   Especially in the seventeenth century, supposition of its effectiveness seems to supersede actual analysis of more than an anecdotal nature.   How did the *bakufu* employ these tools? Were they really used to ensure enforcement of Shogunal edicts?   Were they used for some other purpose?   Were fief transfers considered by either Shogunal officials or the transferred daimyo to be punishment, even when the new fief was the

same size or only somewhat larger than the old? What impact did fief transfers have on administrative control over commoners? Did villagers and townsmen have more latitude in practice to develop and elaborate their own institutions and to thwart the will of their overlords in regions where transfers were relatively common?

Both from the standpoint of academic interest and for its potential to put a human face on the era, works that focus on major figures (whether formally cast as biographies or not), would be useful. Tokugawa Yoshimune is an obvious candidate, but one who, to date, has not been the sole focus of even one study. As noted above, Tsunayoshi has been the subject of several articles, but we have no comprehensive effort. Aspects of the careers of such figures have a bearing on a number of the issues we have raised above (e.g., *bakufu* - domain relations, reform eras). The careers of early daimyo have only been encompassed by studies devoted to other subjects (e.g., castle-town development and rural control), but more direct approaches might reveal a good deal about the stability or instability of their relationship to the Shoguns in the middle to late seventeenth century.

Mid-period domain reforms touched on by Ravina and Roberts raise the question of how representative *bakufu* reforms are, but in so doing, also encourage us to ask what the pattern of diffusion of institutional innovation actually was. Was the *bakufu* actually the innovator of reforms, an image with which we are left largely by default? Or was it a gatherer and re-transmitter of information about policies and institutions from across the land? Or perhaps the mechanisms of transmission involved contact among daimyo and their subordinates in Edo or the national kitchen, Osaka, while visiting or resident on other business?

One way, perhaps, to tie these political questions and a number of other non-political phenomena together might be to follow the current practice in Western studies and treat the "long" eighteenth century as a unit of analysis. In the political realm there are a number of direct parallels. As in eighteenth century France, the century was one of experimentation with efforts at centralization that often failed. Like many European nations, at both the national and local

levels (the estates of the nobility) leaders confronted the challenge of squeezing revenues from their subjects sufficient to meet the expenditures they felt essential. Challenged by new market forces, local populations engaged in increased levels of political protest. In the Americas, Europe and Japan, this century (especially considered as a "long" century) combines "feudal" elements from the past, with elements that lay a foundation for nineteenth-century transformations and shifting balances among them over time, even when they are not directly linked to "modernization."

A "long" eighteenth century has been something of a center of gravity for two recent comparative experiments in which Japan plays a role. The first, directly derived from a transformation of "modernization theory," one that conceives of multiple "modernities," asks if Japan, along with China, Europe and South Asia, shared in the growth of some sort of "public sphere," an arena in which private and official realms meet, giving the non-official realm some influence on the official in some way that was acknowledged by the members of these societies.[178] Answers to this overall question and related issues are not presumed, and there is not any consensus, but as a focus for investigation and discussion, this problem offers possibilities for constructive engagement of Japan specialists with those who study other regions of the early modern world. The second thrust springs from Southeast Asian specialists' efforts re-envision the development of pre-colonial societies in the region and has been brought into explicit focus by Victor Lieberman.[179] Like the old "modernization theory" of the fifties and sixties, the issues of increasing "convergence" and "uniformity" are present here, but treatments are much more sensitive to the ways in which the two tendencies may co-exist rather than result in the extinction of one by the

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[178] See the essays in *Deadalus* 127:3 (Summer 1998), "Early Modernities."

[179] Victor Lieberman, ed., *Beyond Binary Histories: Re-imagining Eurasia to c. 1830*, Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1999, with an essay on Japan by Mary Elizabeth Berry, "Was Early Modern Japan Culturally Integrated?" 103-37.

other.   There is also a distinct effort to avoid the essentializing that many find in the early modernization studies.   Although concerned with issues of proto-nationalism, international connectivity, and government policy, the issues that spring from Lieberman's to give this comparative approach a focus extend well beyond the sphere of the political and institutional.

These approaches do not resolve the problems associated with comparative studies of history, but they represent a more nuanced approach than that witnessed by some of the mid-twentieth century practitioners of the genre.   These efforts are subject to much debate and their potential to draw meaningful cross-cultural conclusions are subject to considerable question.   Nonetheless, to the degree early modern specialists in political and institutional history engage these discussions, we take advantage of opportunities to re-consider the nature of Japan's historical experience while simultaneously building bridges to non-Japan colleagues that can help demonstrate to them the intellectual value of our work.   Considered in this light, study of mid-period "early modern" Japan may lead to a more robust, more unified scholarly image of the period as a whole than we have had heretofore.[180]

Concluding Remarks

Any suggestions for further investigation such as these necessarily reflect personal experience and preferences and this list is only intended to be suggestive.

The expansion of the field, both in terms of the number of scholars and the volume of publications over the past quarter century are very exciting to see.   We may now have a critical mass of scholars to generate perspectives independent of the "modernization" orientation that has been so prominent to date.   We may have a foundation for thinking about the late sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries on their own terms as

well as a movement toward Meiji, a foundation for recognizing the retention of significant "traditional" or even "new-but-not-modern" elements within the Tokugawa polity.   Our sensitivity to the complexity of Tokugawa political and institutional history is enhanced by the better preparation of scholars and their increased willingness to exploit manuscript documents and other non-traditional materials that scholars heretofore have shunned as too arcane or difficult.   All of this is very promising.

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[180] At least in adopting such a focus the Japan field would join the growing ranks of participants in the internationally affiliated scholarly societies that focus specifically on the eighteenth century (e.g., the American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies, International Society for Eighteenth Century Studies).

The People of Tokugawa Japan: The State of the Field in Early Modern Social/Economic History

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Early Modern Social and Economic History of Japan: The Tokugawa Legacy

Post war historians of Japanese socio-economic history argued extensively in favor of a Japanese version of the Whig perspective on history in which practically everything in the Tokugawa early modern leads to the modern age of Japan as an indigenous and stable evolution. Many of us in the field who are dealing with the Tokugawa period have also been greatly intrigued by the politicized question of Japanese global power or at least its dramatic beginnings with the 1868 Meiji Restoration, a kind of a revolution that catapulted Japan alone among the countries of Asia into the company of the great powers of the West. It is therefore not surprising that in her recent accomplished geo-historical study of the social and economic processes of proto-industry in early modern Japan, Kären Wigen begins with similar concerns in her recent book, *The Making of a Japanese Periphery*, *1750-1920*, (1995). In discussing the peripheralization of the Ina Valley in South Shinano an arena that links the Tokugawa and post Meiji periods through the perspective of global market forces, Wigen comments aptly, "Japanese development poses one of the more insistent puzzles of modern history: how an isolated and decentralized state, far from the European heartland, managed to metamorphose in a few short decades into a formidable global power."[1] While the Whig interpretation suggests continuity and a smooth transition, Wigen suggests a sharp break.

Here I treat the socio-economic history of the "early modern," covering roughly the years 1600-1868, the Tokugawa period through the Meiji Restoration, but the broad question remains, how does one assess the relative balance between breaking points and discontinuities as we move from "early-modern" to "modern" Japan? For a long time, post-war scholarship in English joined the two periods so much so that it seemed as if the Tokugawa age was in a "Catholic marriage," not only with the Meiji developments as its origin, preparation, and transition, but also with post-1945, contemporary Japan. The major controversy that underlines post-war research on socio-economic history has been whether the Tokugawa legacy acted as a critical factor causing the "failure" of modernity in Japan or as a positive factor that illuminates the "successes" of a Japanese style of modernity.

My generally chronological overview of the major issues and interpretations in the field of socio-economic history will assess studies that focus primarily on the commoner population of Tokugawa Japan. Ever since the nineteen fifties scholars have allocated special weight to the history of peasants and landlords in rural Japan for it is in this rural setting that the major conceptual arguments about Japan's Tokugawa experience have developed in a comparative framework, juxtaposed with the history of the West as a divergent form of feudalism or as the early foundation of the "modern." Beginning in the eighties, the field has advanced our understanding of the lives of ordinary people beyond the rice fields. The history of merchants and artisans in urban everyday life, the understanding of the culture of sexuality and gender, the social and economic world of the forest and the seas in the Japanese archipelago have followed *en suite* to enrich our knowledge of the variety and complexity of Tokugawa society.

Scholars agree that Tokugawa people had to operate within well-defined boundaries of class, status, and power, partly because of the relative constancy of Japan's geographic borders and the dearth of serious violent challenge to the order for some 250 years. The main outline of the socio-economic history of the population living under a feudal ethos has been described quite aptly since Sir George Sansom's *History of Japan*. But post-war research in English has become increasingly capable of presenting the complex inner workings of how people lived, and the procedures they activated within the institutions of

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[1] Kären Wigen, *The Making of a Japanese Periphery 1750-1920*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995, p. xiii.

the Tokugawa body politic.

The question of what constitutes the social and economic "early modern " in Japanese history is problematic as "early modern" is a term that, in common usage, assumes the history of Europe as the underlying determinant of the concept. What historians recognize as "early modern" in world history covers the period from about the fifteenth century to the eighteenth century and invariably takes developments in Europe from the Renaissance through the Enlightenment, and the early Industrial and Scientific Revolutions as the primary mover in the generation of early modern conditions.   There is a continuous debate in world history about whether episodes comparable to the historical experience of Europe took place in other parts of the world.   Common denominators used by historians in general (including those who study Japan) as indicative of the early modern temper of any society include the following: First, historians indicate that an the increasing concentration of political power in a centralized form of government (European "absolutism") tended to replace the grass-roots hereditary power of local magnates who were typically connected to central authority in a federative framework that was dependent upon feudal ties of vassalage or some other form of reciprocal dependency. Second, the same early modern process is generally held to be in line with the more widespread circulation of goods and services seen in Europe, the emergence of a "commercialized market economy" domestically, and "mercantilism" in international contexts.   Finally, the early modern era also witnesses increasing numbers of towns and cities that reflect a social and economic culture of urbanity.   In European history, the free towns and townsmen of the early modern era in European states are seen to be source for the political and social evolution of civil society and our notions and traditions of freedom and liberty.

In Japanese history, the English literature suggests the early modern begins politically when the national rulers of the country beginning with Hideyoshi in the sixteenth century started to take direct measures to exercise the authority to tax and oversee the village administration of the peasants. Centralization in Japan took place as establishing domain government authority over all of the population.   By the early seventeenth century, the Tokugawa Shoguns and local daimyo domain lords completed the establishment of the *kokudaka* total yield and tax allotment registers and the *shūmon aratame chō* registers of religious affiliation for each village. For historians dealing with the Tokugawa period as "early modern," both developments form the basic indicators of "early modernity" by identifying procedures with which the social and the economic processes of Japanese history were closely connected to political authority until the end of the Tokugawa period.

What especially marks the Japanese experience in this narrative as reflective of early modern processes is that governmental measures to control the population and regular inflow of tax went hand in hand with social measures to establish hereditary status distinctions that divided the population into the politically privileged ruling class of samurai, and the commoner population who were sub-divided into peasants, artisans, and merchants. Hideyoshi's Sword Hunt (1588), which banned the use of arms by the commoners and relegated that privilege to the warrior class, is taken as the seminal event in this freezing of the classes. The edict was followed by the Tokugawa removal of samurai from the countryside into urban centers, where they became the standing armies and bureaucratic personnel of the Tokugawa and daimyo governments.

Second World War scholarship had been critical of the Japanese experience as a negative, divergent process filled with hallmarks of her failure to become truly early modern in the idealized European historical narrative of a politically liberal process that was economically nurtured by the emergence of free market "capitalism" and socially determined by the rise of the urban bourgeoisie and the rights and a free citizenry. This negative view of Tokugawa Japan was best represented in E. H. Norman's classic study of the origins of the modern state.   Norman argued that the combination of centralized power with a rigid social hierarchy under a military class was a special problem of Japanese early modernity that diverged from the European experience. For those such as Norman who saw Japan in light of Pearl Harbor, the Tokugawa experience created a legacy of feudal elements in political organization and social rigidities that originated with the Sword Hunt and similar measures under "central-

ised feudalism." These legacies were incorporated in the new political organization and were the basis for Meiji state formation. The persistence of Japanese centralized feudalism into the nineteenth century was the basis for the authoritarian character of modern Japan that led to militarism and imperialism; the distortion of the early modern in Japanese history explained the failure of democracy and the rise of fascism. Even recently, the doyen of Japanese history, William G. Beasley commented that the authoritarian social and economic measures which we have described as the mark of the "early modern" in Japanese history, "tried to stop the clock of history" and that the feudal ethos of government continued throughout the era, implying that Japan's early modern experience was unlike the European one that charts the "clock of history" in our minds.[2]

This was the standard view of Tokugawa history for a long time, particularly until the advent of post-war research that re-evaluated the whole phenomena in a more positive light. Post war scholarship has countered the Norman view first by a conceptualization of Japanese social and economic history that ascribes a special, privileged and positive role to the emergence of the peasant village community and its economic growth. With the dissolution of the ancient *shōen* (manorial estates), increases in agricultural productivity came about through the application of improved irrigation and better methods of cultivation that can be traced back to the 13th century, but it is really from the sixteenth century on that autonomous village communities become the basis of agrarian social and economic life. Encouraged by the Pax Tokugawa, peasants regularly produced, generation after generation, an increase in yields and undertook significant expansion in the acreage under cultivation (paddy fields under cultivation increased from around 946,000 *chō* in 1450, to 2,970,000 *chō* around 1720.[3] This increased output underlay population growth from an estimated ten to twelve million in

the later sixteenth century to about thirty million by 1700. This permitted the increased market orientation of the economy (the second hallmark of "early modernity") with all its positive and negative components. Historians have viewed this development as a generally "positive" factor that helped dismantle the grip of centralized feudalism on the society and economy.

A related issue that attracted significant attention has been the sixteenth-century emergence of castle towns that provided the initial urban setting which encouraged the expansion of commercial activities within and beyond domain borders. Whether or not these castle-towns "could" become the bastions of political liberty and civil society (as in the European experience) while under the firm control of the military ruling class, for example, constituted one of the major questions concerning the character of early modern Japanese history.

Finally, it is difficult to decide which events end the "early modern" era in Japanese history given the selective definition given above. A personal interpretation suggests that certainly the institution of the Meiji land survey in 1869, and the new Land Tax of 1872, in addition to the abolishing of the feudal laws concerning the social status traditions of the Tokugawa era during the same years, stand out as dramatic events which end the "early modern" in legal and institutional terms in Japanese history. Yet, research also indicates that the social and economic dynamics of everyday life and production appear to have lasted well beyond the 1868 Meiji Restoration.

Rural History: The Peasant Village and Agrarian Origins

Early post-war research produced excellent works that treated the history of peasants, merchants, or local history with an emphasis on tracing Japan's rocky road to modernity beneath the samurai world of governmental institutions and political power. The regional study of Bizen by John W. Hall portrayed the local conditions in the context of regional power from early times

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[2] W. G. Beasley, *The Japanese Experience: A Short History of Japan,* London: Phoenix Press, 1999, p. 152.

[3] One *chō* is about one hectare. Conrad Totman, *A History of Japan,* Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 2000, p. 233.

through the early Tokugawa period.[4] William Chambliss's Chiaraijima village study brought to life for the first time the everyday in a peasant community – the intricacies of the social, economic, and inner-village institutional worlds.[5] James Nakamura revealed the concealed Tokugawa production that underlay the Meiji economy.[6] For the earlier period, Charles Sheldon traced the "Rise of the Merchant Class" in his study of the Tokugawa period, a study that remained for a long time the only major work that addressed the problematic impact of the merchants in Japan's early modern and modern development. Tetsuo Najita's seminal article on Oshio Heihachirō in the Craig and Shively volume, *Personality in Japanese History*, stands as the singular case of a study of an individual rebel who was not a peasant.[7] These were milestones in the scholarship of early-modern/modern Japan that shifted our focus to the world below the sea of a dominant concern for the modernist impetus scholars located in the hands of the samurai political leadership.

However, most post war English-language scholarship consisted of studies on the samurai aristocracy, and the modernist agenda was ascribed to the "positive" role of elite institutions in Tokugawa history. This story painted a Japan able to modernize in a way that was a model of stability and evolution, one that was comparable to Europe, viable and constructive rather than destructively revolutionary. This was a sharp contrast to the critical appraisal of the Norman generation. The classic series produced by the Conference on Modern Japan (published by Princeton

University Press in six volumes from 1965-1971) represents the parameters of the argument. The series incorporates the scholarly research of a whole generation of Japan scholars: John W. Hall, Donald Shively, Marius B. Jansen, William Lockwood, Ronald P. Dore, Robert E. Ward, James W. Morley, Edwin Reichauer, and others. The scholarship evaluated the scope of Japanese history from the Tokugawa to the post-war era from the vantage point of modernization theory and stood in critical opposition to contemporary Japanese scholars such as Maruyama Masao, Toyama Shigeki and Kawashima Takeyoshi.

Within this context, the Tokugawa tradition and its legacy in the modern era emerged in a better light during the nineteen sixties and early nineteen seventies than that in which it had been cast by historians such as Norman. One has to note that this was primarily reflective of the post-war scholarship of the United States. This perspective was part of a larger debate in the States that constructed a positive image of Japan as a successful model of modernization for the "free world," one where native tradition gave birth to European-like processes without the need for imitation. Donald Shively commented, "On the surface Japan appears to have turned away from her past traditions to follow Western models. But a close examination of the individual cases dealt with here reveals that the general product owed more than might be suspected to the quality of Japanese tradition."[8] The publication of Robert Bellah's *Tokugawa Religion*, traced a Japanese form of Protestant ethic in Tokugawa Japan. Subsequently, Albert M. Craig's seminal work on Chōshū in the Meiji Restoration pointed out the strength of the samurai feudal elements that enabled the "power of the Meiji state to respond successfully to the challenge of the West."[9] Herbert Bix reminds us astutely of the atmosphere back then with his opening line in *Peasant Protest in Japan 1590-1884* (1986), that just after World War II, "scholarly writing by Westerners

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[4] John Whitney Hall, *Government and Local Power in Japan 500-1700: A Study Based on Bizen Province,* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996 (reprint).

[5] William Chambliss, *Chiaraijima Village: Land Tenure, Taxation, and Local Trade, 1811-1884,* Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1964.

[6] James Nakamura, *Agricultural Production and the Economic Development of Japan 1873-1922,* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966.

[7] Tetsuo Najita, "Oshio Heihachirō (1793-1837)" in Albert M. Craig, and Donald Shively, eds. *Personality in Japanese History*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1970.

[8] Donald H. Shively, ed., *Tradition and Modernization in Japanese Culture*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971, p. xiii.

[9] Albert M. Craig, *Chōshū in the Meiji Restoration*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967, p. 353.

on Japan centered largely on its great tradition of elite politics and high culture. Interest in the vast majority who were peasants and workers was slow to develop."[10]

There were significant exceptions. Thomas Smith, whose seminal *Agrarian Origins of Modern Japan* (1959), is the first postwar study which looked at the people, translated mostly at this stage as the peasantry, on their own terms, arguing that peasants contributed to modernity not just in terms of surplus and economic value, but also socially. The Tokugawa peasants of Smith's study adapted themselves to the dictates of the market and proceeded to construct a productive agrarian economy and rural industry through improvements in technology and methods of cultivation. Most significant is his argument about social change. The social mode of production shifted from the extended family cooperative to the individual nuclear family. Smith's emphasis on the break-up of the old and the consequent release of energies afforded by high social mobility in the countryside, also provided the source of political conflict that challenged the traditional village power structure. Smith concludes with an image of rural Japan that serves as the training ground for the modern laborer, entrepreneur, and politician in the new Japan. The village is the progenitor of the social and economic dynamic in the modern era.[11]

Studies of Rebellion and Conflict

The larger paradigm of Tokugawa socio-economic history is the continuing debates over the relative prominence of poverty and subsistence-level existence versus rising standards of living and economic growth in the villages, and over the role of demographic patterns which can be interpreted differently depending on which interpretation a scholar follows. The debate broke out with the major studies of Susan Hanley and Kozo Yamamura, which followed the significant

arguments of Thomas Smith and James Nakamura. These studies mapped out a Tokugawa history of agrarian growth, commercialization, and the accumulation of surplus in a concealed economy. Kozo Yamamura outlined the decline in samurai income, a trend that led many to join commoners and engage in cottage industry and other kinds of employment.[12] Hanley has furthered the "rising living standards" perspective in *Everyday Things in Premodern Japan* (1997), by arguing that standards of physical well being – sanitary conditions and efficient use of resources – in a material culture that created a general quality of life for Tokugawa peasants on a par with that of the English workers during the industrial revolution.[13] She argues against the formal estimates of Japan's per capita income on the eve of pre-war industrialization, and is critical of the crude measurement of per capita income used by mainstream economic analysis. She argues that it is an inappropriate standard, pointing to the absence of goods traded in the international market and, more importantly, cultural preferences and changing tastes within Japan's pre-modern culture.

The argument of those in the accumulation-of-surplus-and growth camp stresses the statistical revelation of a concealed surplus resulting from agrarian growth and the inability of the early modern state to revise the tax structure to capture gains from the growing economy – an act accomplished later in draconian fashion under the Meiji Restoration. If we accept this premise, the Tokugawa people achieved an improvement in living conditions through an "Industrious Revolution," to adopt Hayami Akira's well-known terminology. All these factors are seen to have sustained a growing population until the end of the eighteenth century, and increases in commoners' wealth continued, albeit on uneven terms, with

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[10] Herbert P. Bix, *Peasant Protest in Japan 1590-1884*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986, p. xiii.

[11] Thomas C. Smith, *Agrarian Origins of Modern Japan*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1959.

[12] Kozo Yamamura, *A Study of Samurai Income and Entrepreneurship*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974; Susan B. Hanley and Kozo Yamamura, *Economic and Demographic Change in Preindustrial Japan 1600-1868*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977.

[13] Susan Hanley, *Everyday Things in Premodern Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997, p. 21.

the very well off coexisting with those clearly impoverished.[14]

Given the "attraction" of discovering a gradual tax decline relative to the increased agrarian production in addition to rising commercial and industrial income, the growth argument has still needed to acknowledge the fragility of conditions for most and the class differences between landlords/wealthy peasants and tenants, as well as the poverty of significant sections of the peasant population and the vulnerability of the bulk of the producers and city dwellers to fluctuating ecological and market conditions. The debate reflects issues beyond Tokugawa history, e.g., whether the Industrial Revolution, starting with the West, has brought with it an immediate rise in the standard of living or any benefits at all for the majority of the people.

The two opposing views, one stressing growth-oriented Tokugawa social behaviour, the other poverty, often emphasize different aspects of the same phenomenon – market fluctuations. In Takaino, the very same peasants who presumably were making tidy sums in the eighteen sixties producing silkworm egg cards for the international market were listed as destitute on the eve of the 1871 Nakano uprising because of a collapse in the export market. As Edward Pratt indicates, this volatility was typical, even for villagers who engaged only in domestic commerce before the opening of international trade.[15]

For critics of the growth perspective, the impoverished members of a Tokugawa society riven by class contradictions and increasing tenantization become the exploited base of cheap labor that marks the crisis-ridden body politic of early modern Japan. Those who assume this perspective point to the practice of *mabiki* (infanticide) as a sign of the inability of the average peasant family to survive the market forces and the widening, glaring gap between the rich and poor. Totman projects a significant challenge to the rising-expectations-and-growth model by firmly pointing his finger at the increase in self-exploitation of human labor. In his critical review of studies of Tokugawa peasants, he reacts to the use of the language of extreme rationalization of free-market economism employed by some scholars who interpret infanticide as voluntary birth control.[16] In his study of Akita forestry, Totman also points to the fundamental question of what prompts humans to act at all, and what level of ecological disaster must befall a society before it is moved to confront its problems. The depletion of the Akita forest in northwest Honshu resulting from population pressure and the need for timber to support urban growth could be reversed only after the trauma of the Temmei famine (1781-88) forced commoners and authorities to take significant reforestation measures during the nineteenth century.[17] Such analyses provide further evidence of the subsistence-level existence of many Japanese peasants who frequently succumbed to the forces of nature in famines, earthquakes, floods, and epidemics as well as fluctuations of a commercialised economy. In such conditions, even small shifts made the difference between survival and death.

None of the scholars working in the field have solved the issues of growth, poverty, conflict, and their mutual relationship to perfect satisfaction, nor has either side, although opinion appears to lean toward acknowledgment of the primacy of growth in the market economy. So the question remains: Does the growth in the market economy engender an improvement in the conditions of commoners, albeit at unequal levels, or is it the actual cause of increased poverty and class contradictions. I find that in the case of Takaino, economic shifts helped the traditionally poor mountain peasants attain a degree of independence as taxpayers. I also think that the of poor

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[14] On demographic issues, see Satomi Kurosu's review of recent literature in *Early Modern Japan: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 10:1 (Spring 2002), pp. 3-21.

[15] *Japan's Proto-industrial Elite: The Economic Foundations of the Gōnō*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1999.

[16] Conrad Totman, "Tokugawa Peasants: Win, Loose, Draw?" *Monumenta Nipponica* 41:4 (1986): 457-476.

[17] Conrad Totman, *The Origins of Japan's Modern Forests: The Case of Akita,* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1984; Conrad Totman, *The Green Archipelago: Forestry in Pre-industrial Japan*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989.

tenant and *mizunomi* ("landless") peasants in many Shinano villages who are frequently seen as the product of recent social and economic contradictions, were not the social products of late Tokugawa market forces but had been there from the beginning as part of an old-fashioned mode of land tenure. At least in Takaino, most *nauke* (peasants who received "names" and were listed in village land registers) had been *mizunomi* originally and had gained sufficient "status" over time by expanding their economic assets to become registered peasants.

Some consensual points emerge from the debate about the nature of the socio-economic change in the Tokugawa society. First, I think all would agree that the formation of a new socio-economic order was "married" to the move toward political centralization and the foundations of both the national government, the Tokugawa *bakufu*, and the domain polities in the early sixteenth century. Hence, a study of the socio-economic layer in Tokugawa Japan cannot be divorced from the political history of the country.[18] Second, the fundamental structure of the Tokugawa *modus vivendi* with the people regarding taxes and the implementation of social controls may have been shaken by conflict at times, but the institutions themselves remained intact. If the special form of centralization in the federative framework of the *Baku-han* order is the thematic concern of the debate on early modern political history, how people operated within its remarkably "frozen" structure of *de facto* and *de jure* boundaries constitute the foundation within which scholars debate in the socio-economic realm.

There are also some agreed-upon "building blocks" of the debate. We know that the land surveys and *kenchi-chō* cadastral registers of *kokudaka*, total yield, and *shumon aratame-chō* registers of religious affiliation established a stable system of controls over a taxpayer peasantry. The registration of the total population in a closed system of class and status between the samurai, peasant, artisan, merchant, and subgroups such as the outcastes constituted a static social environ-

ment where, with some exceptions, social mobility between the classes through wealth, marriage, or merit was no longer possible. For the historians it is the inner village contradictions that appear to be the only source for mobility and conflict, representing the "catalyst" of "historical action".

This was also a remarkably non-violent society in contrast to its contemporaries in Europe or Asia. After all, there were no wars. The removal of the samurai from land, and their transformation into an urban military-bureaucratic class in service of the domain and Tokugawa governments, and the demilitarization of the peasantry resulted in the elimination of armed warfare and a stable political and military environment. This state of affairs was one major reason for the inability of the Tokugawa peasants to win dramatic victories against the ruling class. Nor were they the subjects or the objects of extreme bloodshed and "religious/ethnic cleansing" such as the armed warfare during the Peasant War in Germany or the Taiping Rebellion in China. Finally, we must note that the samurai constituted an unusually high proportion of the total population, close to 10 percent, which implies that no matter how flexible the praxis of law and authority may be, Tokugawa subjects were under the control of a very large armed military power.

There were further constraints in the socio-economic sphere. The mode of production of the Tokugawa producer was determined, constrained if you will, by "self-exploitation" of the human body and the collective solidarity of the family-community network. Tokugawa peasants and laborers did not have available to them extensive labor-energy of draft animals for farm work, nor the low cost camel or donkey for transportation (although the horse was used for transporting goods in some regions). This meant that increases in productivity depended upon better use of resources, innovations in technology (limited) and dissemination of existing know-how. But it also meant that producers had to increase working hours and concentrate on close regulation of the individual and the collective to get the maxi-

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[18] James White, *Ikki: Social Conflict and Political Protest in Early Modern Japan*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995, p. 63.

mum results.[19]

Nonetheless, the society also faced several crises: three major famines, the Kyōhō famine (1732-33), the Temmei famine (1783-87), and the Tempō famine (1832-36). Induced by years of adverse climatic conditions and natural disasters such as volcanic eruptions, floods, earthquakes, the Temmei and Tempō especially were periods of widespread social upheaval. And hundreds of thousands, possibly a million died of starvation around the 1788 famine. These crises became arenas of violent confrontation between the countryside and the cities with their commoner and samurai elites.[20]

Recent studies of early modern social and economic history explore the history of the praxis within the above "building blocks " of the debate, and we are now able to see better the procedural manner in which the population acted within the limits of the system. The emphasis now is on seeing not just how the Tokugawa population increased their labors' output, but also how they manipulated the existing customs of taxation, and put into practice the written and unwritten body of customary law.

As elsewhere, holders of political power in Japan never "intended" to give up the existing exploitative structure, but in the case of the Tokugawa *bakufu*, recent research confirms its inability to radically change the tax customs to benefit the center. By its very terms of power, the *bakufu* in Shinano for example, had to be somewhat lax and in the long run incapable of significantly increasing governmental exploitation of the producers no matter how draconian the methods.[21] Philip Brown outlines the practical constraints on early Tokugawa land taxation in his article on annual versus fixed assessments in the Kaga domain. In another article, he introduces discussion of the mismeasure of land in land surveying in the Tokugawa period.[22]

Seen in a cumulative manner, starting with the discussion of a gradual decline in taxation by Smith and a similar but less obvious surmise by Chambliss about Chiaraijima, the study of the structure of tax payment and its time-series still constitute the single available tool with which to grasp the nature of early modern exploitation of producers.[23] The fight over taxes between those who pay and those who collect is a litmus test of how much political power from the center was capable of grasping the resources of the economy.

Most would therefore agree by now that the *de facto* tax rate of the Tokugawa *bakufu tenryō* in an average year was only 20 percent of the total yield (and maybe lower). That the additional burden was placed on the population through *goyōkin* ("thank you money", the term used for extraordinary levies, nominally loans) transport costs, and so on is all the more understandable in view of the limitation on raising land taxes to any significant degree. This situation also explains the stiff opposition to these extra levies especially in times of distress. But there were limits to how much the *bakufu* could extract through extra levies as well. Furushima, who actually does not take the Tokugawa period overall yield increase into consideration in his article in the early modern Japan volume of the Cambridge history, still provides a good example of the Tokugawa gov-

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[19] Some authors declare that this displaced leisure time, but I am not sure that we can trace the notion of leisure that is specific to our age back to the early modern age so easily.

[20] On the other hand Satomi Kurosu, in her bibliographic essay cited above, has shown us that contemporary research in the history of Tokugawa demographic trends has a "nuanced approach" which detects regional differences, followed by sustainable population growth that starts again in the nineteenth century in regions, especially in central Japan, with "advanced" commercialization and relatively higher living standards.

[21] Selcuk Esenbel, *Even the Gods Rebel: The Peasants of Takaino and the 1871 Nakano Uprising*, Ann Arbor: Association of Asian Studies Monographs 57, 1998.

[22] Philip C. Brown," The Mismeasure of Land: Land Surveying in the Tokugawa Period" *Monumenta Nipponica*. 42:2 (1987): 115-155; "Practical Constraints on Early Tokugawa Land Taxation: Annual Versus Fixed Assessments in Kaga Domain" *Journal of Japanese Studies* 14:2 (1988): 369-401.

[23] Thomas C. Smith, "The Land Tax in the Tokugawa Period" *Journal of Asian Studies* 18:1 (1958): 3-19.

ernment's tax dilemma. Furushima provides the 1844 *bakufu* budget revenue figure of a total of 4,011, 760 *ryō* (the rice price was roughly l *koku*/ 1 *ryō* for that year); the major portion was provided by the land tax 1,660.000 *ryō*, and most of the rest of the revenue provided by 583,000 *ryō loan*-repayments plus profits from recoinage of 839,000 *ryō*. The 1844 budget indicated that the official *goyōkin* that would be collected from the wealthy producers and merchants was a minor 23,629 *ryō*. Mining provided 62,000 *ryō*, and transportation fees 71,000 *ryō*, both again not close to revenues coming from taxes, loan repayments, and recoinage. The budget also reflects why the government resorted to tinkering with the fiscal system through periodic recoinage, a familiar method of early modern governments elsewhere.[24]

Finally, when we leap to 1868, the Meiji government collected 2 million *ryō*, which was ostensibly in accordance with the formal *kokudaka* obligation of all *tenryō* lands, but the sum was worth only 300,000 *koku* of rice in the market (l *koku* was worth 8 *ryō* in 1868), only a quarter of the value in kind of the 1844 tax revenue, revealing the dire straits of the new regime in graphic terms.[25]

The above may be a somewhat "lean and mean" way to explain our understanding of the taxation framework of the contest between samurai power and the *tenryō* peasantry. In sum, the recent discussions of the peasants' side of the story of Tokugawa Japan have shown an awareness of the limitations of Tokugawa power, especially in the *bakufu* environment.

The late nineteen eighties and the nineteen nineties saw the fruits of what I call the Marcusian generation's earlier interest in ordinary people that revived the "tension-ridden" issues of class conflict in order to highlight the nature of inequity and peasant defiance in Tokugawa society. The list is surprisingly extensive and rather concentrated when one remembers that practi-

cally all are dealing with the conflict issue of the Tokugawa-Meiji transition. It indicates what I think has been the underlying agenda of the conflict scholarship: to present a critical perspective on the question of modern Japan rather than just examining uprisings or revolts: to challenge that "rosy picture" of modernization.

The path breaking articles were those of Irwin Scheiner on "The Mindful Peasant" (1973) and "Benevolent Lords and Honorable Peasants" in *Japanese Thought in the Tokugawa Period* (1978).[26] The first of these was followed by Patricia Sippel, "The Bushū Outburst" (1977) and Donald W. Burton on "Peasant Struggle"(1978).[27] The provocation for the burst of interest that followed probably came (among other sources) from the revival of Norman's works on Japan (spurred by John Dower) that brought back criticism of Japan as an absolutist semi-feudal entity. Then the edited volume by Najita and Koschmann with the splendid title, *Conflict in Modern Japanese History; The Neglected Tradition* (1982) with contributions from Harootunian, Vlastos, Wilson, and others opened up the conflict debate in a full fledged manner. The book's critical perspective places the Meiji Restoration in a setting of dissenting voices from all classes, including the peasant, merchant, and samurai, and – in the Meiji period – labor, intellectuals, and scientists.[28] Mikiso Hane's *Peasants, Rebels, and Outcastes: The Underside of Modern Japan*

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[24] Furushima Toshio. 1991 "The Village and Agriculture During the Edo Period" in John Whitney Hall ed., *The Cambridge History of Japan*: Volume 4, *Early Modern Japan,* New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994, p. 492.

[25] Esenbel, *Gods*, p.148.

[26] Irwin Scheiner, "The Mindful Peasant: Sketches for a Study of Rebellion," *Journal of Asian Studies*. 32:4 (August 1973): 579-91; "Benevolent Lords and Honorable Peasants: Rebellion and Peasant Consciousness in Tokugawa Japan" in Tetsuo Najita and Irwin Scheiner, eds. *Japanese Thought in the Tokugawa Period 1600-1868*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978.

[27] Patricia Sippel, "Popular Protest in Early Modern Japan: The Bushu Outburst," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 37 (December 1977): 273-322; Donald W. Burton, "Peasant Struggle in Japan, 1590-1760," *Journal of Peasant Studies* 5:2 (1978): 135-171

[28] Tetsuo Najita and Victor Koschmann, *Conflict in Modern Japanese History: The Neglected Tradition*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982.

(1982) strongly criticizes the rosy picture of Japan's modernization by shifting attention to the misery, suffering, and exploitation of the population, peasant conflict, dissenting voices, and social discrimination against the outcastes: the "dark picture" that also went into the making of modern Japan.[29]

The subject of Tokugawa-Meiji peasant conflict has inspired a sizable number of general studies and monographs that used narrative sources on Tokugawa uprisings and village documentation. Initially, the question that intrigued scholars such as Herbert Bix was whether the Tokugawa uprisings were revolutionary, following the classic debate on the subject in Japan since the pre-war era. The issue was difficult to pose for it had a tenuous historical base – no peasant-engineered revolution took place in Japan on a par with the revolutions in China and Mexico. Hence, in the Japanese case, the search has been more to decipher revolutionary action or revolutionary discourse that acted as an "energy" or as a force of "progress" in the words of Marxist historian Toyama Shigeki. The social force of peasant conflict is seen to have induced the Meiji Restoration, but the peasant movement remained "strapped" to the reins of power in the hands of the new samurai strata that came to power.

Herbert Bix, whose work on *Peasant Protest in Japan 1590-1884* (1986) introduced a sweeping panorama of the history of Tokugawa uprisings written from a dynamic and energetic perspective contrasts sharply with the single early study by Hugh Borton, *Peasant Uprisings in Japan* (1938), in which he saw uprisings as the "static" reflections of typical peasant revolts born of agrarian crisis within a feudal order. Bix projects a firmly Marxian view that infuses linearity into social history: the Tokugawa phenomenon plays out as the progressive struggles of the peasant against a corrupt feudal order.[30] He stresses the

role of exploitation and injustice that enflamed the Tokugawa peasants to protest.

In a different vein, James White, in his book *Ikki* (1995), covers the whole period of peasant conflict by developing a model of popular contention through statistical analysis of Aoki Koji's data supplemented by his own extensive additions of data. He emphasizes the importance of context in explaining conflict and contends that conflict successfully brought benefits protestors. White's innovative methodology represents a new dimension in the explanation of conflict and brought forth themes that are relatively unfamiliar in peasant uprisings research: self-interest, opportunity, success and reasonable if not "rational" behavior.

Whereas White explains peasant conflict in contemporary social science terms, in *Social Protest and Popular Culture in Eighteenth_Century Japan* (1979), and *Peasant Uprisings in Japan: A Critical Anthology of Peasant Histories*, (1991), Anne Walthall exposes the mentalité of the late eighteenth century Temmei famine period upheavals. In her path-breaking studies of Tokugawa narratives and sources on peasant conflict, Walthall stresses the cultural and ideological components of the subject. Introducing the *Annales* perspective on social history, Walthall's works decipher the commoner's critical view of their Tokugawa betters. In peasant narratives, people such as Tanuma Okitsugu, the *bakufu* official who has been seen as an early modernizer in contemporary research, now surfaces as the exploiting evil culprit of the peasant. These approaches extend our perception of Tokugawa Japan beyond the twentieth-century modernist agenda, which disregards the critical perspective of the contemporaries of Tanuma.[31]

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[29] Mikiso Hane, *Peasants, Rebels, and Outcasts: the Underside of Modern Japan*, New York: Pantheon, 1982.

[30] Herbert P. Bix, *Peasant Protest in Japan 1590-1884*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986; Hugh Borton, *Peasant Uprisings in Japan of*

the Tokugawa Period. Tokyo: Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan, 1938.

[31] James White, *Ikki Social Conflict and Political Protest in Early Modern Japan*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995, pp. 8-24 for the model; Ann Walthall, *Social Protest and Popular Culture in Eighteenth Century Japan*, Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1986; Ann Walthall, Ed. and tr., *Peasant Uprisings in Japan: A Critical Anthology of Peasant Histories*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991.

Stephen Vlastos presents a regional study of the Aizu and Shindatsu uprisings in central Japan in *Peasant Protests and Uprisings in Tokugawa Japan* (1986) with special emphasis on the late Tokugawa *yonaoshi* ("world renewal") rebellions that carried the promise of a new revolutionary vision contemporary with the quagmire of the Meiji Restoration. Much debated as a representation of revolutionary aspirations by the peasants, the *yonaoshi* uprisings are seen to have been a by-product of the effects of international trade, which activated the political role of the small peasant producers of sericulture products for export. Positing the issue within the theoretical debate on peasant conflict between E. P. Thompson (moral economy demands of peasants in a subsistence economy) and Samuel Popkin (rising expectations of rational peasants in a market economy), Vlastos distinguishes the Shindatsu uprisings from the "moral Economy" perspective of E. P. Thompson and the development of that perspective by James C. Scott's analysis of Vietnamese peasant revolts: the Tokugawa peasants were part of the market forces of international trade and their circumstances could not be explained sufficiently with a moral economy paradigm – one which assumes a subsistence economy. However, he considers the late Tokugawa peasant to be extremely vulnerable within a market that entailed a "crisis of subsistence". Vlastos projects the late Tokugawa period as one of intense conflict within the villages, between the rich and poor, that superseded the conflicts between the ruler and the ruled.[32]

While the field of peasant protest is dominated by macro-studies, the study of the peasants of Takaino and the 1871 Nakano uprisings, *Even the Gods Rebel: The Peasants of Takaino and the 1871 Nakano Uprising* (1998), is a micro-study of an uprising that deals with village dynamics in the Takaino area (which organized the Nakano uprising) prior to and during the event. Similar to the Vlastos Shindatsu rising, the Nakano uprising was a *yonaoshi* in the northeast Shinano *bakufu tenryō*. The study looks at everyday village documents that reveal an image of the village in

its ordinary communal praxis, circumstances quite different from that of a village under communal crisis and dissolution we customarily see in studies of uprisings based on government documents and village data that is immediate to the event. Compared to the general tenor of conflict literature, the Takaino study focuses more on the internal dynamics of the Takaino community, a solidarity reconstructed through conflict. It questions the assumptions we have about long-term community dissolution from the outward behaviour of rebels typically described in uprising accounts.[33]

From the perspective of a growth-oriented view, the rising level of conflict in late Tokugawa society needed a new explanation and both White and Esenbel present a growth-oriented explanation for the conflict. White points out the insufficiency of the familiar explanation of conflict as the result of poverty and thankless exploitation. Conflict is not necessarily due to poverty and oppression *per se* but can also be due to competition among producers for more profit and to producer vulnerability coupled with the insistence of rural producers on further inroads into the market and tax system.[34] Esenbel deciphers the overall concealed production in the economy and estimates a gradual decline in the value of taxes in proportion to total production, coming up with an evaluation similar to White's.[35]

Many of the conflict studies cover both the early modern and the modern periods in a continuous manner that carries a risk of finding too many links between the Tokugawa and the Meiji history of conflict. The case study of the peasants of Takaino is a good example of a study of socio-economic forces looking "backwards" into the Tokugawa period from an event that actually took place in 1871.   William Kelly's study of the Shōnai region in the Northwest, *Deference and Defiance in Nineteenth Century Japan (*1986),

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[32] Stephen Vlastos, *Peasant Protests and Uprisings in Tokugawa Japan*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986, pp. 156-167.

[33] Selcuk Esenbel, *Even the Gods Rebel: The Peasants of Takaino and the 1871 Nakano Uprising.* Ann Arbor: Association of Asian Studies Monographs 57, (1998): see pp. 17-20 for the concept of community resilience to social dissolution.

[34] White, *Ikki*, pp. 293-303 for overall argument.

[35] Esenbel, *Even the Gods*, contrast between Chart 1 on p.124 and Chart 2 on p. 128.

focuses on four cases of collective protest in the period 1840-1870, again crossing the Meiji Restoration into the late Tokugawa with a discrete vision toward the future. Finally, Roger Bowen's *Rebellion and Democracy in Meiji Japan: A Study of Commoners in the Popular Rights Movement* (1980) links popular protests in the Meiji period to the popular rights movement.[36]

The debate has been varied, the arguments having their Western counterparts – primarily because of the eclectic use of the paradigms in similar Western studies – ranging from a retake of the classic Marxist paradigm to Tilly's focus on coercive states and communal conflict. Sometimes the English language scholarship on the Tokugawa disturbances risks facilely applying the debates in European history to Japanese data, perhaps an unavoidable deficiency of comparative history. This issue aside, Scott's weapons of the weak, Ladurie's history of ordinary people, the mentalité focus of the *Annales* school, Thompson's perception of a moral economy and Popkin's rational peasant perspectives are among the important sources of inspiration.

The issue of conflict has, I believe, redirected the study of Tokugawa Japan, infusing it with the necessary tension to deconstruct the widely held rosy image of modern Japan. The ideology of modernism had largely removed the conflictual side of human nature, and the modernist description of the Japanese persona had portrayed the average Japanese as devoid of the ability to set the terms for a social contract with power. Conflict literature has helped liberate the Tokugawa period from such perspectives by empowering the commoner, perhaps initially with a degree of over correction, and liberated the period from being the "obedient" servant who provides support and preparation for the modern future.

Limits of Modernity: Proto-Industry and Village Praxis

Interest in the subject of conflict and popular dissent has not disappeared; there is much room for further research especially at the micro/regional level and through anthropological/historical study of the role of religion in conflict.[37] However, contemporary research in early-modern studies has moved beyond the limits of debates on surplus and peasants *per se*, and has unveiled in depth the complexity of early-modern Japan. New studies of the social and economic terrain have increasingly blurred the line between the early modern and the modern by setting limits to the search for modernity in Tokugawa "sources."

Recent studies by Edward Pratt, Kären Wigen, and Herman Ooms present rich, detailed portraits that enable us to understand the inner workings of some of the elements in early modern society previously revealed only in general terms in the English literature. In *Japan's Proto-industrial Elite; The Economic Foundation of the Gōnō*, Pratt analyzes the wealthy peasants, wealthy peasant cultivator/landlords who also engaged in multiple money-generating commercial pursuits. They were also the rural political and social elite. Much admired as the rural entrepreneurs of early modern Japan, the *gōnō* constituted a unique class which combined the roles of landlord, industrialist, financier, and merchant in one class, a role that differed from the experience of Europe during the industrial age when the commercial

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[36] Roger W. Bowen, *Rebellion and Democracy in Meiji Japan: A Study of Commoners in the Popular Rights Movement*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980; William W. Kelly, *Deference and Defiance in Nineteenth Century Japan*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986. Studies by Richard Smethurst on tenancy disputes that took place after the Meiji Restoration into the twentieth century in, *Agricultural Development and Tenancy Disputes in Japan, 1870-1940* (1986); by Michael Lewis on the famous rice riots of 1918, *Rioters and Citizens: Mass Protest in Imperial Japan* (1990); Nimura Kazuo on *The Ashio Riot of 1907 A Social History of Mining in Japan* (1998) focus on conflict as a means of understanding pre-war Modern Japan, but tangentially also provide insights into the previous Tokugawa period as well.

[37] I have noticed that there are some very interesting dissertations (e.g. Elson Eugen Boles, *Rebels, Gamblers and Silk 1860-1890*, Ph.D. 1998 SUNY), and recently the publication of an English translation of Nimura's *Ashio Riot of 1907* reflect the continuous "pull" of the subject.

and industrial classes tended to be different strata and mostly urban.   But in other respects the political economy of the *gōnō* is seen to have been similar to the earlier proto-industrial developments in Europe. Pratt looks at *gōnō* activities across time in the critical industries of tea, sake, and textiles in central and eastern Japan. Rather than firmly situating them as the direct ancestors of the modern entrepreneurs of Japan, in the manner of Shibusawa Eiichi as Smith and others argued, Pratt sees them as the products of a proto-industrial transitional economy.[38]

The book complements a line of studies on proto-industryry starting with Hauser's on the Osaka Kinai region cotton trade (1974), David Howell's study of Hokkaido fishing and fertilizer industries (1995), and Kären Wigen's exploration of the proto-industrial economy in the Shimoina Valley of Shinano (1995).[39]   The perspective shared by Pratt and Wigen is that there were limits to the modernity of the Tokugawa legacy, thus moving them away from earlier scholarship that placed so much emphasis on the causal links of Japan's Tokugawa tradition to modernization. Pratt argues that the rural entrepreneurs of Japan had a limited life in the history of industrialization. Proto-industry came to a close with the maturation of modern industry in the first decades of the twentieth century. Even if they were not completely swept away by Japan's industrial revolution, by the nineteen twenties the wealthy landlords gave up direct cultivation and were replaced in their traditional role as diffusers of know-how in agriculture by state-run institutions. Many became absentee landlords or continued their economic role as bankers.

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[38] Edward Pratt, *Japan's Proto-industrial Elite; The Economic Foundation of the Gōnō*, Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University, 1999.

[39] William B. Hauser, *Economic Institutional Change in Tokugawa Japan: Osaka and the Kinai Cotton Trade*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974; David L. Howell, *Capitalism from Within: Economy, Society, and the State in a Japanese Fishery*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995; Kären Wigen, *The Making of a Japanese Periphery 1750-1920*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

Pratt's evaluation of the rural elites differs depending on regional characteristics.   In some, they acted as leaders in generating wealth that also benefited the poor of the community.   In other areas the *gōnō* projects for new industries created impoverishment because peasants were subject to the volatile character of the economy. An accomplished study of an elite across a wide regional spectrum, Pratt's study raises the question of what consequences followed from the gradual disappearance of the rural elite starting during the nineteenth century and its almost total dissolution with World War I and the Great Depression.   As an intermediate elite, the *gōnō* had provided an element of stability to the community. One can surmise from Pratt's analysis that without the presence of the *gōnō* to provide a source of local income and play some kind of a diffusionist role, the impoverished peasants fell victim to an agrarian crisis which goaded the young army officers of peasant stock to consider themselves, ironically, the patrimonial saviours of the village bent on uplifting the peasantry with a militarist strategy of violence.[40]

The interesting work of Brian W. Platt on the three generations of the Ozawa family, a member of the village elite, is especially successful in constructing a sense of the individual in the midst of historic changes that are usually analyzed only in abstract structuralist terminology. Platt's article "inverts" the approach of most modern scholarship which focuses of different aspects of the class and status roles of people in Tokugawa history, and explores the multiple roles performed by a single family – a significant step illuminating the complex interlacing between class, family, status, culture in traditional societies that is frequently artificially severed in order to fit the historical data into assumed categories of social analysis.[41]

Kären Wigen's study of Shimoina valley again takes us across the boundaries of the early mod-

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[40] This surmise can be linked to the work of Ann Waswo, *Japanese Landlords: The Decline of a Rural Elite*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977.

[41] Brian W. Platt, "Elegance, Prosperity, Crisis: Three Generations of Tokugawa Village Elites," *Monumenta Nipponica* 55:1 (2000): 45-81.

ern and the modern as she applies a geographic perspective to the historical development of the silk industry after the opening of Japan to international trade. Looking at a sericulture environment similar to that of Vlastos's study of the Shindatsu, she links the local and the global, economy and polity, geography and history in a complex web that again shows that it is not possible to separate the social and economic entities from the political and the international, especially in Japan. She negotiates a passage between the production of an integral economic complex in the Ina Valley from 1750 to 1860 and the process by which Japan emerged as an industrial power in East Asia in the last half of the nineteenth century. In the transformation, Shimoina silk production was subordinated to a single national center controlled by the metropol, Tokyo.

Herman Ooms's challenging study of Tokugawa village affairs, *Tokugawa Village Practice; Class, Status, Power, Law* (1996), engages us in a new look at the inter- and intra-village documents of litigation from a revised Weberian perspective, one we might call the political economy of law. Ooms is inspired by the writings of Pierre Bourdieu on early modern France and he constructs an engaging picture of the praxis of Tokugawa law at the village and community levels. Reworking the categories of class, status, and power through a model of convertible capital (economic, social and symbolic), he deciphers the inner workings of the village and its relation to power. Using tax documents, *shumon aratame chō*, petitions, and court documents, Ooms reveals a macro image of the juridical field and the specific power generated by laws. In this respect, we learn of the actual procedure of the distribution of the tax burden within the village collectivity that lay at the base of village autonomy under samurai rule and other procedures of actual litigation. The "mountains of resentment" chapter concerning the woman Ken, who persistently litigated against her community in order that it redress their complicity in the murder of her brother, gives hitherto uncharted detail about the processes of litigious contestation and the conditions of peasant women. His treatment of the outcaste community under the aegis of the state and compared to racism is significant because it is one of the few studies in English of the social structure

of outcaste discrimination in Tokugawa Japan. Outcast discrimination is also probably the only single research subject of the early modern period that is still politically and socially sensitive in present day Japanese society, so that the researcher faces special difficulties in gaining access to unpublished sources in many regions.[42]

Ooms' work creates an image of political authority firmly intact, much more so than the peasant-conflict literature, and political power could successfully control the people through the fine-tuning of the symbolic value of status, thereby co-opting class-consciousness to put it in bluntly Marxist terms. From our perspective of preferred notions of universal law, the praxis of the Tokugawa customary arrangement of law seems to have been particularly situational and unilateral in the hands of the "secular" political forces. While Tokugawa "secularism" has been much admired in the secularist vision of modernism back in the nineteen sixties (in such works as Bellah's *Tokugawa Religion*), at the same time, as Ooms notes, when looked at close up, Tokugawa law resembles martial law, which is interested in order more than justice.

An interesting outcome of recent publications on Tokugawa socio-economic history is that we have now a concentration of English studies on the Shinano-Nagano region: my study of the Kami-Takai *gun* in the northeast, Kären Wigen's study on Shimoina in the south, Herman Ooms on Kita-Saku district below Takai-*gun*, Ronald Toby's study of rural financial networks, and now the recent research of Brian Platt on a Shinshū family.[43] Surely, this must be coincidental one first surmises, but perhaps not. I think that the role of the remarkably advanced level of local history in Japan and particularly the leadership of

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[42] Herman Ooms, *Tokugawa Village Practice: Class, Status, Power, Law*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.

[43] Ronald P. Toby, "Both a Borrower and a Lender Be: From Village Moneylender to Rural Banker in the Tempō Era," *Monumental Nipponica.* 46: 4 (1991): 483-513. In addition, a number of the works by Laurel Cornell, Anne Jannetta (cited below), Hayami Akira, Saitō Osamu and others cited in Kurosu Satomi's review of demographic history also focus on this same region.

the accomplished historians of the local school system and prefectural historical institutes of Nagano have played a decisive role in why so many English-language authors chose to look at Japan through a Shinano lens. Similar to the commendable French tradition of combining the role of the research-historian with that of the high school teacher, the modern Japanese network of local historian-teachers is still alive in Nagano and must be credited with having developed the field of socio-economic history at the local level to such a high degree that it has had ramifications in the work of non-Japanese scholars as well.

Beyond the Rice Fields: History of Urban Life, Fishing, and Forestry

In contrast to the village and rural world in general, the world of the town and the city has remained until recently a relatively unstudied subject as a social and economic history. James McClain's *Kanazawa: A Seventeenth Century Castle Town* (1982) and Gary Leupp on *Servants Shop Hands, and Laborers in the Cities of Tokugawa Japan* (1992) are pioneer works in this field.[44] Heretofore, the Tokugawa city is overwhelmingly the entertaining world of eighteenth century Genroku Japan, but not a socio-economic structure or praxis in the manner of the Tokugawa village. The only major exceptions that come to mind are the earlier works such as William Hauser on Osaka cited above, and the unique research of Gilbert Rozman on Edo and Japanese urban networks; for a long time it was the village rather than the city that represented the social and economic character of Tokugawa Japan. [45] Smith's view of early modern Japanese economic growth as primarily of commercialized rural origins had contrasted the "rural conservatism" of

the "Japanese " model with the "progressiveness" of the "Euro-Western " model of economic growth which was seen as having had primarily urban origins. Norman had been sharply critical of the feudal origins of Japan's pre-war authoritarian polity that derived its conservatism from the rural character of Japan's bourgeois development. Both views saw a sharp contrast between the Japanese and the European experiences that resulted in divergent political paths (however, Smith's analysis searched for a balanced analysis that did not see Japanese rurality as a negative political factor). Both views saw European economic growth as rooted in commercialized towns and cities that gave birth to civil society and liberal thought. In contrast, Japan's economic growth took place in the rural communities that were bastions of peasant conservatism. While much less so for Smith, the implication of this assumption has been that Tokugawa Japan lacked parallel social and political currents that encouraged the development of civil society.

The recent volume of James McClain and Wakita Osamu, *Osaka: The Merchants' Capital of Early Modern Japan* (1999), is path breaking in putting the city on the map of Tokugawa Japan, therefore, challenging the sharp delineation of differences between the Japanese and the European early modern experience. This collection of interesting articles by Japanese and Western scholars describes the layers of social and economic scenery, an autonomous administration in the hands of a merchant elite cooperating with samurai authority, urban communities and gangs, a pulsating commercial life, all as part of urban Tokugawa Japan with the implications that there was quite a lively autonomy of the "city" as an early modern environment. The work gives us the energy of urban Osaka including its history, local *inari* worship, *jōruri* entertainment, the life of mendicant monks, protests and so on. [46]

Cities may be centers of liberty and autonomy for the individual who is distanced from social constraints of the village, but they also have an underside that is more dangerous than the image of village communities of prudent hard working

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[44] James McClain, *Kanazawa: A Seventeenth Century Japanese Castle Town*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982; Garry P. Leupp, *Servants Shophands, and Laborers in the Cities of Tokugawa Japan*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992.

[45] Gilbert Rozman, *Urban Networks in Ch'ing China and Tokugawa Japan*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974; Gilbert Rozman, "Edo's Importance in a Changing Tokugawa Society," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 1:1 (1974): 113-126.

[46] James McClain and Wakita Osamu, eds., *Osaka: The Merchants' Capital of Early Modern Japan*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999.

peasants. The new work of Phillippe Pons exposes the structures of poverty and crime in urbanity of Tokugawa Japan and today's Tokyo. In his book on misery and crime in Japan, Pons has a sweeping vision of the past and present in urban Japan wherein also dwell the underworld of poverty and crime in liminal spaces of criminal subcultures of the yakuza-the familiar "mafia" underworld of Japan.[47] Similarly, Nam-lin Hur describes the social scene of prayer and play in the Asakusa Sensoji temple district of Edo that survived as a small niche of Tokugawa urban popular religion.[48] The Tokugawa city is finally being put on the map of an early modernity that, while not identical with the European scene, appears in step with the standard view of early modernity for Europe.

Pioneer works in their field such as those of David Howell and Arne Kalland on the study of the sea, shift our obsession with the landlocked image of village Japan to its coastal environment. These studies offer an alternative image of Japan as a sea-fearing and fishing nation since the middle ages.[49] Despite the importance of the sea in the Japanese diet and traditional economic activity, little research has been done on the history of Japan's fishing industry. Arne Kalland's work is a landmark approach that has opened a new path to understanding early modern Japan. Kalland's study analyzes how fishing villages were integrated into larger regions and thereby simultaneously breaks the scholarly isolation of Tokugawa villages from the outside world. In his words, the study of fishing villages constructs the bridge between the city and the farming villages and unveils the regional economy of Tokugawa society. Combining anthropology, economic history and the methods of resource management, the study also re-examines late Tokugawa reforms to solve the famine and economic crises as part of

an argument that brings back the role of government regulation of the village as a significant component in the modernization of Japan after the Meiji Restoration.

In this context, the study of man's exploitation and contestation of nature has gained new light. William W. Kelly's earlier work, *Water Controls in Tokugawa Japan*, Constantine Nomikos Vaporis's recent work on overland communication, Ann B. Janetta's study of epidemics and finally, Conrad Totman's *The Green Archipelago: Forestry in Pre-industrial Japan* all expose the issue of man's manipulation of the environment that entailed the destruction of nature with all of its negative consequences for Japan.[50]

The Unregistered Lives of Men and Women: Studies of Sexuality and Gender

A number of innovative, richly textured discussions of sexuality and gender identity have opened new windows to understanding the public and private lives of men and women. These recent publications show us that the field has attained an exciting complexity in terms of methodology and conceptualization, in tune with widespread contemporary trends in historiography.

In comparison to the subjects of political economy such as proto-industry and village elites, recent discussions of the history of gender roles and the regulation of sexuality present an image of Tokugawa Japan that is the most "severed" from the post-Meiji history of modern Japan. One comes away with the impression that although social and economic processes and practices continued into the post-1868 era for some time, the modern state was more effective in modifying, eradicating, or mutating the Tokugawa legacy of gender and sexuality and replac-

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[47] Phillippe Pons. *Misere et crime au Japon du XVIIe siecle a nos jours*. Paris: Gallimard, 1999.

[48] Nam-lin Hur. *Prayer and Play in Late Tokugawa Japan: Asakusa Sensoji and Edo Society*. Cambridge Massachusetts.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2000.

[49] David Howell, *Capitalism From Within*; Arne Kalland, *Fishing Villages in Tokugawa Japan*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1995.

[50] Vaporis, *Breaking Barriers*; William W. Kelly, *Water Control in Tokugawa Japan: Irrigation Organization in a Japanese River Basin, 1600-1870*, Ithaca: Cornell China-Japan Program, 1982; Ann Bowman Jannetta, *Epidemics and Mortality in Early Modern Japan*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997; Totman, *The Green Archipelago*.

ing it with the "modern" Japanese images of man and woman/male and female, and that this was not necessarily a positive development. In the study of gender and sexuality, the Meiji/modern Japanese state does not seem to have played a liberating role. The modern state appears to have sacrificed an early modern sexual culture of flexibility for the sake of the civilizing process.

The volumes edited by Gail Bernstein and Tonomura, Walthall, and Wakita have established the study of gender and the history of women as a significant new field in early modern studies.[51] The study of women as labor in the family-based proto-industries of sericulture, textile, and in rare instances even in the male domain of sake breweries underscores the importance of female labor in upholding the household and providing crucial labor for by-employments. Read together with the Pratt and Wigen studies of late Tokugawa and post-Meiji proto-industry processes, these essays of rural and urban working women illuminate the way gender roles and reproductive roles were integral to the successful functioning of broad socio-economic processes. The overall tone of the rich array of studies on Tokugawa women, especially the farmwomen of the countryside, stresses the relatively flexible division of gender roles between in the family, one where parents shared the chores of cultivation and child rearing. Recent studies describe a relatively greater freedom for females in the villages compared to the stricter social controls and confinement of upper-class samurai women and compared to Meiji women who were "reconstructed" under modern reforms. Interestingly, westerner visitors to Japan appear to have noticed the relative freedom and ease of the village women of Japan in previous times as well. Leupp cites Jesuit missionaries of the sixteenth century who remarked on women's ability " to go hither and thither as they list."[52]

On the other hand, Yokota Fuyuhiko's article on rethinking the *Greater Learning for Women* (*Onna daigaku* of Kaibara Ekken) sees it as the precursor of the Meiji ideology that defined women's work largely in terms of maintaining the household and reproducing heirs at home. Yokota argues that the *Onna Daigaku* was the first step toward the establishment of the post-Meiji ideology of the good wife, wise mother and modern professional housewife.[53] Similarly, the Tokugawa legacy of the authorized prostitution is also seen to have survived into the modern period in various forms, leading to the "comfort women" of the Pacific War.

Both volumes attest long years of study on the history of women in Japan. These scholars bring forth new approaches to the history of women and promise an interdisciplinary breakthrough. The research is revisionist in that it aims to break through the prevalent Marxian tradition in Japan that emphasizes the areas of production dominated by men.

Ann Walthall's biography of Matsuo Taseko, a peasant woman from the Ina valley who was involved in loyalist anti-Tokugawa activities, brings to life the revolutionary environment in the last decades of the *bakufu* regime. Taseko emerges as a vibrant example of many women who step into an unusual role in a revolutionary environment. Walthall's excellent study is a significant achievement in the writing of historical biography in Japanese history: It treats Japanese historical actors as complex individuals who represent the "not so famous and illustrious" and allows the reader to penetrate into the social history of the general population.[54]

The study of Japanese women has been launched with the close reading of the Japanese context through the theoretical and historical evaluation of women and gender pioneered in the scholarship on women in the West. The approach

[51] Gail Lee Bernstein, *Recreating Japanese Women 1600-1945*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991, p. 2; Tonomura Hitomi, Ann Walthall, and Wakita Haruko, *Women and Class in Japanese History*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1999.

[52] Garry P. Leupp, *Male Colors: The Construction of Homosexuality in Tokugawa Japan*

1603-1868, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995, p. 186.

[53] "Imagining Working Women in Early Modern Japan," Tonomura et. al., eds. *Women and Class*, p. 166.

[54] Ann Walthall, *The Weak Body of a Useless Woman: Matsuo Taseko and the Meiji Restoration*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

brings a significant comparative advantage to analysis of the subject, but there is much room for biography, such as Walthall's. On the other hand, that the belated publication of Ella Wiswell's work on Suyemura (1982) remains the best account of women in pre-war rural Japan suggests the need for greater efforts to penetrate the communal and family activities of everyday Japanese women in the Tokugawa period.[55]

Other scholars have focused on construction of the sexual in the male and female worlds. Beginning with Gary Leupp's *Male Colors* and Sumie Jones's edited volume (both 1995) that brought together studies by numerous scholars on sexuality and Edo culture have exposed the connection of the institutions of the public realm with the intimate world of sexuality in its various forms.[56] The recent study of Gregory Pflugfelder on the subject of male-male sexuality (a term that both Leupp and Pflugfelder explain is historically more accurate than the European term, homosexuality) covering the period from the early Tokugawa to the contemporary age, maps in discourse analysis the praxis of sexuality in men, and as a by-product, that in women.[57]

In his study of *nanshoku*, or, "male-colors," Leupp shows how male/male sexuality was intricately linked to the all-male monastic culture that arrived from China in the ninth century: the acolyte boys took the place of women because Buddhism did not condone heterosexual desire. The Japanese perception of homosexuality was quite similar to that of the Eastern Mediterranean perception of male sexuality as naturally bi-sexual.

In contrast to the segregation of categories of sexual and gender identities in modern societies, the Tokugawa praxis of sexuality in both the male and female worlds carried a greater degree of ambivalence about sexuality in general. Beneath the regime's disapproval of sexual conduct as unbecoming by Confucian norms, Tokugawa society widely tolerated behaviour that allowed crossing into other sexual identities. The public's admiration of androgyny and the floating world of the courtesans attest to the combination of the sexual with the aesthetic and the artistic in early modern urban culture. The only subject in the field of sexual and gender identity studies that remains to be studied is the social and psychological history of romantic love between men and women, which is still frequently handled only within the framework of the *shinju monogatari*, or love suicide tales of Tokugawa literature. As Leupp notes, Tokugawa Japan had a profound distrust of intense romantic love relationships between men and women. Their legacy seems to have also influenced the historical study of the subject as well since there is still relatively less knowledge on the operation of the culture of heterosexuality in Japanese culture.

Plugfelder provides a complex analysis of the discourse on male/male sexuality down to the post-WW II era where the legacy of Tokugawa sexual culture (primarily among men) is relegated to the shadowy marginal quarters of society. Setting his debate within the *ars erotica* and *scientifia sexualis* distinction of Michel Foucault, and between the sexual culture of the classical world and the orient versus that of the post-classical West, Plugfelder presents a "western" reading of the shifts in sexual culture in Japan. The emphasis is on the active encounter of the Japanese public with new notions/strictures about sexuality both within popular culture and within professional circles that have accepted the western legal and medical knowledge. Plugfelder avoids the usual Orient/Occident or East/West pitfalls of interpretation. The delicate way in which Plugfelder weaves French legal concepts and German medical discourse into the Japanese environment by showing their complex interaction with Japanese critical discourse is an excellent example of

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[55] Robert J. Smith and Ella Lury Wiswell, *The Women of Suye Mura*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982.

[56] Sumie Jones, ed., *Sexuality and Edo Culture 1750-1850*, Bloomington: Indiana University, 1995; Garry P. Leupp, *Male Colors: The Construction of Homosexuality in Tokugawa Japan 1603-1868*, Berkeley; University of California Press, 1995.

[57] Gregory M. Pflugfelder, *Cartographies of Desire: Male-male Sexuality in Japanese Discourse 1600-1950*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999; Selcuk Esenbel, "The Anguish of Civilized Behavior: The Use of Western Cultural Forms in the Everyday Lives of the Meiji Japanese and the Ottoman Turks During the Nineteenth Century," *Japan Review* 5, (1994): 145-185.

a realistic assessment of how Japan and the West, in this case Europe, fuse into a joint historical fate.

Such studies show us that the psychological history of westernization is yet to be written. Plugfelder's account of sexuality represents a good example of what I call the "anguish of civilized behavior." Here, the civilizing process of constructing a modern persona out of an interaction of oriental and occidental social and cultural environments creates the "double" tension of biculturally determined spheres of the rational and the emotive for the psychology of the individual.

Summary and General Observations

Interpretive Trends.   A review of the literature on the Tokugawa people for the last two decades leaves one with the impression that there is a new image of Tokugawa society: these men and women were different from the modern people of Japan who are more like us, products of a homogenizing, assimilating modern state. Recent studies not only expose Tokugawa people as actors in a social and economic terrain, but reflect how their activities were irrevocably connected to the exigency of power and could in some measure manipulate it as well.

One can summarize the new image of the Tokugawa "early modern" in social and economic history as the following.   Rather than the formal contours of the character of Tokugawa society, our new emphasis is on the dynamic interaction between the *de jure* and the *de facto* of historical behaviour; we are more attentive to deciphering the "due process" of the social-economic praxis. We now have multiple photographs that illustrate various sections of human behavior ranging from the construction of gender and sexual identities to the way the peasantry activated the institutions of samurai hegemony to make inroads in the system. Today, the Tokugawa body politic can be interpreted as an arena of negotiation and litigation. We notice the situationality and flexibility that accompanied the oppressive coercive power of a Tokugawa military which in some measure successfully co-opted local interests. To put it in Japanese terms, we now see more of the *honne*, the real intention of Tokugawa society in socio-

economic terms beneath the *tatemae*, the outward principle of feudal power. The Tokugawa village for example is no longer the oppressed community of feudal peasants that had been prevalent in the early stages of Japanese studies, nor is it like Tolstoy's idyllic rural utopia that was the precursor of modernity. The early modern village is instead the environment where conflict and consensus among peasants of varied classes, wealth, and status developed through their own procedures.   In sum, the Tokugawa historical arena is now a stage where there is a significant degree of fine-tuning, the term that best describes our new approach to the early modern today. The early modern state was concerned about retaining their overall authority, but they were not that interested in penetrating into the details of community management or the personal lives of individuals in the way that the modern state can be; Tokugawa society is a world where urban authoritarian power could or had to be negotiated at the grassroots level.

Therefore, the Tokugawa age sometimes appears as a collection of admirable qualities that were lost along the way to Japan Inc. Government was autocratic but flexible; law was not democratic but answered to the needs of the day with a complex situationality; culture was regional but appears "authentic" in the sense that it was not dictated from the metropolitan center; there was exploitation of the producers, but peasants negotiated their taxes and, if pushed, put up a good fight against the wealthy landlords and merchants as well as the governmental authorities in seeking justice; there was poverty but proto-industry as well. It meant that some were rich among the many poor, but proto-industry was the basis for the circulation of capital and the foundation of a rurally based production. In sum, the Tokugawa age rested on a *modus vivendi* between central power and local interest.

At the personal level, the decentralized quality of Tokugawa life also suggests the "advantage" of a presumed absence of regulation over sexual desire and a balanced gender self-image at the commoner level compared to the highly regulated breeding required of the military aristocracy. Leupp notes, "Although the regime attempted to freeze class distinctions and regulate the minutiae of its subjects' lives, it made little effort to police

individuals' sex lives."[58]

In the newer literature the Tokugawa experience, in both its positive and negative aspects, emerges as quite distinct from the super-structure of the post 1868 modern sectors and this "early modern" legacy disappears by the Great Depression. Unlike the standard modernist view of the post-war period that interpreted the Tokugawa era as preparation for the future, new scholarship in some ways is again ambivalent about seeing the Tokugawa legacy as directly antecedent to the modern, especially in terms of its psychological history and economic history. The "Tokugawa Early-modern and the post-Meiji early-Modern," to use Wigen's words, combine within the prevalent form of a rural proto-industrial-commercial network in the Shimoina region of central Japan in a Tokugawa-style geo-topographic-social setting that, however, is temporary, vanishing during the Taishō period.[59] The imposition of modern values through education, nationalist ideology, and so on molds the men and women with "loose" habits into modern images of male and female behavior.

The new writing has made us more conscious of the breaks and discontinuities of the early modern era before later times brought about total centralization, total industry, total war, and total empire. Our sympathy for the early modern age seems to play a role in this new image of the Tokugawa age. The recent studies, especially of the period from the seventeenth to the early nineteenth century, depict a lively proto-industry in the villages and flourishing bourgeois culture in the cities. In some respects this "liveliness" compares well with similar developments in France before the French Revolution. The customs of the early modern era in Japan still seem admirable in some respects, especially in how the individual man and woman fared under the early modern regime, before the "guillotine" of modernism struck Japan just as it did Europe.

The strong points of the field are obvious. The study of early modern Japan has become sensitized to the use of comparative approaches through both theoretical constructs of social science and an interaction with contemporary research on the history of Europe. Hence, recent publications show sophistication in making comparisons with the Western experiences, by using contemporary research on various regions of Europe rather than a monolithic, idealized "West" as in the past. Research on the early modern history of France and England appears to be the primary choice of comparison. I would add, however, that research on Germany, which is less used, can provide useful insight into the history of Tokugawa Japan. On the other hand, the primary comparative concern of the scholarship is still with the historical environment of the First World; while understandable, that focus creates the danger of a special form of *datsu-a*, where the Asian environment to which Japan undeniably belongs receives less attention.

Methods and Materials. This survey of recent publications on socio-economic history of Japan shows the rich variety of topics and methodology in the field. The cross-fertilization of history with social science theory stands out, with "theory" ranging from the classic Marxist paradigm to post-structuralist approaches. The studies of growth, conflict, proto-industry, village law and society are reflective of structuralist approaches but there is great variety among them. Whereas Hanley and Yamamura used historical demography and economic history to describe Tokugawa economic growth, Wigen applies the geographer's methodology to portray the development of proto-industry on a regional scale. White's analysis stands out for his application of quantitative methods to a whole series of data on the Tokugawa period.

In village studies, the use of theory contributed to a new sensitivity to the meaning of village documents such as the *taka shirabe chō*, *shumon aratame chō*, *kenchi chō* and the language of petitions. Scholars now understand them as texts beyond their formal content. We are now much more aware of the need to recognize that documents such as the *takashirabechō*, tax documents, *kaisai chō*, tax collection documents, *shumon aratame chō*, and the temple population registers, while they say something about the numerical framework of Tokugawa communal life are frequently more important as expressions of the social and political distribution of power than of

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[58] Garry P. Leupp, *Male Colors,* p. 61.
[59] *The Making of a Japanese Periphery*, p. 293.

economic reality as such.[60]   For Ooms, the rich variety of village documents are the means to a structuralist and functionalist interpretation of Tokugawa village praxis of class, status, power, and law.   The new historical research on gender and sexuality also creatively employs a range of materials, from the familiar documentation created by the Tokugawa authorities to private diaries, woodblock prints, literature, and medical treatises.

English-language scholarship in Tokugawa economic and social history is largely oblivious of the excellent research in European languages other than English.   Recent European publications now get more regular reviews in English publications, especially in *Monumenta Nipponica* with the contributions of Peter Kornicki and Herman Ooms, but the field of English language studies on Japan has had difficulty incorporating new research from these languages.   Research on Tokugawa social and economic history in German by Klaus Muller, the expert on pre-Tokugawa and Tokugawa economic history, studies by Regine Mathias Pauer, Erich Pauer and Reinhard Zőllner remain known primarily to the German-speaking academy except when these authors choose to write something in English.[61] The study in French by Philippe Pons offers a fascinating entry into the underworld of poverty

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[60] For me, the village land and population registers, although they provided numerical information, also represented the state of social status and power within the Takaino village that provided a better understanding of the political leadership of the 1871 Nakano uprising.

[61] See, for example, Klaus Muller, *Wirtschafts- und Technikgeschicht Japans.* (*The history of economy and technology in Japan*).   Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1988; Klaus Muller, *Agrarproduktion und Agrarschrifttum im Japan des 17 Jahrhunderts* (*Agrarian production and Agrarian writings in seventeenth century Japan*). Bochum: Hab.-Schr., 1976; Ulrich Pauly, " Ikkō-ikki. Die Ikkō Aufstande u. ihre Entwicklung aus d. Aufstanden d. bundischen Bauern u. Provinzialen d. Japan. Mittelalters." ("Ikkō ikki. The Ikkō uprising and its development among the association of peasants and provincials of Japan during the middle ages.") Ph.D. dissertation. Bonn: 1985.

and crime in the liminal spaces of Tokugawa (and modern) criminal subculture but it is not widely known beyond France.   The Internet and web pages of the Japanese studies research centres composed in many European languages, promises better access to the international world of Tokugawa Japanese studies.

Recent research has the advantage of being able to rely upon the strong tradition of historical research in Japan.   Sometimes unduly criticized in the past for being Marxist, there is now a healthy and balanced dialogue within the Japanese research on the village, conflict, gender and other topics. This situation facilitates interaction with our Japanese colleagues.

However, it is also incumbent upon the student in the field of socio-economic history to develop the necessary skills and "patience" to experience direct engagement with the rich sources of Tokugawa manuscripts in the archives and research centres in Japan.   Some of the work reviewed here (e.g., Kalland, Walthall) would either have been impossible without engagement with handwritten documents or it would have been far less successful scholarship.   We can expect that the need to use manuscript materials will increase as socio-economic historians address issues (e.g., gender) for which our Japanese colleagues have not created compendia of transcribed sources.

Issues for Future Research.   Those of us who focus on the Tokugawa social-economic field have pretty much kept our gaze on the realm of the commoners: this made sense in the initial stages of transforming a field that needed to "liberate" the Tokugawa people from the hegemony of modernity. But such an emphasis leaves much room for additional research.   The following appear to be some of the fundamental problems that remain to be addressed.

While we have gained a better understanding of the inner reality of the village, the study of the socio-economic world of the samurai and the urban environment remains foggy despite a handful of excellent works.   For example, we know little about the inner praxis of a daimyo residence in Edo.   Also at the high end of the social scale, we could use further work to supplement the recent publication of Lee Butler's study of the *kuge*, the civilian nobility of Kyoto, whose eighteenth and nineteenth century history in particular remains

largely unstudied.[62]   Prior to Butler's study, our general impression of Tokugawa history suggested that the *kuge* lived a restricted life in Kyoto.   Nothing prepares us for their sudden Bakumatsu arrival on the political scene as loyalists with a distinct dislike of the *bakufu*.

A similar problem exists at the other end of the social scale, the bottom of Tokugawa society. The outcastes (*eta*, *hinin*, etc.) rarely figure in historical studies outside of Japan.   While Ooms (*Tokugawa Village Practice*) has recently delved into aspects of this subject, we still have no clear idea of their communal life under the discriminatory customs of the Tokugawa regime.

There is also no study of the history of childhood to parallel the very significant contribution of French historiography to our understanding of the shift between the pre-modern and the modern. Changing conceptions of infancy, childhood, and adulthood might offer insights and a path to resolve the debate on *mabiki* and other social issues as well.

Another uncharted subject is the connection between the perception of the foreigner and the custom of using women as agents of diplomacy by the Tokugawa authorities, an interesting aspect of contemporary gender issues. I am thinking here of the late Tokugawa – early Meiji phenomena, the "Okichi" syndrome: the Tokugawa authorities assigned women to take care of the private and public needs of new male foreign residents as a kind of diplomatic ploy to placate the "barbarian."   (Okichi was assigned to serve Townsend Harris in Shimoda; her service and later suicide became the object of nationalist ideology.)[63]

On the economic side of the picture, the social and economic history of money and the role of the Tokugawa *bakufu* as a fiscal power offers the promise of learning how recoinage and currency manipulation interacted with social and political concerns (this is a new subject in European history which may offer methodological hints for Japanese historians).

Concluding Remarks.   The socio-economic studies in early modern Japanese history reflect the flourishing of early-modern socio-economic history in the historiography of Europe and other regions. After a prolonged obsession with the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries – the rise of the modern state and the industrial revolution – savants like the *Annales* historians Braudel and Ladurie helped us discover the period between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries. Academia has also benefited from the liberal atmosphere in recent years that is more tolerant of personal agendas of identity and choice.   Subjects such as homosexuality, and sexuality *per se* would have been difficult to write and publish about a generation ago.   In recent years many of the new studies on sexuality, proto-industry, law and society – again the history of Europe – appear to have been a significant inspiration for the comparative framework of the historians of early modern Japan.

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[62]   Lee Butler, *Emperor and Aristocracy in Japan, 1467-1680:   Resilience and Renewal*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, Harvard East Asian Monographs, 2002.

[63]   Although the Rokumeikan experiment of the late Meiji years has nothing to do with the poor servant girl Okichi's service, or that of other women of the lower classes who were assigned to take care of Westerners without families, there are some thought-provoking similarities. According to the *Attic Letters* of Tsuda Ume and Takie Lebra's study of Meiji aristocratic women, *Above the Clouds*, Japanese aristocratic ladies were instructed never to

refuse the dance proposal of a foreign guest during the Rokumeikan galas, part of the diplomacy of treaty revision in the late nineteenth century – a sacrifice they were encouraged to make as a patriotic duty.   This strategy, too, represents the use of the female to "pacify" the foreigner. Yoshiko Furuki, ed., *The Attic Letters: Ume Tsuda's Correspondence to Her American Mother*, New York: Weatherhill, 1991; Takie Sugiyama Lebra, *Above the Clouds: Status Culture of the Modern Japanese Nobility*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993, p.189, for discussion of women and diplomacy. Finally, in my visit to Shimoda a number of years ago, I was surprised to discover a scroll in the museum that depicts Okichi as a <u>Chinese princess</u> sent to the barbarian nomad rulers of the steppes to placate the threatening foe, a story that adds another fascinating twist to the use of women in the world of diplomacy.

Ultimately, Tokugawa social and economic history now impels us to come to terms with the early modern character of governance over a population that was unquestionably subject to the supreme authority of its various rulers; however, within this framework the implementation of political power at the grass roots level was based on seasonal and cyclical negotiation with local power, the village elite-landlords and/or the broader community. Recent early modern Tokugawa social and economic history focuses on detecting the processes by which written and customary law were implemented by the *bakufu* and the local domain governments, polities whose absolute authority remained unquestioned. The contrast between the flexible nature of negotiation within the Tokugawa social scene and that of the draconian hand of the modern state in the form of the Meiji regime, however, should not lead to the idealization of one era over the other. The difference between the early modern and the modern in state - society relations actually illustrates a shift in the niches of tension, moving from the local level to the national. One can also suggest that the fight between the ruling strata and the ruled turned from a contest over how to implement power under a classic set of documents to a contest over the construction of new documents that defined new roles for state and society.

Tokugawa people as we seen them in the documents and as we narrate them in our imagination are "dead"; however, recent studies imply that the Tokugawa era was an entity unto itself that was doomed to "die" once the political will expressed through the Meiji Restoration began to construct a modern Japanese state and society. Many of the recent studies on Tokugawa social and economic history acknowledge this loss. The capital that is presumed to have been born of the Tokugawa proto-industrialization may have remained, and the know-how of community organization may have survived into the post Meiji era, but the human persona of the Tokugawa age (i.e., the *gōnō*) is lost forever.

Recent research has demonstrated the significance of a dynamic approach in constructing the Tokugawa individual amidst the restraints of the geo-political situation in which they functioned. Ann Walthall's excellent biography of Matsuo Taseko goes beyond the definition of gender history or women's history *per se*. As John Breen noted in a review, it is an outstanding biography of this politically engaged woman who was a disciple of the late Tokugawa nativist, Hirata Atsutane and brings to our immediate "gaze" a living individual of the era.[64] Platt's recent article on three generations of Tokugawa village elites brings home the cultural, social and economic environments as they affected the lives of persons and generations, rather than exploring class or strata structures.[65] In sum, the study of the people of Tokugawa Japan now prefers nuanced emphasis on the human element rather than analysis of social structures as fundamental category with which to interpret documents from the age. The bold analytical conceptualisations of the Norman and Smith generation of historians derived their precision from the discourse of the great nineteenth-century theoretical tradition in the social sciences. Today, neither Marxian theory and approaches nor Modernist agendas derived from Parsons or Weber survive in the same convincing form. Regardless of the differences of opinion among the early post-war generation, their common purpose was to explain the problematic relationship of late feudal society to modern Japan. Compared to that older generation, new social and economic research takes the Tokugawa age and its processes into the future in a relatively noncommittal manner *vis-a-vis* problems of modernity. Yet, while the bold analytical debate about the past and the present of modern Japan appears to have receded, the people of Tokugawa Japan have begun to have a history of their own. We can confidently state that the "People" of Tokugawa Japan are being "empowered" as actors by today's scholars. They now are perceived to behave autonomously of a Whig role, if not independent of it. We have just begun to see them on their own terms, acting on the historical environment of early modernity in a way that has a distinct character of its own, and is not intentionally a preparation for a future "modern."

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[64] John Breen, "Nativism Restored," *Monumenta Nipponica* 55:3 (2000): 438.

[65] Brian W. Platt, "Elegance, Prosperity, Crisis: Three Generations of Tokugawa Village Elites," *Monumenta Nipponica* 55:1 (2000): 45-82.

Summary of Discussions: The State of the Field in Early Modern Japanese Studies

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At some point during the Hōei era (1704-1710), a low-ranking samurai (*ashigaru*) of Kaga domain, Yamada Jirōemon, edited a collection of materials that various people had been collecting since the mid-seventeenth century. The materials focused largely on the formative years of Kaga domain. In accord with common practice, Yamada gave his work the self-deprecatory title, *Mitsubo kikigaki*, loosely translated as "Three Jars of Jottings on Hearsay." In part, the inspiration for his choice of title may have been his sensitivity to the unoriginal nature of his work. He was, after all, collecting, editing and transmitting materials that others had researched or that they had written based on their own personal experience.

This essay, based on discussions at the conference on the state of early modern Japanese studies has some of this same character. I wish to stress that this is a summary of the *discussions*, and eschews any effort to summarize the ten papers that formed the basis for them. Nonetheless, a number of the themes noted here also appeared in some form in the essays themselves. Furthermore, the title of Yamada's collection suggests a metaphor for the major tasks of the conference: 1) to review recent trends in the scholarship, 2) to discuss methodological and theoretical problems of the field at this time and

3) to suggest possible directions for future research in and development of the field, all concerns that lie at the heart of this essay.

Major Cross-cutting Issues

1. Different disciplines in "Early Modern (*kinsei*) Japan" do not share chronological bounds and publishing practice can further exacerbate differences by narrowing disciplinary focus considerably. While the terms of political history often provide the broad framework for much political, diplomatic, intellectual and socio-economic history, historians typically recognize that within large periods, non-political developments might mark important subdivisions. The Tokugawa era lies at the heart of this period on which our essays focused, giving a nod to the groundwork laid during the late sixteenth century.

From the historian's perspective, the designation of the period as "early modern" began with the publication of *Studies in the Institutional History of Early Modern Japan*.[1] There is a certain irony in the fact that, despite the title, the essayists' conceptual discussions, when they characterized the period at all, focused on "feudalism" – "early modern" was not directly defined or discussed and does not even appear in the index to the book.[2] (There can be little doubt that the title of the volume reflects the heavy involvement of the editors and many of its contributors to the conceptualization underlying the conferences and essay collections associated with the Princeton series on Japan's modernization. In this series, treatment of Tokugawa as an "early modern" precursor to a modern Meiji extended beyond political, social and economic history into the realms of cultural history, too.)

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[1] Edited by John W. Hall and Marius B. Jansen, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968.
[2] The volume's heavy emphasis on the limitations of characterizing Tokugawa Japan as "feudal" combined with current academic interests in "pre-modern" precursors to Japan's late nineteenth century rapid economic development and political, social and cultural transformation led most scholars in the U.S. to substitute "early modern" for "feudal" as the standard characterization of Tokugawa Japan.

Historians also widely recognize that if one takes a broadly social or economic historical perspective, a completely different scheme for periodization might result. Indeed, several alternatives were briefly mentioned during the discussions, including some that clearly violated the standard schemes of periodization beloved by political historians.

Yet nothing in this general set of expectations could have prepared the historians in our group (and perhaps others) for the arguments made in the fields of art history and literature. For example, noting the emphasis in art history on the study of individual artists (despite the emergence of post-modernist theory as an important element in the field), Patricia Graham argued that in the major fields of art history, the period would have to begin with the late Muromachi era (mid-sixteenth century, with the flourishing of urban merchant classes) and would not end until well into the late nineteenth century. This is partly because styles change more gradually, without the sharp demarcations based on pivotal events such as those that are commonly invoked by political historians.

The different definitions of the period are inevitably linked to the differing definitions of "modern" applied within disciplines in the U.S. and Western Europe. For political history, the key lies in the emergence of more effective, centrally controlled state apparatus, largely in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. In the field of diplomatic relations, the definition is generally tied to the emergence of a system of diplomatic relations based on equality of states as expressed in treaties and an emerging diplomatic protocol in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In prose literature, the issue is linked to the development of the novel. These different definitions are further linked to the historical circumstances in which the Western intellectual traditions began to think of the "modern" as a distinct historical break.

These differences of definition have had consequences that extend back in time, beyond the development of the field in the latter half of the twentieth century. Given the fact that many of the early European and North American scholars worked with Japanese intellectual guides who, by the twentieth century, had developed a pretty good sense of what appealed to this foreign audience, the tendency was to focus on what was familiar to or resonated with "us" rather than to place principal emphasis on understanding Japan's past on its own terms.[3]

Even if scholars today have an awareness of unexplored vistas, what is published, especially in book form, has often remained quite narrowly focused. In the field of literature, English language publication is trained heavily on Genroku and largely avoids anything else before or after that. The styles of literary expression dominant in the medieval era are treated as though they continued to dominate literary production through most of the seventeenth century. The period after Genroku has largely been ignored, Haruo Shirane argued, because it seems to have little connection to the emergence of "modern" forms of literary expression, notably the novel. From this perspective, "early modern Japan" is, in publishing practice, comprised of just a few decades and the objects of investigation are quite limited.

2. The field is young and relatively small; publications in many areas are spotty. A common thread running through much of our discussion, that there are yet big projects or problems that remain to be undertaken, can in part be traced to the fact that the ranks of laborers in the early modern field are still rather thin. Pre-modern Japan's role as backdrop to Japan's late nineteenth- and twentieth-century transformation provided the major justification for the expansion of the Japan field into the Tokugawa era in the United States. The influence of the modernization problematic – at least in the sense of the Tokugawa–Meiji links in politics, society, economics, literature, religion and thought, if not in the modernization paradigm of the nineteen fifties and nineteen-sixties – remain influential, even if they may be undergoing transformation. Now, for example, in political and social history these days, work bridging the Tokugawa-Meiji divide is more likely to trace the ill effects of the Tokugawa connection than would once have been the

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[3] Recall that many Japanese were trying to prove that they were "civilized" and "sophisticated" like the West, and were assiduously striving to refashion themselves to demonstrate the validity of that claim.

case.   Links between Tokugawa and Meiji may not be chronologically direct but nonetheless, the old ties still bind.   In art history, *ukiyoe* prints of the eighteenth century were of particular interest in the West, and associated with the *Japonisme* and Impressionist movements of the late nineteenth century, both reflected the nature of Western interest in Japanese art.   That interest remains highly prominent today, to the exclusion of many other styles and art forms.

This leaves relatively large areas of research virtually or completely untouched.   This is true not only for fields that have been in vogue recently (e.g., women's history), but also for older "established" fields such the study of as upper class literary genres in which we might typically imagine attention to have been concentrated heretofore, simply by virtue of the fact that a heavy emphasis on high culture characterized literary studies until the mid-twentieth century.

3.   Major influences shaping the early development of the field continue to affect our image of early modern Japan.   Intriguing observations regarding the forces shaping the different fields emerged in the course of discussions. In some cases, a field has been shaped largely by a single individual.   For example, historical demography, in its current form, owes everything to the work of Hayami Akira and people he has trained.   Literary studies of the period, especially the broad overviews, are overwhelmingly informed by the perspectives of Donald Keene.

In literature, art, religion, and intellectual history, the initial models of academic research applied in the post-war era stressed the creation of a canon to match that of the Western world, and focused on the accomplishments of the great men who produced that work.   That approach shaped the selection of subjects even when, as in literature, the focus was on the literature of the townsmen rather than the samurai elites.   Indeed, that the bourgeois taste seemed to produce a product that paralleled expected literary developments (the novel) and reinforced the similarities with European literary history.

Of course, upon even slight reflection, we are not surprised at the dominance of a few energetic and very productive individuals and the tendency to mimic existing academic models (especially during the early years of the Japan field in the

North America and Western Europe); we also tend to anticipate that the first studies of political history and foreign relations focus on elite politics.

The realm of art history, however, introduces other powerful forces in deciding what gets studied: the connoisseur, the major art collector, the consumer.   Exhibition catalogs, one of the major publication venues in the field of art history, are built around the display of exhibitions that often feature the holdings of a single collector.   Collectors' tastes come to define the subjects in art history that get broad exposure here.   (There is something of a parallel to this phenomenon in the field of literature where, Shirane noted, translations have a fundamental role to play in stimulating interest in one aspect of the field or another. If the translations are found appealing, they are likely to spark scholarly interest.)   In addition, the Bunkachō (Japanese Ministry of Culture), as partner with foreign institutions, has frequently overseen the conception and planning of international exhibitions featuring Japanese art from major Japanese collections. In this way, they exert profound influence on the conceptualization of Japanese art for foreigners as well as control the canon of art objects deemed worthy of study and display.

4.   Scholars generally presume that the era is marked by a sameness despite the fact that notable potential turning points have not yet been examined.   For example, noticeably absent from the English-language repertoire is a full study of that dynamic Shogun, Tokugawa Yoshimune.   While participants first raised the example of Yoshimune and their belief that his reign marked a substantial breaking point in the context of political history, participants working in other fields quickly identified the same era as marking a major shift in the cultural, intellectual and social spheres as well.   That such a consensus developed quickly and spontaneously reinforces the impression that periodizations that divide the Tokugawa are conceivable and worthy of consideration; the possibility even exists that breaks are sufficiently great that they should be treated as marking a shift in era, not just sub-periods within the early modern era.

A roughly parallel situation can be found in the realm of Japanese literature, although there are

differences.   Political history often focused on the samurai elites (creation of the Tokugawa *ba-kufu*, formation of castle towns and domains, land taxation and the like) and gave short shrift to lower levels of political activity; however, the case is reversed in important respects in studies of literature.   Our discussion of Japanese literary works after Genroku revealed a rich body of material not yet exploited by English-language scholars.   Among the Tokugawa corpus, the works of authors such as Saikaku and Chika-matsu, which are seen to presage the emergence of modern literature, do not come from the elite literary traditions.   They represent an important part of the literary culture of townsmen and commoners, certainly not the only group to create literature in the Edo period. The absence of attention given to the literary traditions of other Edo period social groups, such as that created by elite samurai, Buddhists, and intellectuals in the studies our specialists surveyed represents a large void, and failure to treat these genres may create a false impression of uniformity in literary forms and evolution. The omissions included some genres, such as *gesaku*, which are now drawing some attention, but also Chinese-style prose and poetry, Buddhist literature (仏教説話), travel literature (紀行文), essays and miscellanies (随筆), fantastic tales (怪談、奇怪小説), and women writers and poets (all genres).   As these attract our attention, we can expect (at the least) that we will have a new vision of the development of literature in the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries.

5.   The defining characteristics of the period within each discipline are not clear.   At the least, scholars have become aware of a broad range of subjects that complicate past characterizations and hint at the need for something new. Despite this, no one expressed confidence that we currently have sufficient grasp of the overall development within the various areas which comprise the field of early modern Japanese studies to be able to identify distinctive colorings that provide a sense of thematic unity to the period.   If this is true within major fields, it is all the more the case if we think about characterizations that cut across fields.

The small number of scholars in the field and the fact that Japanese studies is still rather young

in the U.S., Europe, and Australia, have reinforced early orthodox images of thematic unity to the period in each of its major sub-fields.   In politics and foreign relations, the rise of a fairly centralized government under the Tokugawa shogun and the image of a "closed country" (*sakoku*) provided the major themes through the early nineteen-sixties.   In the world of art, *ukiyoe* dominated our view.   The rise of urban literary traditions in prose, theater, and poetry marked the period as distinctive.   Almost simultaneously, the emergence of national learning (*kokugaku*) and Confucian rationalism marked distinctive trends in religious and intellectual history.   Economic growth, diversification and (more recently) a rising standard of living were treated as the general trend line in economic history.   All were viewed as making major contributions to the emergence of a "modern" Japan.   Yet most of these developments occupied relatively short spans of time within the Tokugawa era or characterized a relatively limited geographic reach, and the heavy focus on them ignores not only other chronological eras within the period but topics, too.

The late nineteen-sixties and early nineteen-seventies generated tremors of discontent with attempts to draw a straight line from Tokugawa to a "successfully modernized" Japan, but the new scholarship that undermines the old images and complicates our understanding of the Meiji transformation came in publications of the nineteen-eighties and nineties.   This concern may be most significant in the fields of diplomatic, political, social and economic history.   To briefly note several examples: *Sakoku* is now widely seen as a Euro-centric interpretation and while the issue is hardly settled, there is now also much greater stress on the limitations of shogunal authority and domain autonomy of action.   Some participants argued that scholars too readily abandoned the utility of "feudalism" as an attribute of the age.   A half-dozen monographs in the late nineteen-eighties and early nineteen-nineties used commoner protests (*ikki*) to argue that farmers still had it rough, a claim reinforced by some demographers who took effective potshots at early suggestions that birth patterns showed conscious family planning rather than response to a Malthusian vise.   As noted above, the world of arts and

letters is now known to have been far richer and more complicated than previous treatments suggested.

Participants generally agreed that no widely agreed upon unifying paradigm and characterization of the era is likely to emerge until more of the Tokugawa heritage has been explored, and explored in new ways. Art history, intellectual history and religious studies of the period, for example, have been dominated by those in which a scholar analyzes a single, prominent figure; however, that approach has begun to lose its luster and workshop participants across all disciplines have expressed interest in moving away from that model to study the religious practices and intellectual-cultural lives of more ordinary folk. (The discussion below regarding the need to accommodate the multifaceted, syncretic character of artists, intellectuals and religious figures also implies approaches that move beyond traditional practice.)

6. Regardless of discipline, there was a sense that the field needs to make our work of broader interest.   There was general agreement that early modern Japan specialists talk largely with and to each other or (sometimes only implicitly) to our modern Japan counterparts. To those outside the field, the period is seen as potentially interesting largely in its relationship to characteristics identified as precursors to the "modern" rather than holding attractiveness when treated on its own terms and defined by internal developments rather than its teleological links to Meiji Japan. This appears to be true across all of the disciplines we surveyed. Counter-examples might be offered to suggest interest in Japan from outside the field (sociologist S. N. Eisenstadt and Southeast Asian historian Victor Lieberman come to mind), but these examples are sufficiently rare that they highlight the problem rather than inspire confidence that others take interest in the work of early modern Japan specialists.

Beyond this, however, lies a broader question of how scholars can make this field interesting to people in other professional contexts, and to students and the broader public. While not the subject of extensive discussion, there was general agreement that the latter part of this problem was significant. Indeed, one participant commented that a review of recent doctoral theses suggested not only that were people choosing (and being allowed to choose) dull topics of limited interest; further, they were also writing in opaque and spiritless idiom.

Participants agreed that this issue could be solved partly by exploring subjects that personalize and humanize our writings on this period. This suggests a need to create less purely scholarly publications (especially those in which scholars of each of the respective sub-fields write mainly for each other) and more attractive materials for classroom use. However, these forms of professional activity tend to be under-rewarded in the institutions whose faculty author most of the publications in the field.

A hopeful note regarding this theme lay in the acute awareness of dynamic stories of change at the family and individual level even in the framework of substantial social and institutional stability. There are at least a few examples of scholarly publication that suggest the feasibility of generating interesting personal detail in the context of scholarly work.   Recent work by Ed Pratt in social history, and Melinda Takeuchi in art history come to mind.[4]

Nonetheless, even the inclusion of personal detail does not obviate the challenge of describing social settings, practices, religious concepts, office titles and functions for non-Japanese in a way that is consonant with an engaging and well-written story.[5] Quick shorthands such as describing a *bugyō* as a "magistrate" often fail because the contemporary Japanese office has considerably different duties than a court magistrate

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[4] Edward E. Pratt, *Japan's Proto-Industrial Elite: The Economic Foundations of the Gōnō.* Harvard East Asian Monographs 179, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Asia Center, 1999, and Melinda Takeuchi, *Taiga's True Views: The Language of Landscape Painting in Eighteenth-Century Japan*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992, are suggestive.

[5] The world of Tokugawa Japan is sufficiently removed from that of today's Japan to pose a similar challenge even within the Japanese market. One can find a variety of examples, some more successful than others, every Sunday evening on NHK's Taiga *dorama* series.

at the same time in England or France. The challenge of basic translation of Japanese concepts becomes even greater in realms beyond the political.

7. The polymath quality of many figures in the cultural, intellectual and political world, and the varied economic bases from which they operated strongly suggest the need for cross-disciplinary perspectives if we are to understand influences shaping developments in the late sixteenth to nineteenth centuries. Thinkers, preachers, artists and craftsmen, poets, and authors functioned in many contexts. Like their contemporaneous European and Chinese counterparts, they aspired to accomplishment in many fields. The practice of licensure in mathematics and other realms of learning played to the desire of ambitious villagers as well as political and cultural elites who sought to demonstrate their multi-faceted prowess. The time is ripe to exploit this circumstance through both cross-disciplinary cooperation by several scholars and through the efforts of individual scholars to apply multi-disciplinary perspectives and tools in their research.

8. "Theory" represents one means to cross the divide between Japan scholars and colleagues with other regional – national focus; however, use of "theory" raises questions about 1) the applicability of largely Western conceptual schemes to Japan and 2) the way Japan scholars have used "theory" in their studies. I place the word "theory" in quotation marks here because current use is typically very narrow. Unmodified, the term these days is often simply shorthand for the theory of literary criticism and post-structuralist conceptualizations. We occasionally find reference to other forms of theory, derived from political science, sociology, or economics, but on the whole, there is a tendency to treat all social science theory as bound up with a discredited "modernization theory" and it is extensively ignored.[6] While early problems

of employing, for example, Weberian theory to study Japan are by now well known, the issue arises in post-structuralist theory as well. As one example, a participant raised the controversial proposal of one scholar that Edo period literature might reasonably be characterized as "post-modern." The question remains as to whether use of post-structuralist theory commits the same errors that brought criticism to the use of other social science theory in Japanese studies: Are the concepts and theories being coarsely imposed on the data without looking carefully at the fit between data and concept?[7]

In this vein, some participants questioned the degree to which heavy focus on theory sometimes became a substitute for analysis of data. In this regard, the area of sharpest contention to date has concerned charges, levelled in the pages of journals such as *Monumenta Nipponica* or *Positions*, of sacrificing accuracy in translation in the name of developing or applying theoretical approaches derived from the work of Western scholars.

Participants who were critical of some of the trends they identified or of specific examples of what they saw as "abuse" of theory were not crying, "Abandon theory!" and to take that as the thrust of their arguments would be a serious distortion. There was a widespread sense that theory (of the post-structuralist, literary criticism type) was inescapable and that it had yielded some productive results; the concern was how to use it in a responsible and productive way to 1) learn more about Japan and 2) to find ways to communicate with non-Japan colleagues. Similar issues can be raised in regard to the use of social science theory in, e.g., the study of political, social or religious history, whether that of grand theorists such as Weber and Durkheim, or that of modern "rational choice" partisans.

Although the above comments reflect the emphasis in this facet of our discussion, a persistent set of additional questions arose regarding an

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[6] Chapters of J. Mark Ramseyer, *Odd Markets in Japanese History: Law and Economic Growth*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996, and James W. White, *Ikki: Social Conflict and Political Protest in Early Modern Japan*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995, represent

two exceptions that specifically employ social science perspectives that are not associated with post-structuralism.

[7] It remains to be seen what reactions will be to the continued efforts of S. N. Eisenstadt and his more theoretically-oriented colleagues. See "Early Modernities," *Daedalus* 127:3 (Summer 1998).

alternate means of expanding our audience: the degree to which late-sixteenth to mid-nineteenth-century Japanese practice was influenced by and could be properly analyzed through contemporary or classical Chinese conceptualizations and practice of literature, art, religion and thought. A consensus emerged that in such fields familiarity with Chinese practices was essential for appraisal of developments in Japan, and fundamental for understanding the degree to which such practices were modified or employed selectively by Japanese artists, thinkers, and religious groups. [8] These concerns suggest the possibility of treating Japan as part of the Chinese cultural sphere – stressing the distinctive features of Japan's use of continental patterns not just their commonality.

9. Western Europe and the United States may not be the appropriate comparative spheres through which we can reach out to a broader range of scholars. Implicit in much of the preceding discussion is the expectation that "The West" (western Europe and North America) set the standard for international comparisons to developments in early modern Japan. While not denying that there is merit in some such comparison and for some projects, the question repeatedly arose, "Why are developments in Japan so seldom compared to those of contemporary China, Korea or India, for example?" Family demographic patterns in Japan are clearly distinct from those in Western Europe; might we not learn more about the sources of difference if we also compared Japan's patterns to those of some other non-European society? While the choice of comparison in the case of demographic history may result from lingering influences of the modernization perspective, comparison of artistic and literary practice with that of China, for example, might yield an entirely different appreciation of the "non-standard" literary genre that professors Shirane and Marceau discussed in their arguments. Such studies have appeared in art history and literature in the past fifteen years – e.g., work by David Pollack, Melinda Takeuchi, and Patricia Graham – but even in these fields there was a

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[8] One of the most readable and effective demonstrations of the modification of Chinese practice and its naturalization in Japan is Melinda Takeuchi's *Taiga's True Views*.

strong sense that links with continental culture merit fuller consideration.

10. Despite the expansion of many cultural fields (literature, art, religion), history, and even social sciences into non-elite subjects among our non-Japan colleagues, the impact of such trends in the Enlgish-language literature are recent (dating largely from the 1980s) and still under-developed relative to other regional-national fields. Among many factors that lead to this end, three stand out. First, the field is still very small and those already established scholars have invested so much in mastering the techniques, conceptual apparatus and vocabulary of their original area of interest that they are unlikely to make a major shift to those research interests that reflect current American and European academic trends. Second, while our students at both the undergraduate and graduate level may get excited about topics and problems that are *au courant*, Japanese language preparation of most of these students is still typically inadequate for them to immediately begin research in pursuit of their intellectual interests. The time lag between the generation of their interest and their ability to act on that impulse is quite long even in the area of modern Japanese studies. The language demands of earlier historical periods require still greater investments of time. Third, in many areas of art, literature, religion and intellectual history, one must understand the practices of earlier eras (and perhaps of China and Korea as well) in order to have an appreciation of developments in the early modern era, adding to the body of preparatory material that one must master before actually undertaking research.

Regardless of the source, the consequences of this situation are clear and suggest some general realms for future research.

1) Investigation of the workings of lower levels of society, including popular religious practices, factors affecting family planning such as nutrition and religious belief, popular education and literacy and aspects of material culture.

2) Exploration of explicitly religious topics that go beyond the secularized treatments

of "Confucian" or "National Learning" scholars and treat their subjects in the intellectual context of the times rather than as stages in the development of autonomous intellectual and religious history.

3) Exploration of the links between religion and politics (e.g., the efforts of Matsudaira Sadanobu to use Shingaku for political ends).

4) Re-evaluation of the boundaries of, and within Japan during the early modern era (status, class, village, domain, frontiers and international, gender) regarding which participants sense a far greater permeability than had generally been acknowledged. Do boundaries of this sort become more elaborate over time? Do they become more rigid? Or do they weaken over time?

5) Re-assessment of the degree of political control of the Shogun over domains, domains over villages and towns, and villages, families and towns over their constituents and changing patterns of different groups' participation in the political and economic world.

6) Rather than looking at the large urban areas as autonomous centers of economic and cultural development, exploring changing patterns of social, economic and cultural interaction between urb, suburb and countryside as geographic mobility (migration, *dekasegi*, pilgrimage), economic diversity, and trade increased during the period.

7) Examination of the role of gender and the appropriateness of our current understandings of the role of gender. A number of recent works clearly undermine the rigid gender boundaries that are often presumed to have been operative.

11. Recent scholarship in most fields creates a heightened awareness of regional diversity. While scholars presume an urban – rural divide, the underlying assumption has been that the quality of the divide was generally uniform throughout the land and other regional differences were relatively unimportant. The general pattern of scholarship was to downplay the role of regional differences or dismiss them as exceptions that did not undermine accepted images. That picture has now begun to change. For example, literary studies have made something of a kowtow in the direction of regional variation by noting differences between Kansai-based traditions and those of the Kanto; art history has focused a lot on contrasting Kansai and Kanto artistic traditions as well as connections between them, without actually making that difference the object of study. That focus, and the interrelationship between the two earn greater attention these days, as does the active interaction of rural and urban writers of poetry. In the realm of socio-economic and political history, erstwhile national narratives are under attack and, in the extreme, domains are treated as nearly independent states. Scholars today are more aware of the strong regional variation in the incidence and impact of famines, variation domain responses to economic and population crises, variations in institutional development and domain autonomy. The impact of regionalism can no longer simply be ignored, no matter how much the relative balance of central authority and local autonomy might be debated in specific contexts or overall. In the realm of art history, scholars are increasingly exploring regional differences in craft traditions, especially ceramics.

This consciousness underlay several broader themes that engaged participants. Can we speak of a truly national culture at this point in Japan's history, one that extends beyond the capital and castle towns throughout the provinces? When do we get a self-conscious sense of national identity and under what circumstances? Is it largely a "positive" identification or created by a "negative" contrast with some "other," initially situated in East Asia, later identified as the West?

12. Participants widely expressed a continued interest in exploring more aspects of everyday society and culture. Some of the comments above suggest this concern, but it is worth repeating here for emphasis. Examined more closely, this interest is not just a simple wish

for more study of ordinary people. To state participant interest in this way excludes concern with the everyday life of elites, also a matter of interest: What was life like at court? For residents of castles? For women of all classes? Just as we asked above, "Can we speak of a truly national culture at this point in Japan's history?" in regard to the regional integration of Japan, we can extend that query across the social strata. Do we have a culture that extends beyond the elites and well into the middle and lower levels of society? If we have evidence that some people thought that they shared a national culture, in what contexts did they sense it, and who within Japan was likely to have this sense? How far down the social ladder does this sense extend?

13. Interest in new areas of research that moves away from the political and cultural center toward the influences of regionalism, lower socio-economic strata, and everyday practice encourage greater emphasis on the ability to use manuscript materials. The themes which many scholars now wish to explore and for which conference participants expressed the most interest – greater understanding of the lives of commoners and further exploration of the sources and consequences of regional variation, to name just two – call for work in sources that may not have been transcribed, edited and published in printed form. In contrast to studies of the collected works of famous authors or analysis of top-level domain and shogunal policy-making, the documents that require exploration are incompletely available in printed form, not available at all in printed form, or, in some cases when available, subject to error. A number of scholars – Ronald Toby, Anne Walthall, Janine Sawada, and Lawrence Marceau to name but a few – have already plunged into the world of manuscript sources in order to explore subjects where printed materials presented only a limited opportunity to explore questions of interest. This trend is likely to continue and suggests a clear need to consider how best to fill this need in training graduate students.

Summary

The preceding observations suggest a number of common issues that cross disciplinary boundaries in the field of early modern Japanese studies. The field is still relatively young, certainly still limited in numbers, and reflects current Western academic fashions at a rather slow pace. The challenges of integrating theoretical perspectives from literary theory, anthropology and other social sciences loom as large today as they did thirty years or more ago, both from the standpoint of the applicability of a particular theory and our ability to use it sensitively with Japanese data.

A major trend in the field is the de-centering of our attention. We are more concerned with non-elite groups and behavior and more aware of diverse regional patterns of social, political and cultural development and interaction than twenty years ago.[9] Participants clearly embraced the intellectual challenge of coping with the awareness of greater diversity and complexity that accompany this multi-faceted de-centering. One task for the field is to determine to what degree such diversity can be used to create new narratives at the pan-Japan level.

This challenge is matched by that of trying to create problem foci that are not slavishly tied to the "the modern" and providing a strong positive identity for the era on its own terms. While modernization theory typically was thought of as applying to political, economic and social concerns, our discussions made it clear that this approach affected the choice of topics for study in art and literature as well. Discussions clearly indicated the limiting our focus to the era's link to post

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[9] While discussion above concentrated on the role of literary/post-structuralist theory, theory alone can not explain the range of interests that have been affected by this de-centering. Two alternative examples: In historical demography, it is the very application of statistical methodology, approaches to sampling of data and the like that increased scholars' desire to explore the influences of regional differences. Political science methodology has played a similar role in encouraging recent scholars to think about the distribution of power throughout Japan as well as the activities of state-building.

Meiji Restoration developments distracts us from a variety of significant developments that depart from current emphases.

In some instances phenomena heretofore ignored directly bear on our assessment of how "modern" early modern Japan was. In the field of literature, popular genre of elite literature have been given rather short shrift in Western studies in favor of those that seem to presage the arrival of more "modern" forms of literature such as the novel. In the area of institutional history at the local level, the rather widespread existence of corporate forms of owning and managing arable land tends to contradict the image of near-modern property rights that dominates the field. In other realms, such as the continuing conflicts and tensions between the Shogun and the daimyo and between daimyo and retainers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, we have a different appreciation for the nature of the state even if this is treated separately from the question of its contribution to the "modernization" of Japan. From either perspective, we have much to gain by moving beyond investigations of problems that focus on the links between Tokugawa and Meiji Japan.

Both of these concerns underlie one broad question for the field: Wherein lies the dynamic story of the era? The answer to such a broad question will undoubtedly differ with each specialization, as it does today. It is likely to lead to continued variation in the way in which people define the chronological boundaries of the field and its subspecialties.[10]

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[10] These issues of characterization and definition of the period extend beyond simple academic debates. How they are resolved involves power relationships within the profession. Underlying many of the issues we identified looms the big question of who should or will have the principal role in defining the field. Western theorists? Classical or modern Japanese literature specialists? Comparable Chinese specialists? Our Japan scholar colleagues who focus on other eras? The people in the field? Non-Japanese practitioners in comparable American or European fields who make the hiring decisions in departments of history, religion, comparative literature, and art (especially in smaller programs)? To some degree all play a role, but one hopes that those in the field will have the

If the field(s) of early modern Japanese study face large challenges, our discussions also revealed a great optimism and excitement. The current state of the field provides a tremendous stimulus to undertake interdisciplinary study. The importance of thinking about the era from an interdisciplinary perspective was highlighted at a follow up meeting the group had in conjunction with the annual meeting of AAS the year following our conference. Participants then noted that often change within their particular disciplines was motivated by external factors. For example, art was motivated to change by an increase in and changing distribution of wealth as well as new developments in technology. Religion was influenced by economics, literature by changes to demographics (audience) also technology (i.e. development of printing). Indeed, one of the most exciting elements of the conference was the opportunity it gave us all to learn about developments and issues facing fields other than our own and to explore the possibility of using data that is not traditionally employed in one field in a new intellectual arena. This stimulus to interdisciplinary work comes not only in our concern for the polymaths of the age, but also from the increased awareness of the importance of regionalism in socio-economic and political history. One suggestion for multi-disciplinary study of a single region was especially well received – the Shinano region – because there is already a substantial clutch of studies that touch on this region.[11] In the future, interdisciplinary work may help to provide a deeper understanding of early modern Japan, a fuller awareness of characteristics that usefully define a distinctive era of Japanese history, and provide a firm basis for integrating a study of early modern Japan with historical and cultural developments in other parts of the world.

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primary role, especially in the area of faculty hiring decisions.

[11] There is already a core of people who have published on at least some aspect of Shinshu: Laurel Cornell, Selcuk Esenbel, Anne Janetta, Herman Ooms, Ronald Toby, and Karen Wigen.

A Postscript

Authors of the various essays that have appeared in the last several issues of *EMJ* have endeavored to incorporate in their essays the publications that appeared between the conference and the time of publication; of these, I would like to take special note of Marcia Yonemoto's *Mapping Early Modern Japan: Space, Place, and Culture in the Tokugawa Period, 1603-1868*.[12]   Her work clearly moves in a number of intellectual directions that reflect the desiderata of conference participants.   To cite only some of the larger elements: She takes the era on its own terms, liberated from subservience to Tokugawa links to post-Restoration Japan.   Comparison with the West plays a role in the study, but it does not become one-sided; it is balanced by comparison with those societies closest to Japan.   Yonemoto creatively exploits materials (literary sources and maps most heavily) that have not been widely used by American scholars and, more importantly, often uses them in ways that Japanese scholars have not, expanding their utility beyond the boundaries of the disciplines that typically use these sources.   (Literary sources are used to explore mental maps of Japan; maps are explored for what they reveal of elite conceptions of Japan's place in the world as well as in the context of scientific and technical development.)   While not a biographical study, descriptions of her actors' reveal their polymath intellectual and professional lives.   Their activities, and the broader description of her subject heighten awareness of regional and class variation in the way people perceived the Japan in which they lived.   The highly literate (and even artistic) individuals Yonemoto analyzes clearly rank as members of the elite, yet the study focuses on their more everyday perceptions of their world, not their role in governance and generation of artifacts of "high" culture.

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[12] Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.

Howard Hibbett, *The Chrysanthemum and the Fish: Japanese Humor Since the Age of the Shoguns*. Kodansha International, Tokyo, 2002. 208 pages. $28.00, cloth.

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In *The Chrysanthemum and the Fish*, Howard Hibbett argues that the Japanese sense of humor has been unappreciated by both Japanese and Westerners, citing authorities as disparate as Arthur Koestler, who described Japanese humor as "astonishingly mild and poetical, like weak, mint-flavored tea" (p. 11) and Inoue Hisashi, who claimed that "on the whole Japanese people are serious" (p. 13). Hibbett challenges this assessment, arguing that Japan actually possesses a rich and varied comic tradition, making "the enormous corpus of Japanese literary humor, and of jokes, comic poetry, [and] recorded vestiges of oral storytelling" (p. 13) the subject of a book which is both amusing and informative.

The title is a parody of Ruth Benedict's famous 1946 study of Japanese cultural patterns, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*. Here, Hibbett pairs the chrysanthemum – Benedict's emblem of elite, aristocratic culture – with the fish, which he uses as an emblem of earthy, low culture, or in other words the comic. (The joke works in Japanese too: *sakana* [fish], though different semantically, has the same vowels as *katana* [sword], and hence is worth a bit of a chuckle.) He notes that the comic side of Japanese literary culture has been largely overlooked by scholars and excluded from the canon as well. Without attempting to offer a complex theoretical conceptualization of "humor" or facile generalizations about the Japanese "national character," Hibbett observes that the comic tradition in Japan is diverse and shaped by many forces, including regional and class differences, the interaction of literacy and orality, and changing social mores. His purpose is not to define Japanese humor, but to give readers some sense of its variety. While he does make frequent reference to humor in drama, *rakugo* storytelling, and other forms of performance, most of the discussion focuses on literary humor.

The first chapter presents an overview of Japanese humor from its earliest sources to its pre-

sent-day forms, making brief reference to major developments in the historical and social background of the periods it covers. This chapter is useful is a foundation for the more in-depth discussion that follows in later chapters, but it could also stand on its own as an introduction to the varieties of Japanese humor. Hibbett traces the earliest origins of literary humor to *Kojiki*, and takes note of the comic aspects of *Genji monogatari* and *Makura no sōshi*. Reference to the humor of the medieval period includes mention of *kyōgen* and popular tales. These early sources are discussed briefly, prefatory to the more detailed introduction that follows to the cultural landscape of the early modern period. Here he lists the major forms and genres of early modern humor, both written and oral, some of its celebrities and their works: Anrakuan Sakuden's *Seisuishō* (Laughs to Banish Sleep), Hokusai, Hiraga Gennai, and Jippensha Ikku all put in brief appearances. The last two are discussed more deeply in later chapters.

The balance of the book is a generally chronological survey: Chapter 2 has as its primary topic Saikaku's haikai and fiction but also discusses the cultural environment of Osaka in the Genroku period. Chapter 3 centers its discussion on eighteenth century Edo. It sifts through the varieties of fictional works and joke books that emerged from the milieu of the Yoshiwara quarter, highlighting the work of Gennai, Ōta Nanpo, and Santō Kyōden as well as some lesser-known "wits." Chapter 4 explores the interaction between *bakumatsu*-period fiction and *rakugo* anchored around several major figures, Shikitei Samba and Ikku. Chapter 5 describes the developments of comic literature in the Meiji period as it confronted imported ideas of propriety, especially in literature. It explores Fukuzawa Yukichi's views on humor, the remarkable success of the British *rakugo* entertainer Henry Black, and offers a detailed analysis of humor in the work of Natsume Sōseki. The last chapter discusses the uneasy position of humor in the modern period – unacceptable as "pure literature" but nevertheless irresistible to writers such as Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, and Inoue Hisashi, as well as stars of stage and screen like Kitano Takeshi and Tamori. The book also features a large number of images, including many illustrations from early modern fictional works.

The Chrysanthemum and the Fish is most notable for its comprehensiveness. It covers a wide range of genres over four centuries of development, and manages to accomplish this in a way that informs as well as entertains. Broad descriptions of historical context and biographical details of individual authors mesh neatly with literary analysis. Best of all, Hibbett is able to convey a sense of the variety of the works he discusses by including a generous amount of translations. That most of these succeed in being funny is a testimony to the skill of the translator.

Still, the book leaves some questions open. Given the its impressive range of coverage, more thorough exploration of the Japanese concepts of humor would have been useful, especially as they were framed by terms such as *kokkei* (滑稽), *warai* (笑い), *okashimi* (おかしみ), and so on. Also, there is no discussion of the role of women in the history of humor's development in the early modern and modern periods. With the exception of some *kyōka* poets and *rakugo* performers, it appears that women were never the creators of humor in the centuries following the Heian period, only its object. The reason for this is worth discussing. Another concern is that the prose style might sometimes present problems for non-specialist readers, especially in the opening chapter. While its casual tone is inviting, in places it veers so rapidly through historical periods, names, and terms that it occasionally becomes hard to follow. Elsewhere, the specialist might be frustrated in the few places where the English titles of tales are given, but not the Japanese.

On the whole, however, the book is very readable and will be valuable for both non-specialists and specialists, particularly those interested in the literary and cultural history of early modern Japan. Erudite yet accessible, *The Chrysanthemum and the Fish* is a study of Japanese humor that is not merely finny, but funny.

Lee Butler, *Emperor and Aristocracy in Japan, 1467-1680: Resilience and Renewal.* Harvard East Asian Monograph, 209. Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002.
© **Carol Richmond Tsang**, University of Illinois, Chicago.

The medieval imperial court was both stronger and more resilient than is usually thought, argues Lee Butler in his new book, *Emperor and Aristocracy in Japan, 1467-1680.* According to Butler, the emperor and aristocrats knew their strengths, and used them to their own advantage. The *sengoku* court survived primarily because warriors found it useful, but he contends that courtiers worked tirelessly to keep the warriors convinced of the court's importance. It functioned as a religious symbol, and as the "arbitrator of religious matters" (p. 104), but even more importantly it was a source of artistic culture, a connection with the past, and "the only institution in the country that enjoyed . . . overarching authority" (p. 58).

Divided into eight chapters, plus introduction, conclusion and three appendices, the book is organized chronologically, but often thematically within each period, which sounds more unwieldy than it is. Butler's topic is complex, and the book's organization reflects that complexity. The text itself is absorbing and readable, and most of the time the structure works well.

Chapter 1 discusses the challenges faced by the court in the course of the Ōnin/Bunmei war, as many, probably most, aristocrats found themselves homeless in the charred city of Kyoto. Butler describes the court at its nadir, with its members largely dispersed and its income disappearing. In an especially welcome section, he also describes the women who were engaged in the court's administration, and how *sengoku* provided them with the extended opportunities that allowed them to become involved.

The second chapter treats aspects of the court's life that made it distinctive and important: the arts, ceremonies, scholarship, and so on. Many courtiers had fled to the protection of daimyo in the various provinces and made their livings by teaching traditional arts like poetry and calligraphy to the new elite. The court continued to hold artistic gatherings, and perform annual ceremonies, Butler writes, partly to put on a show of normalcy, but also to demonstrate a continued relevance and "adherence to precedent" (p. 97). Members of the court were poor, however, and the show required some improvisation to keep up. Few, if any, courtiers owned all the necessary clothing for the various observances, for example, and Butler shows us networks of courtiers sharing clothes in order to be properly outfitted.

In Chapter 3, we see the impact of *sengoku* on the court most clearly, as many courtiers formed relationships with warriors and promoted their interests at court and elsewhere. Oda Nobunaga's triumphal entrance into Kyoto resulted in a number of changes, but not right away. Only gradually did courtiers begin to prefer residence in the capital, and took up again the pursuit of court rank and titles, which had become somewhat unattractive because of how liberally the court had awarded them to warriors.

The next chapter continues the discussion of the court and its relationships with Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi and Tokugawa Ieyasu. One of the more intriguing sections deals with the court's efforts at mediation, particularly those times it ordered Nobunaga to make peace with an enemy, as it did, for example, with Honganji. Butler sees this as a way the court increased its capital, as it were, because in negotiating for the two sides, the court also "laid claim to a position of authority . . . a position recognized as superior . . . to the antagonists" (p. 132). Hideyoshi made special efforts to bolster the court and show respect to the emperor, partly because he relied on court rank to maintain his own authority. In spite of his troubles, Hideyoshi remained a warrior, considered a barbarian by the courtiers, and never became an insider at court. One usually thinks of Ieyasu as more distant from the court than Hideyoshi, though Butler argues that Ieyasu was more capable than his predecessor to interact with the court as a courtier. Arguably he identified himself more closely with the court than the other unifiers. He hired aristocratic diviners, for instance, and used rites for the shogunal investiture ceremonies that mirrored those for imperial investitures.

The last four chapters go over the changing relationship of the court with the Tokugawa *bakufu*. Chapter 5 deals with the Court Lady Scandal,

interpreting it as an incident that sorted out the roles of court and *bakufu*. After 1603, Butler says, the authorities of court and *bakufu* were not clearly delineated, and the possibility existed that the court might be involved in political matters. This question was settled mostly through two incidents that pitted the emperor against the *bakufu*.

In 1609, it became clear that a number of the emperor's consorts had taken lovers from the ranks of the nobility, and in two cases, from the lower nobility. No one disputed that the consorts and their lovers had acted reprehensibly, or quarreled with the decision to relieve them of their court ranks. The question of further punishment created a problem, however. The emperor, Go-Yōzei, supposedly had the authority to decide matters within his own court, though he was required to notify the *bakufu*. When he did so, Ieyasu at first responded that the matter should be settled by the emperor, which itself implied that the permission was his to give. Trouble arose, however, when Go-Yōzei insisted on severe punishment: the execution of all involved (five women and seven men). The rest of the court argued that the penalty was too severe, and Ieyasu put pressure on Go-Yōzei to mitigate it. In the end, Ieyasu (and the court) prevailed, and all were exiled except for the two lowest-ranking men, who were executed. A similar struggle occurred a year later over Go-Yōzei's desire to abdicate. Again, the *bakufu* prevailed, and so the court had no choice but to recognize the *bakufu*'s dominance.

In Chapter 6, Butler advances what may be his most controversial finding, a reconsideration of the *Kuge shohatto*, "Regulations for the Emperor and the Nobility". Thus far, the rules have been interpreted as a radical redefining of the purview of the court and of its ties with the *bakufu*, setting limits on the court. The first article is seen as an order to the emperor to concentrate on the arts and scholarship, and leave politics to the *bakufu*. Butler dismisses this interpretation. "Nothing about them is revolutionary, and nowhere do they significantly constrict the court or its activities" he insists (p. 209). He points out as an example that the first article recommends several specific works for the emperor to study, and that they are "political works that offer concrete advice on how

to rule" (p. 209). Furthermore, many of the provisions were simply restating practices that had been introduced earlier, such as separate ranks for courtiers and warriors. What actually redefined the court's position was subtler: Ieyasu took it upon himself to dictate to the court the even in matters within the scope of the court's own business. He even regulated proper dress. Merely the issuance of the regulations, then, constituted the restrictions on the court.

Butler summarizes his conclusions on this issue at the beginning of Chapter 7. He argues that the regulations were "a powerful pronouncement of the need for the emperor . . . [but also] disabling", going on to observe that "politically, [the court] held no mandate to act" (p. 225). The court was not so much told to stay out of government, as it was not given a basis for becoming involved. The bulk of the chapter, however, deals with changes that occurred with relation to particular individuals in the court and *bakufu*.

The final chapter deals with the court after Iemitsu, when all understood it as set apart from government. The court settled down to concentrate on the arts and scholarship. By the second half of the seventeenth century, Butler declares, the position of the court and emperor had been redefined. He insists, however, that the court had a continuing and important role as the center of high culture, at least until the Genroku era when the culture of the commoners blossomed. By then, the world of the court "lacked political and social vitality" (p. 286), and so was outstripped by the townspeople.

In the conclusion, Butler moves to the question of ideology, arguing that its main value was its history, not its mythical origins, which courtiers never mentioned. Ultimately, the warriors wanted to imitate the court: "they adopted its culture and emulated its ways" (p. 296), both enhancing and relying on the court's prestige. Finally, the court survived because of its history, and "its ability to keep that past alive in the present" (p. 296).

The three appendices are lists, the first two essentially glossaries. The first records, in Japanese characters, the books Ieyasu collected while doing background research for the Regulations of the Court and Nobility. The second provides characters for the bulk of Japanese words used in the text. The third, however, is an annotated bib-

liography of the most important courtier diaries used for the study.

There is a list of works cited as well as the endnotes, and an index. This reviewer did not find the index to be wholly satisfactory, as its coverage is spotty. Sections include listings for such items as "fishmongers", "flower-viewing" and "kickball". One searches in vain, however, for "precedence", although its importance is discussed repeatedly in the text. Similarly, "scholarship" lists only two pages in the first chapter, though it also figures in, for example, Butler's discussion of the *Kuge shohatto*. Most of the index consists of proper names and Japanese terms. A more thoughtful index would have been helpful.

Emperor and Aristocracy in Japan, 1467-1680 is the first major work in English that takes the late medieval court as its subject. Mary Elizabeth Berry's excellent *Culture of Civil War in Kyoto* makes use of many courtier diaries, and gives us the texture of mid-fifteenth century Kyoto, but the court is not her focus, and Butler's book covers a much longer period of time. For that reason alone, it is valuable. It's a cliché, but this study truly does take its subject out of the shadows and into the light, allowing us to see much that had been dim.

Butler's research is thorough, and he has used an appropriate variety of sources. He takes virtually no interpretation for granted, and this is one of the book's major strengths. In addition, he exposes much of the inner workings of the court, from the ceremonial observances to the women who found a place in court administration in the late fifteenth century.

Some of his arguments will be controversial, especially his re-assessment of the interactions between Ieyasu and the court. The book's weakest part comes in connecting the court and its concerns with the warriors. One gets a detailed understanding of what the court did, and how its members used its various tools to attract the warriors' attention. What remains less clear, however, is precisely why the warriors found the court, its ceremonies and its arts appealing. Adherence to precedent was certainly important to members of the aristocracy, but why would it be important to the tradition-breaking daimyo? In the end, we are told that warriors had always supported the court, and that the relationship had worked, so naturally warriors would want to continue it.

The question of the court's appeal is, however, very complex, and one suspects that it will take another book (or more) to address it. *Emperor and Aristocracy* takes up new issues of real importance to understanding fifteenth- to seventeenth-century Japan, and handles them with clarity and insight. It is welcome indeed.

Political-Institutional History of Early Modern Japan: A Bibliography

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Contents:

I have reserved the heading "Politics" for studies that deal with major, far-reaching political trends and the events associated with them and I have used the "Policy" section to deal with more temporally and spatially limited studies. Thus, events leading to the establishment of the Tokugawa *bakufu* are treated in the "Politics" section, while studies of government relations with merchants (domain or *bakufu*) are treated in the "Policy" section. "Institutional/Government Structures" has been reserved for studies of the long-lasting arrangements through which political power was distributed throughout the late sixteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries rather than studies that focus on specific events or policies. I classified materials based on my understanding of where the major emphasis of each book or essay lies, even when the work may have substantial implications for other subjects even within the realm of politics.

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