The Center For Far Eastern Studies is pleased to present this second volume of "Select Papers", published at the University of Chicago.

The "Select Papers from the Center For Far Eastern Studies" focus on specific themes in Japanese or Chinese studies. The papers are written and compiled by advanced graduate students, under the guidance of the Center and the editorial supervision of individual faculty. This year's papers were selected from the seminars of Professors Tetsuo Najita and H. D. Harootunian.

We wish to express our gratitude to the individual authors for assuming editorial responsibility. We are also grateful to Verna Burson, Claudia Rex, and Mildred Shanklin for their assistance in the production of this issue.
SELECT PAPERS FROM
THE CENTER FOR FAR EASTERN STUDIES

No. 2, 1977-78

The University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction. ........................................ 3

The Ethics of Protest by Commoners in Late Eighteenth Century Japan by Anne Walthall ........ 5

Intellectual and Moral Foundations of Empirical Agronomy in Eighteenth Century Japan by Jeffrey Marti. ................................................. 41

The Myōkoninden: Analysis of a Nineteenth Century Collection of Jodo Shinshu Stories by Elizabeth Harrison ............................. 81

Kusaka Genzui: His Action and Thought, 1859-1864 by Thomas Huber ............................. 114

Politicians and Reform in Taishō-Showa Japan by John Vanderbrink ............................. 145
INTRODUCTION

The five papers selected for this volume range from a consideration of peasant disturbances in the late eighteenth century to an evaluation of early twentieth century efforts to construct a liberal ideology. All fall within the larger category of social and intellectual history.

Anne Walthall has investigated social disturbances in the Temmei period from the perspective of the ethical expectations of townspeople and peasants. She contends that such disturbances—in the eyes of the commoners—"were performing the essential task of rectifying the system, not subverting it."

In Jeffrey Marti's study of empirical agronomy we have an analysis of the epistomology of Kaibara Ekken. Marti seeks to uncover Kaibara's "intentionality or problem orientation, and the manner in which he frames his understanding and response to a perceived problem." He sees in Kaibara's project "a new interest in agricultural life and agricultural principles" that had far-reaching significance to life and thought.

Elizabeth Harrison focuses on an heretofore unstudied aspect of popular Buddhism in Tokugawa Japan. She analyzes the "Book of Saints" (Myōkōninden) of the Shinshū sect and finds in these biographical accounts of saintly commoners, an effort to revitalize the Buddhist faith among the general population.

The studies of Thomas Huber (now of Duke University) and John Vandenbrink concentrate on the problem of ideology and action in modern Japan. Huber examines the ideological framework within which the political action of the late Tokugawa activist Kusaka Genzui and other loyalists might be interpreted. In the case of Kusaka, Huber sees the development of a meaningful revolutionary strategy that links his efforts to Yoshida Shōin on the one hand and the large scale military program of Takusugi Shinsaku on the other. It is his belief that there is much rational political content in the radicalism of Kusaka and his cohorts. Finally, John Vandenbrink has studied the problem of the ideology of political leaders in the Taishō period as it relates to questions of reform.
His essay centers on four key political figures—Takahashi Korekiyo—a banker-politician, Hamaguchi Osachi—a party leader, Ozaki Yukio—a long standing proponent of parliamentary government, and Muto Sanji—founder of a political party for businessmen. He finds in all of these examples the realization of an historical crisis in which "their society was beset by stagnation and failure." Vandenbrink concludes that the solution to this modern failure of nerve was in moral self-cultivation that would mediate between the contradiction of "competition and social harmony."

Tetsuo Najita

H. D. Harootunian
When the object of historical research is to discover how a set of people gave meaning to action, rather than to categorize types of action and to arrange them along a developmental scheme, the endeavor lies as much in the field of intellectual history as social history. One way to uncover the underlying assumptions that condition how a group perceives and responds to the pressures of its environment is to investigate the structure of intent that generates documents taken within their context of action and social milieu. In this study, the aim is to reconstruct the ethics of protest by commoners within the context of social disturbance in Japan in the 1780s, focused specifically on how peasants and townspeople perceived political authority, how their range of responses to political pressure related to differences between groups and their social environments, how they employed the conventions of language to justify their action, and how they dealt with a changing society through changes in consciousness.

Riots, uprisings, and rebellions have long been recognized as the reaction of premodern crowds to the threat of relative deprivation. In Japan as well conflict can be reduced to inevitable causes: crop failures mean famine which breed rice riots; corruption in government leads to arbitrary exactions which lead to economic uncertainty which leads to social unrest; government intervention in trade results in lower profits for producers which results in uprisings. However, this kind of reductionism cannot explain that the significance of protest lies in the fact that the people involved acted out their perception of right and wrong and that action was controlled by a consciously recognized moral code. In order to uncover this moral code—ethics in protest—the meaning of written statements must be weighed equally with forms of action, for the appearance of petitions, circular
letters, posters, and leaflets was an integral part of
protest movements in late eighteenth century Japan. Be¬
sides, to ignore what commoners said and to focus only on
the limitations inherent in their action is to deny that
commoners had any body of shared assumptions other than
those handed down by the ruling class, or that they had
any understanding of what their action implied.

The framework of this study consists of comparisons
between forms of action and written documents, as well as
statements that imply the conflicts of interest, justifi¬
cations for protest, and changes in consciousness by
commoners. The purpose is not merely to demonstrate that
groups of people respond to a variety of social pressures
in different ways, but that in all responses there are
discoverable perceptions of what is an ethical world order.
In the world view of a group there is a perception of re¬
ality, the way things are, and of an ideal, the way things
should be. The fit between these two determines the
possibilities for action—whether a particular course of
behavior is seen as feasible or potentially effective,
whether it is necessary to act in order to bring the
actuality closer to an ideal model. It also provides the
justification for action—that the ideal need be achieved
in reality. From the forms of action of discrete groups
one may work backward through the problems they are trying
to solve to the principles that demand a solution to be
found. These principles are based on perceptions of what
is right and on a critical awareness of what is wrong,
which together constitute the content of informal ethical
consciousness. This ethical perception of reality, the
constant comparison of actual circumstances with an ideal
abstract norm, legitimated protest in the eyes of the
commoners.

The purpose of this paper is not to investigate the
emergence of a tradition of protest or to trace its de¬
velopment. Consequently, the focus is not on a series of
events separated in time that occured in one locality,
but on events that happened in widely separated areas
within a specific time period. The Tenmei period, 1781–
1788, has been chosen because it was clearly a period of
crisis, of systematic breakdown, of wide-spread disorder
in high government circles, cities, towns and villages;
yet, it was not a period of revolution when radically new
ideas drastically changed the form and content of opposition to political authority. In this period, the significance of an intensification in action was masked by traditional forms of protest. Since they were not qualitative changes in structure, the distinguishing characteristics of the Tenmei period—how it differed from the 1750s or 1710s—were obscured by a quantifiable increase in incidents. Another problem to be faced is the difficulty of defining a specific change in consciousness for an entire country within a limited period. In the semi-autonomous domains of Tokugawa Japan, regional variations and geographical conditions played an important role in determining how quickly the political and economic environment changed, and they set limits on how people were able to respond to new opportunities and different forms of exploitation.

Commoners faced three problems in the Tenmei period which in their opinion could only be solved by political authority. The first of these was a crisis of subsistence brought on by poor crops, often leading to hoarding by grain merchants, and a breakdown in the distribution system. Because natural disasters, such as the eruption of Mt. Asama in 1783, were compounded by human factors, commoners put pressure on their political superiors to reduce taxes and to distribute food. The second was misgovernment or arbitrary exactions by corrupt government officials or village headmen, and the third was government intervention in trade through officially sponsored monopolies and fees. Examples of how commoners met and dealt with these problems form the bulk of this paper.

Forms of social disturbance during the 1780s ranged from nonviolent appeals to pitched battles between peasants and warriors, depending on the type of problem being confronted and the social composition of the group involved. The methods employed to bring grievances to the attention of political authority were not arbitrary; they were selected to fit each particular situation: the issues and the actors. While social context played an important role in determining the way a confrontation was articulated and justified by commoners, and this relationship cannot be ignored, the first step will be to describe the structure of different forms of protest and the
events leading up to them in order to illustrate the range of responses to governmental pressure by townspeople and peasants.

The most spectacular examples of social disturbance in the 1780s were the urban riots in the fifth and sixth months of 1787 in the cities of Edo, Osaka, Nagasaki, Kyōto, Nara, Sakai, and Fushimi, and in the castle towns of Kōchi, Kōfu, Hiroshima, Kumamoto, Akizuki, Hakata, Yoshida, Suruga, Wakayama, and Kōriyama. An extraordinary increase in the price of rice and other commodities brought about as much by bakufu monetary policies and hoarding by merchants as by a bad harvest formed the immediate background. In Edo, the first act of protest was performed by wealthy merchants who petitioned bakufu officials in charge of Edo city administration to do something about the high prices. When this tactic failed—the official announced that "townspeople are not the sort who need rice for food"—the shop renters and laborers in the city led a different kind of response and on the night of the twentieth day of the fifth month, they smashed (uchi-kowashi) thirty-two houses and rice shops. The next day they tore down seventy-some rice stores. According to an account written by a ward elder (machi toshiyori),

Young and old, men and women participated. The sounds of destruction were like thunder. Padded silk garments and other clothes fluttered in the sky. Piles of rice and beans were heaped up like a severe storm at sea—all household furnishings were destroyed.

In one night there were riots in ten different areas. Finally groups of townspeople went to as yet untouched rice stores and demanded that rice be sold to them at a price they could pay. In the end vagrants joined in, and they stole rice or demanded that it be given to them. The riots continued another four days until city officials, spurred to action at last, distributed rice to the people living in rented rooms in back alleys. A thousand buildings had been destroyed. The Edo rice riots, as an example of urban centered protest, exhibited three forms of action by commoners: petition, destruction, and price fixing.
Urban unrest in Fushimi, a city located between Kyoto and Osaka, occurred in response to misgovernment rather than to high prices, and it was led by a different stratum among the townspeople. It marked the culmination of mismanagement by the bakufu city administrator for the preceding seven years. Corruption, bribery, extortion, and embezzlement by officials and their henchmen had antagonized everyone from wealthy merchants to humble laborers, but the precipitating factor in the disturbance was the dismissal of seven city elders in 1785. From their point of view, they were dismissed because, "being diligent (tsutomeru) in the performance of their duties (yakugi)" they stood in the way of even more serious crimes by what they considered to be evil elements in the city. Two elders first decided to appeal directly to the bakufu over the head of the city magistrate. They had taken action before it was brought to their attention that direct appeals even by officials were in defiance of bakufu regulations and that their petition would not be accepted by the authorities in Edo. They changed tactics and returned to Fushimi, where they allowed themselves to be placed in custody of the city. The questions raised by their action, subsequent arrest, and death in prison, forced the bakufu to consider their complaint seriously. The whole tone of the Fushimi disturbance was much more subdued than the Edo riots. It was a much more serious undertaking.

While petitions were the standard vehicle of protest, the variety in the grammatical structure of the arguments they presented suggests the kind of differences that were found in the social environment of their authors. The five petitions written in 1787 by the farmers of four villages deep in the mountains of Tosa on the island of Shikoku contrast strikingly with the ones written by the Fushimi elders. One Fushimi petition was over three times as long as any of the Tosa petitions. It contained thirty-nine sections, one of which was composed of over one thousand characters, compared with eighteen sections, the longest containing two hundred eighty characters, in the Tosa petitions. Both sets of petitions were written in the formal epistolary style, sorobun, distinguished by the heavy use of characters rarely separated by kana, inversions of verb endings in an imitation of Chinese, and
the use of relatively simple stylized sentence patterns. However, a dissimilarity in the style of the petitions is readily apparent. The Tosa petitions were composed of short, clearly related sentences with a limited number of patterns using nontechnical vocabulary. Most of the sections in the body of the petitions ended with similar perorations: "We humbly petition you to please command that...." Each item was carefully built up out of a statement of the problem, its effect on the peasants' livelihood, and a recommended solution. In the Fushimi petitions, the sentences were much longer and subordinate clauses were piled into elaborate and extended sentence patterns. Verb endings were slightly less complex and were arranged more carelessly. Sections generally contained a verbose, loosely structured statement of a problem, but the effect was often merely implied and an explicit remedy was seldom suggested. One can assume that city elders, accustomed to expressing themselves in writing, wrote in a close approximation of oral mannerisms. the concise style of the Tosa petitions, on the other hand, suggests a barely acquired and little practiced literacy on the part of its authors.

In Tosa, protest began with the presentation of three petitions. Then, when han officials ignored their requests to allow free trade in certain kinds of paper, the peasants escaped to a temple in the neighboring domain in Iyo.11 Even in the Muromachi period, flight as a type of social protest had become a tactical device employed by commoners to put pressure on han officials in order to force them to acknowledge the peasants' demands. It was an effective use of the dramatic gesture. A month later, peasants were promised that there would be no reprisals, and they were invited to state their demands in full.11

The battles fought by peasants in Fukuyama han, located midway between Hiroshima and Okayama on the Inland Sea, were the opposite of flight, a nonviolent form of rural disturbance. When han officials rebuilt the Ichinomiya shrine in Bingo, they levied special contributions for the enterprise on the peasants. In return, a letter circulated among the villages calling for a simultaneous insurrection of the entire han, using shrine and temple bells for tocsins. Prior to the outbreak of violence, on the third day of the new year, 1787, peasants
from the area visited Ichinomiya shrine incessantly—an excellent opportunity to pray for victory and to develop organizational links between villages. During the course of the uprising, the ringleaders, through their firm control over the peasant army, defied han officials dispatched to quell the uprising and forced them to accept some twenty demands. They also petitioned the neighboring han of Okayama to mediate for them. Meanwhile, they formed a contingency plan to petition the bakufu office in Osaka.12

Violent confrontations between a peasant army and government troops did not mean the pitting of an unstructured mob against disciplined professional soldiers. Peasant leaders evidently knew enough of military tactics and tradition to fight a regular army to a standstill. The kind of organization that was so effective in Fukuyama may be even more clearly seen in the following case. In 1738 in Taira han of northern Honshu peasant leaders requisitioned one man from each household. These men were formed into units of one hundred, based on their village affiliation with each unit carrying a banner that displayed the names of the group and the village. The ringleaders ordered the men to wear old clothes and straw raincoats, to bring food for five days of camping out, and to carry soup bowls hung from their hips for drinking water. This peasant army guarded against intervention from other han to prevent reinforcements from reaching its own han troops. Furthermore, it stopped the payment of taxes, and it hid the tax rice in a mountain storehouse.13

Peasant action in Tosa exhibits the commoners' capability to put up a united front in opposing government policies. The events in Fukuyama add another dimension to the traditional image of village solidarity. The combination of the peasants' ability to act out the village consensus and the warriorlike frame of reference for village leaders created a militant peasantry capable of effectively protecting its own interests.

The organization of peasants into supra-village leagues, for example the Settsu and Kawachi kokuso (provincial wide appeals) of 1788, did not have to mean violent confrontations with government authority. This organization, which extended over several domains and two
provinces embracing some 600 villages in the Kansai plain near Osaka, suggests a grass roots peasant solidarity overcoming both the feudal fragmentation of the political system and the traditional isolation of villages. That peasant solidarity was not necessarily dependent on village leaders can be seen in the attempt by the poor peasants alone in three villages in Settsu to present a group petition in 1783. A nearby shrine again provided a meeting place from which they jointly requested the lord to accept an inferior grade of rice for the land tax. They stayed within the confines of nonviolent collective protest, but the han response was to stress the illegality of group petitions. The confrontation was resolved by the peasants asking forgiveness for having united in a group and promising not to do so again.

In the forms of disturbance described above, the main thrust of action was directed against particular manifestations of political authority and occasionally against rich merchants. In other cases the objects of attack were officials, moneylenders, and landlords—the wealthy strata in a village. Farmers in the Hitotsubashi domain of Izumi, another province on the Kansai plain, resisted the domanal policy of maintaining the normal tax rate despite a failure in the cotton crop in 1782, and they destroyed the residence of a village headman who, in his role as moneylender and money changer, had supported han policies. In such cases the position of village leaders was seen by the peasants as inimical to their own interests and as a threat to their sense of village community. As Hugh Borton wrote, "The village officials, as the attorneys and representatives of the controlling class, collected the taxes, spied on the plans of the farmers for insurrection and added special taxes for their own profit". Toward the end of the eighteenth century, conflict within villages added another dimension to the attacks by commoners on political authority.

Village disturbances engaged many of the primary symbols in peasant life. When the role of old families as exemplars of ethical conduct for the villagers came into conflict with the peasants' sense of commitment to the welfare of the community, older patterns of action were given new meaning because these patterns were performed by people not of the village official class. The
pattern of action here was that of an individual attempting to redress wrongs on behalf of his village.

The 1783 eruption of Mt. Asama in the Japan alps caused a serious crop failure in the landlocked province of Shinano, northwest of Edo. When famine threatened, peasants from mountain villages along the inland highway leading to Edo (Nakasendō) banded together and invaded Shinano villages, destroying buildings belonging to rice wholesalers and wealthy farmers. Along the way more peasants joined them, and the crowd of 3,000 or more rampaged through Komoro han and penetrated the eastern section of Ueda han as they laid ruin to grain stores, sake houses, and prosperous farms. This social disruption, ostensibly due to a crop failure, formed the background to a local disturbance where the peasants attacked the prerogatives of the village headman.

The headman of Shimomuroga village in Ueda han was the ninth consecutive headman in his family line. His refusal to allow the villagers to examine the tax assessment records, his arbitrary decisions on the use of village common land, and in general his treatment of villagers as though they were his dependents, are examples of the ways by which the traditional social dominance of his family had been translated into political power. In 1783 the headman's official position in the lowest level of han administration came into conflict with the tradition of village solidarity when his adopted heir informed han officials that the villagers had stolen government timber. The government officials investigated and levied a fine on the village.

Soon after this incident, the headman was requested by two villagers, Minuemon and Isonosuke, to lend the grain which had been harvested from the village common land to needy farmers. But he refused, saying there was no grain. Two days later, a group of villagers complained of his injustice to the headman of a neighboring village. When a search was made of the Shimomuroga headman's residence, seventeen bags of grain came to light. Minuemon and Isonosuke then demanded an investigation of the village records. Their continued opposition to this hereditary official on behalf of the village corporate community finally forced the han government to take notice of the conflict; gradually higher and higher ranks in the
government bureaucracy became involved in an effort to pacify the villagers.

On the second day of the eighth month, the local intendant (daikan) summoned Minuemon and Isonosuke, placed them in hand irons, and returned them to the village. A few days later, two other men forced a petition on the district magistrate (gun bugyō). After an unsuccessful attempt at working out a compromise, government officials placed three more villagers in hand irons, and the remaining villagers went in force to petition the regional police office (wari ban) in Shiojiri city. A month later another endeavor to settle the conflict out of court failed. Finally, on the fifth day of the eleventh month, the community as a whole petitioned the han lord. Five han officials went to the village, placed three more men in hand irons, transported all eight handcuffed men to the castle town, and threw them in prison. What had begun as individual efforts in the end involved the entire village community in their attempt to oppose the headman's traditional authority.

During the course of the year-long official investigation, another sixteen men were thrown in prison. Finally, the han court fined the headman three and a half bags of grain and pardoned most of the villagers. Minuemon and Isonosuke were tortured. Then Isonosuke was condemned to prison, and Minuemon was banished from the han. Three months later, the headman was placed under house confinement. Six months after that, the village common land was divided among the villagers, the headman was dismissed from office, and his family was forever barred from holding office. The villagers on their own ostracized (mura hachibu) the headman's family until the twentieth century, the most serious punishment which the village community could inflict.

In contrast to the conflict in Shimomuroga village, where the corporate village united to defend the welfare of the community as a whole against the traditional power and prestige of the headman, the 1790 disturbance in Kurashiki, an important market just west of Okayama, appears to have been engineered by more obvious motives of self-interest on the part of one group of villagers. Here the confrontation was more limited, and the aftermath was less bitter. The old families of Kurashiki, those who were
registered as landowning farmers in 1642, controlled the village administration and the village shrine association (miyaza). As commercial farming developed around Kurashiki, they were given the privileges of and monopolies over transporting cotton cloth and rice, and brewing sake. In 1790, their traditional dominance over village administration was challenged by the head of a new family who demanded that all members of the village be allowed to participate in the assessment of taxes. As would be expected, the headman refused, and the intendant backed him up. Finally the continued opposition of the new families led to a crisis which immobilized village administration until all villagers were granted the privilege of participating in tax assessment.23

From rice riots and armed uprisings to petitions demanding everything from dismissal of bakufu officials to a voice in village politics, forms of conflict in the 1780s were determined by the social status of the groups involved, the reason for their complaint, its subject, and the forces of repression. But, that forms of conflict were different depending on the circumstances is not in itself significant, for to leave a comparison of action by commoners on the level of behavior alone would be to deny any conscious understanding by them of what their action implied. In order to differentiate and understand the meaning of forms of conflict, the underlying structure—the assumptions that guided the protestors—must be uncovered. The first layer to be removed is that of self-interest, or the way in which the various groups of commoners felt threatened.

In the Edo rice riot, scarcity and currency devaluation combined with high prices had created a potentially explosive situation. The first act of protest, that of petitioning the city administrators to rectify the situation, was undertaken by wealthy landlords and merchants because "when all in the city are half dead and suffering, disturbances will naturally occur" and "we should consider the benefit of not having disturbances involving the people they usually ignored."24 The wealthy townspeople perceived precisely how scarcity and high prices threatened them. Fears for their own
economic hardship did not motivate them to present a petition; rather they feared social disorder in which they could all too easily become the targets of attack.

Action during the course of the riot expressed the commoners' anger at grasping merchants and an indifferent bakufu. According to a contemporary account,

They brought up a large wagon that reached to the second floor and instantly smashed the interior. After that the door of the storehouse was broken down and over one hundred bags of rice were dumped outside, where they were opened up and the contents scattered over the water. It looked like a snowstorm.

Many of the attacks took place at night, and they soon spread to other stores selling food and sake. Intentional destruction of food was not the action of a starving crowd, but rather that of one outraged by high prices, hoarding, or a refusal to sell in small lots. Its purpose was not only to intimidate the wealthy merchants into refraining from the sharp business practices that threatened the livelihood of the poor, but to force the government officials to act on behalf of the commoners.

While some shops were smashed up, others were the targets of price fixing. For example, a group of people told one store owner in Hiramatsu-cho that if he did not sell them rice for 100 mon per shō (approximately two liters), they would wreck his store. It is obvious that the commoners were willing to pay for food at a price they could afford. However, this taxation populaire played only a minor role in the Edo food riots in contrast to eighteenth century France, where it was a dominant theme in collective action, and where any destruction of property was almost inadvertent. This suggests an important difference in the way that the crowds in these countries perceived economic problems. In Japan, the hoarding of grain was as much of an issue as high prices, and the crowd was out to teach the merchants a lesson and righteously to punish them.

In Fushimi, too, town elders, anxious to maintain order, used the threat of social disturbance to put pressure on the bakufu. Corrupt administrative practices on the part of government officials threatened the elders'
sense of security. In their petition they complained:

The government officials and their henchmen extort money and falsely claim that they have permission to build gambling halls. They are selfish; they discover small mistakes and blow them up into serious crimes...; they do not take the administration of the Shogun's government seriously; they despise the city administrator; knowing that the townspeople do not dare transgress the law, they falsify orders proclaimed by the administrator; they defile the government's name in order to promote lawless and selfish behavior; their acquisitiveness continues to increase...

During the last seven years they have expropriated about 100,000 ryo, and during this period the population of the city has been unable to maintain itself... If things should be conducted in this fashion for another two or three years, the townspeople of Fushimi, finding it difficult to support themselves, will disperse--the ruination of the city is close at hand. In such a case the government authorities who should be respected are resented--is this not a deplorable error on the part of the administrator? While we would like to expel the sycophants and reform the customs of the land, there is no way to appeal to the government office.28

According to this angry petition, government officials' harassment of the city population had created such economic chaos that social disorder would be the inevitable result unless the bakufu took action.

The Fushimi townspeople were vitally concerned that political authority maintain the correct status distinctions. Social status was too often translated into political or economic power for its regulation to be arbitrary. When the bakufu abrogated its function of defining status by permitting exceptions to its regulations, lower officials were able to take this essential attribute of power for themselves. The petition added:

Four years ago, on the twenty-eighth day of
the eleventh month, four men, Shinomura Sozaemon, Hirai Kizaemon, Yamamoto Jirouemon, and Shigaki Gohei, were permitted to use surnames and were given the title of overseer headman with an official salary of 600 monme in silver each... When they go to Edo, their supplies are contributed by the townspeople; too much money is given to these officials, and everyone suffers hardships.29

The threat of status deprivation was the other edge of this weapon wielded by the bakufu's unscrupulous officials. The petition stated:

Three houses of monopoly wholesalers in the vicinity of Kyobashi who are responsible for leather baggage were ordered to consider themselves to be in the status of the unclean—they were greatly distressed, and when they went to complain to the officials, they presented some money and were allowed to return to their former status.30

Thus, the townspeople felt that a strict regulation of social status with no exceptions permitted by the bakufu was in their own best interests.

Interference by the government officials in commerce was a major problem. "Fushimi does not depend on production but on the exchange of goods and money. Commodities had been brought voluntarily to the scales where their weight was verified, but a ban on this has been announced."31 Not only did bakufu officials arbitrarily meddle in the merchants' everyday transactions, they also appeared to be out to corrupt their employees. According to a statement in the petition:

Souemon and Rinzo, who announced that they had received confidential permission, have built a lottery gambling club at Chushojima and they prosper daily, having raised money through forced contributions. The youth of the town, as well as clerks and servants, go there night and day. Since they forget their occupation (kagyo) and waste money, there are many who
petition for disinheriquence or who run away
and there is no limit to the troubles of this
area.  

Successful, stable merchants emphasize virtues like dili-
gence, sobriety, and thrift, an ethical stance antithetical
to the lure of easy profits and the excitement of gambling.

Like the Edo rioters, the Fushimi townspeople's
interests lay in preventing serious fluctuations in the
price of commodities. However, they did not want govern-
mental authority to take an active role in maintaining a
just price; rather they asserted that government interfer-
ence in commerce would bring suffering to the people.
The petition stated:

Bakufu officials establish guilds and contend
that they will profit the city government.
Opportunities for trade have become limited,
and especially since various taxes are collected
on goods, the price of commodities mount of
their own accord and those below become im-
poverished.  

The Tosa peasants expressed their view of this cause and
effect relationship between government interference in
trade and hardships for the people much more explicitly,
but the aspiration to keep political authority out of
commerce is evident in both cases.

The Fushimi elders protested corruption in bakufu
officials and laxity in the city administrator's per-
formance of his duties. Despite their low position in the
social hierarchy, their moral position was relatively
uncomplicated and easily defendable. They felt that not
only would the bakufu agree with them in principle, there
would also be coincidence in interest. The action they
took, that of allowing themselves to be arrested while
deliberately avoiding direct appeals to the bakufu, also
suggests that they tried to see no essential antagonism
between their position and the bakufu regulation. The
interests of the Tosa peasants conflicted more directly
with the han government interests, and they elaborated
the principles that supported their side of the debate
more fully.

All of the Tosa petitions began with the way the
peasants were threatened by the han regulations that had
established a monopoly of wholesale buyers over paper. For example, the Yasui villagers said:

As for the ordinary paper produced in our village, in 1768 [this date was also stressed by the Mochii villagers] a new plan was announced whereby a wholesale outfit was established at Ikegawa village. Both wholesale purchasers and Iyo merchants were given the privilege of entering the domain to trade and paper products were purchased for a proper (fusawashii) price. In 1785 merchants from other domains were prohibited and, except for the wholesale purchasers, even merchants from this domain are not allowed to trade. Opportunities for trade are limited [also stated by Mochii villagers] and the common people are gradually falling deeper into adversity (meiwaku). [The Ikegawa peasants added:] Paper goods are bought up for a lower price than is suitable (fusawashii), we have become poverty stricken, and the farmers' livelihood cannot be maintained.34

The peasants did not demand the complete elimination of han sponsored wholesale purchasers, nor did they object to a han policy established as recently as 1768. They merely attacked the monopoly obtained by these wholesale purchasers in 1785 and demanded that "as before (izen no tori), the Ikegawa wholesale purchasers and merchants from other domains have the privilege of entering the area to trade."35 This demand, superficially a statement of peasant versus government interests, was predicated on a basic set of principles. One was the concept of a just price, an issue also raised by the Edo and Fushimi townspeople, and the other was the moral imperative of the han authorities to insure the livelihood of the farmers.

The Ikegawa and Yasui peasants also stated their opposition to the han's fiscal policies. The Ikegawa peasants pointed out that:

Indeed, 108 mon per monme is collected by the government just for the land tax, but it was ordered that the government give the farmers 90 mon per monme as payment for the paper
mulberry used in government storehouse paper. In the last petition written in the third month of 1787, the peasants of Ikegawa village and Mochii village clearly stated the reason why it was to their advantage to trade with outsiders:

Ever since the new government plan went into effect, merchants from other domains have not been allowed to enter. The exchange before the payment of the land tax in summer and winter has not taken place and the farmers have run short of ready cash (tezumari). According to the Yasui peasants, when the Iyo merchants had been permitted to buy paper during all seasons of the year, "everyone profited from it". Therefore, they requested that the governmental authorities allow merchants to enter the han as before (izen no tōri), and in return the peasants promised "to pay both the additional tax and the wholesale commissions according to the regulations previously in effect". The han government advocated a mercantilist policy of restricting trade with the outside and a possible outward flow of wealth except under official auspices, and it attempted to regulate the exchange rates in its favor. The peasants insisted that permitting merchants to enter and trade in the han would be to their benefit, and they would be better able to pay the extra taxes assessed by the han—a physiocratic theory of political economy. In the nineteenth century, this would be considered an argument for free trade, but it was justified by the peasants on the grounds that it was a traditional form of behavior—an example of reasoning that used the past as a moral norm.

In other sections of the petitions, the peasants attempted to force the han government to limit the extent of political authority. The Mochii and Ikegawa peasants complained about the inconvenience of transporting goods for the government from one village to another and requested that this burden be more equally spread out among the villages because of the trouble (meiwaku) it caused them. In the last petition they demanded that the government "remove the government production office in Mochii village and the wholesale dealership in Ikegawa
from the area and install them at some other place."40 The peasants did not ever hesitate to demand the elimination of government officials. In the petition they said:

In the last few years there is nothing for the local officials to do, but still district clerks have been appointed to discuss various matters at the central han offices. There are expenses for this that distress the farmers. Please have the practice stopped.41

They also asserted that the proper day-to-day activities of government officials did not include meddling in commercial activities. "The officials in charge of domestic production force sales on the wholesale buyers. These local officials have become the same as the group leaders (kumigashira) and buyers."42

The petitions offer further glimpses into the way peasants viewed themselves and the world around them. At one point, they asserted that the production of paper was expanding. "Since the production of ordinary paper [paper produced outside the government quotas] will increase, please purchase it at the Nanogawa government office."43 However, despite their commercial activities as rural manufacturers, they still identified themselves as agriculturalists. According to the petition,

In the early fall we were ordered to make quickly ten bundles of paper for official use. This interfered with agriculture and we suffered many hardships. Please command that after the eleventh month, paper manufacturing be done in the proper sequence.44

In contrast to the situation in Tosa, where a clear cut conflict of interest between peasants and han officials led to the peasants' departure from the han, in Fukuyama pitched battles expressed the antagonism between the peasants and the officials. There the distrust and suspicion between the peasants and the han government went back to the 1717 uprising where, after several thousand peasants had marched on the castle town, carried off the government timbers, and rampaged through the dwellings of unjust headmen, a letter had circulated among the villagers
in the region reporting:

When the Abe family received this han (1710) the elders told them it produced 500,000 koku. The Abe pretended not to hear, and when the elders again said 500,000, the Abe said 500,000 plus 500,000 equals 1,000,000 koku. They persecute the farmers as if they were the type of sly fellows who attempt trickery.  

At that time, the peasants of the Fukuyama han had placed the blame for unjust government squarely on the new ruling daimyo family instead of on lower officials, an unusual criticism seldom found in most uprisings or riots in Europe or even elsewhere in Japan. In the 1786 Fukuyama uprising, the peasants' threat of physical violence against persons was more insurrectionary than the usual eighteenth century direct appeals by force (gōso). "We hear that recently the intendant managed to acquire permission to remove the farmers' heads. Rather than the farmers' heads, the intendant's head will be removed."

The Fukuyama peasants also attacked some of their own village headmen who had acted contrary to the peasants' interests. In their petition they requested the han government to investigate a headman accused of selling to other villages rice that had been paid in taxes, to investigate a headman accused of making poor farmers pay their tax assessments too many times, to remove a headman because he had not kept a sufficient supply of rice in the village storehouse, and to have the headmen's records explained to the farmers at the district office.

Village disturbances, the struggle over political dominance between headman and the common run of peasants, cannot be reduced to simple economic conflicts between rich and poor. Rich farmers, those with the leisure and self-conscious ability to challenge traditional practices, often led the opposition to the headman's authority. For them, the headman's privilege of translating his traditional political power into economic advantages was a threat to their own economic expansion. Other village disturbances were triggered by the headman's failure to live up to his traditional obligations to protect the villagers. Then the peasants acted when their role as hereditary dependents became meaningless.
Shimomuroga village presents a typical example of a headman's hereditary privileges in the village. Horseback riding had been banned near his residence (just as commoners were prohibited from riding horses within the Edo city limits) and the peasants were not permitted to examine village records. However, by the 1780s, the headman was no longer fulfilling his obligations in the village. His son had broken with the village sense of solidarity by informing on the villagers, and the headman himself had made no attempt to provide charity for the villagers during a famine. When the villagers began the conflict by demanding that another village headman examine their headman's records, they asserted that injustice (fusei) by the headman had forced this step upon them. The villagers acted when the advantages of being the headman's dependents had been nullified; they did not deny that the office of the headman should have authority over them.

In Kurashiki, where the lines of conflict divided old lineages from new wealth, the concept that a monopoly over politics and religion should be hereditary was successfully and repeatedly challenged by the new families. The new families' most radical demand, that all members of the village should be allowed to participate in the assessment of taxes, demonstrates how the problems of relative economic advantages could become translated into political issues. This conflict ended in a permanent change in the process of decision-making.

Commoner survival and commoner interests faced a range of threats in the 1780s. Even when the basic issue was one of subsistence, the problem was perceived and acted on in a number of ways—price fixing in Edo and the demand for charity in Shimomuroga village are two of the ways in which the commoners asserted their right to subsistence. In Izumi the peasants asserted that when the crops failed, the lord should reduce the tax assessment in order to leave them enough to live on. In the end even the lord had to recognize that it was more important for the peasants to survive than for them to pay taxes. Thus, in Edo the commoners turned to rice merchants, in Shimomuroga village, to the village headman, and in Izumi, to the han lord, as those people responsible for providing the means of survival. In each case different
perceptions of political authority and justifications for action were at work. The Tosa peasants used this concept of a right to subsistence to criticize han policies, while the Fushimi townspeople and Fukuyama peasants used it to indict government officials, but in those cases the right to subsistence camouflaged the commoners' assertion of self-interest. In all cases, justifications for action by commoners were predicated on assumptions concerning the correct role of political authority. These assumptions supplied the principles legitimating their protest.

In Edo, Fushimi, and Tosa, the concept of a just price was employed to underline the gap between ideal and actual governmental behavior, and to justify the action of the crowd to close it. However, these groups had different perceptions of how political authority should operate. For the Edo townspeople, it was vitally important that the bakufu actively oversee the continued flow of rice into the city and its dispersal to the townspeople. The wealthy landlords and merchants realized that only the bakufu had the ability to regulate prices in an emergency, and therefore they advocated government intervention into the rice trade. However, the poorer inhabitants of Edo took direct action to chastise those who had violated their social obligations as suppliers of rice. If the merchants of Tokugawa Japan had a legitimate function, it was to provide goods to people unable to produce their own. Hoarding in order to cause a drastic increase in prices and a refusal to sell in small lots were contrary to this perception of the merchant's role in society, and thus were punishable by the townspeople. The townspeople's self-perception as legitimate punitive agents was assumed only because the government could not regulate the rice trade and the merchants denied their social responsibility to regulate themselves. Ineffectual though the bakufu had proved to be, there were no Mencian overtones of rebellion against it.

In eighteenth century France and England, the crowd's demand for government regulation of the grain trade was predicated on a corporate model of society that was being attacked by the capitalist model of individualism and free trade. This corporate model of society was based on the kind of social contract in which,
practically speaking, a paternalistic government forced grain growers and merchants to satisfy the needs of the poor before considering their own profits. In Tudor England, when this model actually existed, all areas of economic life were considered to be legitimate objects of administrative control. In Japan, on the other hand, economic problems ideally were beneath the notice of political authority. The bakufu had taken limited steps to guarantee the steady flow of rice into Edo, but they were purely pragmatic measures necessitated by the unique role and size of the city. The sporadic attempts of the bakufu and of various han to establish monopolies over specific commodities were measures designed to ameliorate the state of government finances, and most of them came in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries. The Edo townspeople may have based their demand for official action on their memory of earlier bakufu policies, but such policies did not become a universal model for political authority. The Fushimi townspeople and the Tosa peasants were against government intervention in trade. They wanted to limit the proper function of government administration to maintaining the status quo, and that meant fewer, not more restrictions on commercial transactions. The Edo, Fushimi, and Tosa dissidents all rooted the legitimacy of their action in their perception of traditional or correct governmental behavior and their own needs, but they appealed to different traditions and had different needs.

The ability to maintain themselves whatever their occupation was the central concern of commoners in eighteenth century Japan. The Fushimi townspeople saw the threat of official corruption primarily in those terms. When bakufu officials removed the scales the townspeople required to carry on business, they saw it as an unwarranted interference in their function as the middlemen between producers and consumers. The townspeople did not produce anything, yet they did not apologize for their role in society, and they believed that the government should have allowed them to continue working in their occupation.

The Fushimi townspeople made a clear distinction between proper and improper official conduct. They insisted that the political authorities had a legitimate
and necessary role in maintaining order, but they denied that the bakufu had any traditional right to interfere in trade. The Tosa peasants attempted to teach han administrators their duties ("you should command that vagabonds and gamblers not come in from other places"), and they also tried to limit political control over trade without denying the tradition of government promotion of manufacturing.

Both political authority and commoners could be said to have had similar interests in preserving social stability, but their interests diverged radically over the question of monopolies. At that point, the han administrators' desire to siphon off the commercial profits of the commoners came into conflict with the peasants' need for the cash with which to pay their taxes and, incidently, to make a better living. A basic difference in the perception of economic realities underlay the conflict. The Tosa han officials saw the role of monopolies as that of providing them with a steady if limited source of income, while the peasants saw the possibilities of being able to increase their wealth through manufacturing and trade, if they were relatively unhampered by restrictions and regulations. In the end, peasants had sufficient power to prevent the government authorities from sharing in their new sources of wealth.

The vocabulary employed by the elders of Fushimi had a moral weight similar to the expressions analyzed by Fukaya Katsumi in his articles on peasant consciousness. Fukaya focused on the peasants' self-conscious identity as respected farmers (on-byakushō) who were diligent (tsutomeru) in performing their role in society (kagyō). In return they expected the government to perform what they considered its role to be, relieving (ō-sukui) their hardships. This perception of the administrator's imperative to maintain the farmers' livelihood was employed by the peasants to legitimate protest and opposition to government policies. The townspeople could not rely on this argument of being the foundation of society and the state, but they did stress that they too were diligent in the performance of their social responsibilities (yakugi). The elders ended their second petition with a classic statement using a vocabulary that emphasized the moral obligations of political authority.
and suggested the unhappy consequences of its failure to live up to the commoners' expectations: "We humbly implore you please to be compassionate (jihi) and relieve (o-sukui) the distress (konkyu) of the area in order that it may be tranquil." Disorder, which threatened the merchants' security, was the result of authority interfering where it should not and neglecting its traditional function.

The Tosa peasants, too, employed the orthodox ethical vocabulary to articulate the principles that legitimated their action. However, the way they shifted emphasis in their language of politics reflected the primacy of their own values. The key words in this process of definition were grace (o-kage), relief (o-sukui), the past (izen no tori), and a "just" price (fusawashii). Grace and compassion formed the keystone of proper governmental behavior. In the Tosa petitions, "as we have respectfully presented the above three items, if you would be pleased to command their acceptance, through your grace, the farmers' livelihood will be maintained."For the Tosa peasants, grace guaranteed the peasants' subsistence, but it implied a state of being rather than of action. Hence, it limited political authority to a moral realm which excluded the practical regulation of the peasants' mundane economic concerns. Grace was a protective umbrella held above the peasants; it lost its efficacy when its exemplars, the han officials, engaged in inappropriate activities.

The concept of relief through the lord's compassion was relied on to stimulate governmental action. The Fushimi townspeople asked the bakufu to relieve the distress of the people through a reform of local customs. Their equation of the bakufu with the private behavior of its officials--"the government officials who should be respected are resented"--symbolized the crisis of confidence that afflicted the city. The problem they confronted was essentially one of morality, and hence its solution depended on an assertion of political virtue by the bakufu--the dismissal of immoral, corrupt officials.

The justification for submitting petitions rested on more than an idealization of proper administrative functions. The Tosa peasants repeatedly stressed that the changes made by the han government had occurred in
very recent times. It was two years ago that merchants from other domains had been forbidden entry into Tosa; it was last year that the currency exchange rates were manipulated. Therefore the proper course of action for the government officials was to renovate their policies to the way they were before (izen no tōri). *Au fond,* the peasants' accusation was that the han officials had ignored the tradition of the han, and that consequently they had disrupted rather than maintained social order. The peasants' demands were not based on a reactionary bias for a mythical golden age, but on abstract norms of behavior for political authority, and they employed the past as a standard of morality only because it restricted the realm of governmental action.

The Fushimi townspeople, on the other hand, saw themselves as the epitome of moral conduct. Diligence was the attribute they valued most in the performance of duty, and they used their own diligent conduct in order to justify their actions. Their perception that only through their own actions could they reform the customs of the land was an inversion of the bakufu's claim that political authority set an example for the commoners. The elders essentially dealt with personality, not policy, and the justification of their demand for a rectification in political authority was based on the difference between their diligent performance of their role and the dissipated deportment of bakufu officials—not on a comparison between different modes of governmental action through time. The elders were more interested in defining the proper conduct for bakufu officials than they were in limiting the realm of political authority.

The Fushimi townspeople and the Tosa peasants opposed officially sponsored monopolies, but this should not be construed as a basic attachment to the principles of free trade. In the moral economy of the commoners in eighteenth century Japan, the law of supply and demand and the advantages of private versus governmental enterprises were not at issue. They demanded merely that the government stop regulating trade because it had not done so in the past. Free trade was the means to an end—to the concept of a just price, or that price which allowed the commoners to survive. How it was realized, whether through regulations or free trade, was irrelevant;
political authority had the obligation of guaranteeing that goods would be bought and sold for a fair price. When goods were hoarded to drive up prices or when merchants took advantage of a monopoly to lower prices, the commoners saw a threat to their survival. As a consequence, they were justified in demanding action by political authority.

The Fukuyama peasants' antagonism to their overlords went back to the Abe family's installation as daimyo. When the han officials ignored tradition and used the provincial shrine to pretend a common identity of people and government, the peasants in return asserted their solidarity against the han officials. The peasants viewed themselves as the foundation of the domain, while the Abe family was merely its temporary caretaker.

"First for the sake of the country, then for the sake of the lord we must resolve immediately to make a direct appeal by force." 59 Unlike the situation in Tosa and Fushimi, the dialogue between peasants and officials consisted of an abusive barrage of threats and counter-threats. This long term hostility, expressed in the antagonism between han government and peasants, formed the peasants' rationale for taking violent measures. At the same time, in a latent contradiction, they relied on the han's political authority when they sought redress for their grievances against village officials. They never denied the existence of a higher level of political authority even when they had effectively expelled it from the countryside.

When the cotton crop failed in Izumi in 1782, only in the Hitotsubashi domain did officials refuse to reduce the tax assessment and only in that domain did discontent lead to an uprising. The peasants protested to remind the han officials that the structure of government would not be maintained if the people who paid taxes and were the foundation of the state ceased to exist. They did not rebel because of straightforward economic deprivation; rather, a perception that it was unjust to collect the land tax as usual when there had been a crop failure legitimated their action, even though they disobeyed bakufu regulations.

In the Shimomuroga village of Shinano, the peasants saw the headman as a threat to the corporate identity of
the village. His refusal to assist poor farmers during a famine corrupted his official personality as the headman, especially as one who traditionally and by inheritance was the protector of the village, and his collusion with han officials introduced an alien element into the solidarity of the village corporate community. The disruption of village unity was as serious as the headman's abrogation of his proper role. Both challenges were defeated by mura hachibu (ostracism from the village), which signified the exclusion from the corporate community of its traditional unifying symbol, the hereditary village headman.

According to Naitō Seichū, the movement to challenge the prerogatives of the village officials in Kurashiki did not appeal to traditional values such as village solidarity, since it was motivated by a desire for greater political influence on the part of the new families. They tried to translate their newfound economic power into a share in the village decision-making process by asserting that their economic contributions to the village and shrine coffers should be matched by political responsibilities. The tactical device of demanding that all members of the village be allowed to participate in the assessment of taxes led them to a greater voice in village government and ultimate control over it.

A comparison of the perceptions acted on by the peasants in Kurashiki and Shimomuroga discloses three principles for action in these two villages. The first was important because of the poor peasants' inability to support themselves in time of economic crisis exacerbated by famine. From their point of view, the proper provider of charity was the village headman, their traditional benefactor. When he reneged on his inherited obligations to them, they acted in order to force him to behave in accordance with their perception of his role. The second principle, village solidarity against outsiders, was imperiled when the headman's son informed on the villagers. Ostracism of the headman's family was a drastic measure taken because of the peasants' need for a reassertion of village unity once they could no longer depend on the headman to assert it for them. Ironically, ostracism destroyed the headman's other traditional function as the
village benefactor and provider of charity. The new families of Kurashiki asserted that, since all landholders in the village paid a share of the land tax, they should also have a share in deciding how it would be apportioned. The idea that economic power should be directly translatable into political power was a radical and new principle acceptable neither to the old families nor to the bakufu intendant.

The Edo townspeople's claim that the bakufu had a responsibility to make arrangements for the poor people of the city to purchase grain was based on past action by the shogun's officials. The wealthy townspeople expected the bakufu to maintain social stability, yet they ignored the increased complexity of commercial activities that made bakufu attempts to regulate the social order ineffective. By the late eighteenth century, the bakufu no longer had the means to prevent hoarding or increases in the price of rice unless extraordinary circumstances frightened the rice merchants into supporting its policy. The decline of the bakufu created a power vacuum where the interests of the wealthy townspeople and poor house renters came into direct conflict. While the wealthy cliques of wholesalers and brokers pretended that there had been no change in their relationship with the bakufu (under ordinary conditions they were quite happy with the degree of freedom they had to exploit everyone else in their role as government licensed monopolies), the poor townspeople recognized and feared that a weakened bakufu had left them at the merchants' mercy. *Uchikowashi* can be seen as an attempt by the poor to deny changes in the Edo city political and economic structure by putting pressure on the bakufu to act according to traditional norms of a benevolent government. At the same time, it was an expression of the crowd's hostility toward unscrupulous rice dealers. However, *uchikowashi* meant the irrevocable commitment of the poor to new forms of action for themselves and a new forceful dimension in their relationship with the bakufu.

The Fushimi townspeople were committed to maintaining social stability, and they tried to ignore changes which threatened it, such as the developing complex of commercial activities and corresponding increase in
bakufu attempts to regulate trade. They appealed to the bakufu to maintain the time-honored status distinctions, but they overlooked the bakufu's prerogative of using promotions in status to mobilize and control certain elements of the population which had grown up outside the old commercial networks. The Fushimi townspeople appealed to a model of official behavior which assumed limits to the range of political authority that were no longer viable. For them, changes in commerce did not require comparable changes in the mode of political action. They tried not to articulate any consciousness of change, since they saw change as a threat to social stability.

In the Tosa peasants' perception of a commercial economy, goods and hence wealth could be manufactured and increased. They had moved away from a typical subsistence mind set that presumed a finite amount of wealth in the world. The economic strength of other han did not threaten them; they saw trade with outsiders as providing for the expansion of all resources, not as potentially decreasing Tosa's share of a limited quantity. The han authorities, on the other hand, were not conscious of the implications in the difference between subsistence agriculture and commercial manufacturing. Therefore, they attempted to maximize the government's share of the han's resources through monopolies and prohibitions on trade with other domains.

The peasants believed that economic resources were expandable but they did not articulate any change in their self-image. In the petitions they stressed problems of paper manufacturing, but they called themselves farmers (hyakushō) and the requirements of agriculture still came first. This suggests that as peasants living in villages, the change in their economic behavior was not mediated by a new environment. In any case, a crucial change in consciousness—the perception that wealth was expandable—did not lead to a new self-perception.

In the Hitotsubashi domain the peasants protested because the lord's officials did not give them the usual tax breaks when there was a crop failure. They ignored the possibility that the deepening financial crisis in ruling class circles during the late eighteenth century had made it increasingly unlikely that many han coffers had the reserves necessary to absorb a drop in income.
Thus, they rejected the idea of any change in their traditional relationship with the han power structure, and they tried to force the han to act beyond its resources.

The Shimomuroga peasants who demanded that their headman provide charity for poverty stricken villagers were operating on the basis of similar assumptions. However, the threat that they perceived to village solidarity soon overwhelmed this other consideration, and it finally negated the economic benefits they received when they conformed to traditional practices. The peasants were able to continue feeling secure in a stable village order, but they were forced to define it in a very different way, and they had to make a conscious effort in order to maintain it. Until then, the headman's lineage had symbolized the village corporate order, but after 1784 a sense of community could only be maintained in opposition to him. Mura hachibu was a defense mechanism used against changes in the headman's official personality and the peasants' perception of that change in order to preserve the fragile fabric of village unity.

The new families in Kurashiki were the most radical in the way they demanded a redefinition of the village political structure. They denied that precedent justified this structure, and they insisted that it reflect the distribution of wealth in the village. They eagerly accepted and, through their own commercial activities, encouraged changes in the economic structure, and they looked forward to alterations in other areas of village life. Moreover, they were able to impose their buoyant perception of the world on their fellow villagers and create a new foundation for participation in village decision-making.

E. J. Hobsbawn, in *Primitive Rebels*, and other historians of peasant rebellions bemoan the reactionary trend of peasant ideology compared to their own modern standards of revolutionary thought. However, to insist on labeling peasant thought as either reactionary or revolutionary is to misinterpret the intent of that thought and its moral basis. In late eighteenth century Japan, peasants attempted to correct what in their opinion were specific abuses by appealing to concrete norms of action. The demands that commoners made, the ways they made them, and the actions they took can be
seen by present-day historians as undermining, eroding, or ignoring the *bakuhan* system. But, had commoners ever been confronted with this interpretation of their protest, they would have denied it vehemently. In their eyes, they were performing the essential task of rectifying the system, not subverting it.

NOTES


4. Ibid., p. 251.

5. NSSSS, p. 795.


7. Ibid., p. 326.

8. Ibid., p. 326. "If we returned to Fushimi, even if we threw away our lives, its meaning would be noticed in Edo. Fushimi would naturally achieve tranquility, commerce would be carried on without anxiety, the townspeople would all be reassured,
and the administration of government would be clean."


10. Ibid., pp. 47-48. "Early in the first month of this year, we presented a written petition to the government, but there was no acknowledgement of it at all. Since our poverty had increased daily, and we had become exhausted by starvation, we had no choice but to commit ourselves to the custody of this domain where through the government's assistance, compassion, and grace, our lives have continued."

11. Ibid., pp. 47-51.


19. Ibid., p. 126.
20. Ibid., p. 127.
21. Ibid., p. 127.
23. Naito Seichū, "Kinsei sonraku no kōzō henka to murakata sodo" (Changes in the structure of pre-modern villages and village disturbances), Keizai rōnsō LXXV, no. 2 (February, 1955), pp. 39-60. It was not until 1821 that the new families challenged the privilege of the old families of monopolizing political and religious control over the village and not until 1828 that the leader of a new family was elected headman.
25. Ibid., p. 251.
26. Ibid., p. 252.
28. NSSSS, pp. 326-327.
29. Ibid., p. 322.
30. Ibid., p. 324.
31. Ibid., p. 325.
32. Ibid., p. 324.
33. Ibid., p. 327.
35. Ibid., p. 33.
36. Ibid., p. 32.
38. "Ikegawa Mochii hijō kiroku", p. 35.
39. Ibid., pp. 32-33.
41. Ibid., p. 50.
42. Ibid., p. 43.
43. Ibid., p. 50.
44. Ibid., p. 51.
45. Hayashi, "minzoku ishiki", p. 3.
46. Fukaya Katsumi, "Hyakushō ikki no shiso" (Consciousness in peasant uprisings), *Shiso*, no. 584 (February 1973), p. 212. The leader of the uprising in Sanuki, 1750, said, "This action is definitely not due to resentment toward the han lord. It only, by excluding the corrupt officials of the court and opening the way for a message from below to reach to the top, appeals piteously for the magnanimous withdrawal of cruel taxes". Ito Okumo, "Sanuki kanen ikki no seikaku" (The character of the Sanuki uprising) *Nihon Rekishi*, no. 285 (February, 1972), p. 41.
52. "Ikegawa Mochii hijō kiroku", p. 33.
53. Matsuyoshi Sadao, "Tosa han no o-kura kami kaiage ni
tsuite" (On the sale of official paper in Tosa) Keizaishi kenkyū I (1929-30). The manufacturing of paper was diffused throughout the mountainous region of Tosa through government loans of capital in 1710.

54. Kozo Yamamura, A Study of Samurai Income and Entrepreneurship (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), pp. 47-48, 91. He mentions that from early on in the eighteenth century, even the bakufu was too weak to exploit effectively the growing commercial sector.

55. Fukuya Katsumi, "Bakumatsu ikki no shisō" (Consciousness in Bakumatsu uprisings) kaishaku to kanshō XXXVI, no. 458 (December, 1971).

56. NSSSS, p. 325. "A number of entertainers and prostitutes were summoned for Kondo Shohachirō [a bakufu official], toadys gathered around him and day and night his extravagance was displayed in drinking bouts. Moreover, the porters were instructed that, it being their duty (yaku), they should be diligent (tsutomeru) in taking care of the palinquins that the entertainers and dancers rode in."

57. Ibid., p. 329.

58. "Ikegawa Mochii hijō kiroku", p. 34.

59. NSSSS, p. 358.

The intellectual climate of the late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century Tokugawa period has been the focus of an expanding discourse among Japanese intellectual historians. A time of intellectual as well as social fluctuation in which new modes of thought rose both to challenge the old and to occupy spaces previously left vacant, this period and central figures within it have been variously interpreted with the aim of uncovering underlying trends and structures. Most notable in this regard has been Maruyama Masao's *Studies in the Intellectual History of Tokugawa Japan*, which outlines the development of modern Japanese thought in a Hegelian fashion by attempting to "...ascertain how the process of disintegration of the Chu Hsi School made way inwardly for the formation of a uniform mode of thought known as National Learning". Maruyama saw the early eighteenth century, particularly with the rise of Ogyu Sorai's School of Ancient Studies (kogaku), as a critical period in this process.

For Maruyama and others who create an intellectual history, however, specific figures such as Ogyu Sorai or Kaibara Ekken (a supporting character in his interpretation) become actors in grand dramas, and their roles are expansive or narrow according to their placement within the chosen scenario. The problem here lies in the fact that the actor's role is defined by the historian and the needs of his script; the intentionality of the actor himself may be overlooked or possibly misread in order to illustrate a continuous history of a mode of thought or of an idea. Thus, Maruyama sees Kaibara, for example, primarily as an important element in the disintegration of orthodox Chu Hsi Confucianism yet overlooks the possibility that Kaibara was engaged with problems quite outside the fate of Neo-Confucianism itself. No doubt we cannot help bringing some assumptions about a historical figure's role to our studies of ideas. Yet, as
Quentin Skinner states,

"...the perpetual danger, in our attempts to enlarge our historical understanding, is that our expectations about what someone must be saying or doing will themselves determine that we understand the agent to be doing something which he would not—or even could not—himself have accepted as an account of what he was doing."²

Perhaps this is extreme; yet it is, as Skinner amply illustrates, a continual problem which only the most diligent can avoid.

There are, however, ways by which we can approach an intellectual period and the individuals within it and at the same time maintain better control of those assumptions we bring with us. In place of a linear view which forces us to create an intellectual history and in its most extreme form limits us to a discussion of genealogies, one alternative is to slice through history and view a specific period, a historical moment, in a synchronic manner. Only then can we see that individual figures and their texts are part of a wider discourse crossing specific intellectual allegiances in terms of structure and intention. No longer viewing individuals as agents or actors in dramas, we can attempt to view, as H. D. Harootunian states,

"...the world—social reality—in conscious experience, in human thought and action; a perspective from which we might locate the 'problem orientation' (mondai ishiki) in the perceptions men record of their surrounding reality and the project by which they seek to validate such perceptions."³

The key here lies, I believe, in locating the problem orientation, or intentionality, of a particular discourse. This involves uncovering the purpose behind an individual's or a group's actions—the issues to which they address themselves. Secondly, we must uncover the manner in which they frame and apprehend the problem, their project. By necessity, of course, we must start with the individual and his texts as the key to our entry into the wider social discourse, keeping in mind that explication
of these texts must lead us to understand the wider social and intellectual climate. The historical figure is then seen as engaging in a social discourse and confronting problems which are not peculiar to the individual himself, but which are commonly shared despite outwardly different intellectual allegiances and approaches.

In this paper, then, I will attempt by analyzing the works of a historical figure, Kaibara Ekken, to uncover both his intentionality, or problem orientation, and the manner in which he framed his understanding and response to a perceived problem. Secondly, by examining a relatively narrow field of activity in which he was engaged—specifically, agronomy—I hope to illustrate how his projection was implemented in a direct manner.

As will be seen in the second section of this paper, intellectual and moral attitudes toward the collection and study of agricultural data underwent changes within this period. While this is most obviously reflected quantitatively in the increase of works devoted to this subject from about 1700 (Miyazaki Antei's Nōgyō sensho, 1696, is often cited as the forerunner of these works), more than mere quantitative changes seem to be involved. This increase may in fact reflect changes in attitudes which themselves were in large part due to a new problem orientation, a qualitative shift of focus, faced by these men of the early eighteenth century. At its core, this new orientation revolved around the problem of recreating order in the face of a new sense of natural and social dynamism. In Kaibara Ekken's own works this new orientation resulted in a stress upon the importance of understanding the dynamic relationships of natural activity and on uncovering the proper modes of human activity in response. Kaibara directed much of his scholarly activity toward explaining the natural world, and a logical result was his deep interest in agriculture and agricultural life where man was in closest contact and harmony with nature.

Kaibara Ekken's works offer us a particularly important key to understanding this shift of focus as expressed in early agricultural works, for unlike most of the authors who wrote on agricultural problems, Kaibara was a noted scholar whose concerns extended beyond the specifics of agriculture itself. In his discourses on Neo-Confucianism, for example, we may uncover the broader
intellectual underpinnings for a new problem orientation which had implications not only for the study of agriculture but for other areas of society as well. In this regard I will suggest that the problem as perceived by Kaibara and his project or resolution was not an individual perception, nor was it one confined to a specific field such as agronomy. Rather it was part of the wider social discourse of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries in Tokugawa Japan. Problems of agronomy as discussed in these and other works, then, are not isolated phenomena but are part of a complex social environment.

* * *

Kaibara Ekken (1630-1714) was a lower samurai of Kuroda-han in Kyushu, a position his grandfather had initially obtained through exemplary service. As the youngest of five children, Kaibara grew up in an atmosphere of intellectualism; his father and two older brothers all distinguishing themselves as scholars. Trained from early childhood in the study of medicine, Kaibara later took up studies of both Lu Hsiang-shan and Wang Yang-ming, the two major Chinese philosophers associated with the idealistic wing of Neo-Confucianism. At the age of thirty-six, however, he committed himself to the doctrine of Chu Hsi and became an adherent of Chu Hsi Neo-Confucianism. Yet within this Neo-Confucian framework he is noted for initiating a movement towards an empirical natural philosophy—the observance and recording of nature as it exists. Because he saw man and nature as interdependent, he felt that a detailed study of nature was essential to a proper understanding of man and his relationship to the universe.

When viewing Kaibara's body of works, one is at first struck by the range of subjects they cover. In addition to the moral primers for which he is perhaps best remembered, such as Onna daigaku (Great learning for women) and Yamato zokkun (Instructions for everyday life), Kaibara wrote works on agriculture, medicine, geography, and of course scholarly works on Neo-Confucianism itself. Yet, on closer examination it becomes apparent that the main issue for Kaibara remained throughout a concern for
uncovering an order, both natural and social, which would provide people with an ethical basis to be active in the widest sense. Kaibara saw activity as a natural condition which was mirrored by man's own activity in his social life. Yet activity in itself was inherently neither good nor bad. If, on the one hand, it was unstructured activity—activity without purpose or plan—then it could only bring about a state of moral chaos. Yet, when activity was combined with proper knowledge and moral purpose, it could be rationally ordered and structured, and thus gain ethical content. By means of a thorough understanding of the natural world and the particular elements within it, Kaibara believed that one could uncover a logical order which could serve as the basis for structuring the activities of men. In a negative sense, Kaibara attempted to prove that men's activities need not, and should not, be chaotic; rather it was only in systematic and orderly activity as seen in the natural world that one's activity could be considered ethical.

Moreover, Kaibara particularly addressed those people who had previously been overlooked in the writings of many earlier moralists. His intended audience, peasants for the most part, is clearly indicated by his writing style, which is purposefully plain and relatively simple. Only in his most scholarly efforts did he utilize the restrictive Kanbun style. Thus, he was not only defining ethical activity in its widest sense, but he was especially attempting to provide an ethical basis for the daily activity of those uninvolved in what had been considered the more important realms of government and politics. Or stated in another way, his view of activity made possible the creation of a new sphere of moral activity not previously extended to the peasant class.

No doubt this concern for new areas of activity and their regulation reflects in part an awareness of the activity and change occurring in the society at that time. As one of the more widely traveled scholars of the period, Kaibara certainly was able to observe many of these changes. Speaking particularly of the growing social and economic problems of the peasant class, he stated:

45
The farmer is the basis of the nation. During the year he plows the fields and produces the grains without rest. Paying tribute to those above, he supports the myriad people. If his time is not snatched away, he works not only for his own sake but for the sake of the country. If there are natural disasters, his profit is small. In times of poor harvest if he omits the payment of his taxes, he must go so far as to sell his wife, children, and even himself. Even in the good years, since there are low prices for his crops, he cannot escape extreme difficulties. The craftsman does not work as hard as the farmer, yet his profits are large. The merchant's profits are double those of the craftsman. Thus the number of farmers decrease, and yearly the ranks of craftsmen and merchants increase.

While this clearly indicates Kaibara's awareness of the growing difficulties of the peasants, there is also present here an underlying suspicion that what had been believed to be a careful balance of social activities making up the social order was becoming impossible to maintain. This was heightened by the disparity between the supposed importance of the peasants as the foundation of society and their low economic power and status. According to Neo-Confucian doctrine, the peasants were awarded relatively high status, surpassed only by those in the ruling caste—the samurai. Yet Kaibara indicated how empty this position had become, leading peasants to seek new forms of activity away from tilling the soil. Much of Kaibara's work seems to have been an effort to rekindle within the peasants a new sense of moral worth beyond their economic and political power. By redefining their daily activity in new moral terms which could include mundane tasks of measurement and observation, for example, he provided the peasants with an ethical basis for their daily lives. It was through education, particularly of the natural world surrounding them, that the peasants could not only better their economic position but could also reaffirm their moral position and find moral purpose within their lives.
Central to Kaibara's world view was the great importance he placed upon the concept of Heaven and Earth (tenchi). As the bestower of the principle of life (sei-ri), Heaven and Earth [or nature] were depicted in personified form by Kaibara as the parents of the myriad creatures of the world, including man. The phrase, "Since all men in the world are the children of Nature, they should make Heaven and Earth their parents," reappeared throughout his works and carried with it an almost religious significance for Kaibara. When referring to Nature in this manner, he always utilized the most reverent language. The granting of the principle of life was a sacred act, unexplainable and miraculous, and was an expression of Nature's great blessing (ōn). It is the granting of life principle which becomes the source of human morality.

This life principle bestowed by Heaven and Earth, is the unifying concept in Kaibara's view which binds together all things, man and the natural world, in a symbiotic relationship. Having all received the principle of life, they are all in this sense equally the children of Nature. Man, however, is placed above all the other creatures. ("Man surpasses the myriad creatures, and has received the unlimited blessings of Heaven and Earth." Because he alone was granted the four virtues of Benevolence, Righteousness, Wisdom, and Propriety, only man is capable of understanding Nature's gift and of acting to repay that gift.

While the principle of life binds all things together, there are, of course, qualitative differences between individuals and things due to the different abilities and characteristics bestowed by Nature. Observably things are not the same; the individual characteristics of all things are defined by the specific nature (kishitsu no sei) received from Nature. Thus, among men, too, there are differences. "The qualities people are born with are not the same. Thus each has abilities and inabilities." And, states Kaibara,

...when first receiving Ether (ki), the qualities of clarity, muddiness, thickness, and thinness are not the same. Already that which one receives and lies in the body is individually fixed. Hence, from the beginning sages and fools are different.
These differences explain the necessity for creating and maintaining social divisions. Yet, always implicit in Kaibara is the understanding that this division is not based upon a moral hierarchy but merely upon men's different abilities.

It also follows that one's activities must match one's inborn talents. Herein lies the ethical quality of activity—understanding one's proper role and acting in accord with it. Kaibara saw that this understanding was possible for all, not merely for those of high social or intellectual status. In this manner he spoke of the way of learning as being broad and noble, yet "even the unschooled can easily study the way, easily know it, and easily carry it out." Hence learning—understanding moral activity—was not limited by social or political status.

In bestowing the gift of life, Nature had exhibited the greatest blessing. Kaibara termed this Nature's great benevolence (daijin). Because man has been created superior to the other creatures of the world, his gift from Nature is all the greater; repayment of Nature's blessing (hoon) becomes the Moral Way of Man. "Throughout one's life, one must serve Nature, and one must always think of repaying its great kindness." The manner in which one repays Nature is by exhibiting benevolence in one's own life.

Kaibara tells his readers:

Feeling compassion towards the myriad things is called benevolence. Benevolence is a compassionate heart. This is following the true heart of Nature and is the way of serving Nature.

Benevolence, then, is the central virtue in Kaibara's system. While this is of course true in most Confucian and Neo-Confucian thought (for example, the Mencius itself), Kaibara gave it particularly naturalistic connotations by tying it to the creativity of Nature. Righteousness, propriety, and wisdom were not separate virtues; they arose from this primary virtue, which could in turn be traced to the original benevolence of Nature.

At this point, we can begin to see that Kaibara operated under assumptions quite different from those of an orthodox Neo-Confucian outlook. Although he long
revered the person of Chu Hsi and remained a devoted follower, in the end he was moved to question Chu Hsi's metaphysical construct and what he felt to be its detachment from the observable world.

In short, he rejected the dualistic Neo-Confucian view of reality in which the trans-phenomenal world of metaform (keijijō) and the world of physical being (keiji-ka) existed simultaneously yet were distinguishable. The unifying element in this view was Principle (ri), the universal governing norm which, although of the world of metaform, extended to the physical world and could be found as the governing principle of all things. Seen as the universal physical and moral norm, Principle was equated with the Way of Heaven (Ten no michi). Viewed in its particular manifestations, it was the true nature of men and things (honsen no sei). Ether (ki) was its counterpart in the physical world; ether formed not only the natural or visible world but also, by obscuring man's true nature, accounted for his specific nature (kishitsu no sei), which dictated both physical and moral characteristics. By overcoming one's specific nature through contemplation and inner struggle, one could achieve understanding of one's true nature and, thus, of Principle, the abstract ultimate good.15

Kaibara found Chu Hsi's metaphysics cumbersome and his dualism particularly unwieldy. Kaibara's strong belief in the solitary position of Nature as the creative force led him to deny any possible division between a world of metaform and the physical world. Since Nature had bestowed upon man life principle, and each man's character was essentially fixed at this time, there could not be two origins governing his true nature and his specific nature. Indeed, there could only be one nature derived from the quality of the life principle received at birth, and it was unchangeable. Men were not inherently good because they possessed a universal Principle as defined by Neo-Confucianism; they were good because of the nature of the gift they had received. (Kaibara accepted the existence of evil, yet he saw it as an exception to the rule, not a general condition.16) One's nature was the same as that which one had received from Heaven and Earth.

In place of Chu Hsi's dualistic structure, Kaibara
proposed a monistic structure based upon his belief in Nature, and what he felt to be a concrete view of reality. Kaibara contended that the origin of all things was found in the endless movement of yin and yang, the forces of Ether. Ether, rather than principle, was elevated to a central position. The Way of Heaven was not equated with a static metaphysical norm, Principle, but was merely the name given to this constant flow of yin and yang. Thus, Kaibara attempted to offer a dynamic substitute for the static principle of Chu Hsi.17 Stressing activity rather than stasis, Kaibara saw the world in terms of movement and change rather than the constancy and stability which he felt Neo-Confucian doctrine had continually stressed.

In its endless flow and movement, however, the Way of Heaven did not operate in a chaotic manner. It exhibited a logic which is its principle. Kaibara termed this the truth of the Way of Heaven (ten no michi no makoto). Principle became for Kaibara the logical principle of Ether, not a metaphysical moral norm. In this manner he separated human morality and the operation of the universe from a fixed moral standard, Principle. As has already been stated, in Kaibara's thinking, human morality did not originate from an abstract principle; rather its source was the creative benevolence of Nature as exhibited in the act of creation itself.

Kaibara believed that the reasons for Nature's benevolence and the granting of the life principle would remain unfathomable, as would the reasons for the universe's initial creation and for the continually ongoing process of production. This ultimate secret seems to have formed the core of Kaibara's strong religiosity. Yet, the operation of the universe, or the Way of Heaven, was orderly and not chaotic—its logic could be uncovered. Only by understanding this logic could one act benevolently and, thus, ethically, in accord with the flow of the Way of Heaven. Like the Way of Heaven, the Way of Man must also be orderly and systematic.

For Kaibara, the method of uncovering the logical principle of the Way of Heaven lay in close and diligent study of man's surrounding world, both natural and social. To this end he formed a scholarly methodology based primarily on empirical observation. He listed as his principles of study the five activities of wide learning,
detailed investigation, caution, clear understanding, and good deeds. The first two activities clearly indicate Kaibara's concern for the direct observation of phenomena, while the remaining principles insure the accuracy of the material thus gained. Doubt also played a great part. As he stated in the introduction to his last work, Taidiroku, which was itself an outline of his doubts about Neo-Confucian doctrine:

Chu Hsi said, 'If one doubts greatly, one will advance far. If one doubts a little, one's advancement will be slight. If one does not doubt at all, one will not advance.' I Atsunobu [Kaibara] say that after study there is doubt. After doubting there are questions. After questions there is thought. And after thought there is gain. The way of learning must certainly be like this.

Although he justified his scepticism with examples from the past, it seems clear that Kaibara saw himself treading new intellectual ground and viewing reality in a new, unbiased manner. He rejected introspection, a long-standing practice of Neo-Confucians, as a possible method for understanding the Way of Heaven both because he no longer equated Principle with man's true nature and because he felt that introspection could not be empirically justified. Kaibara's view was thus oriented to the external world. His consistent concern with the world around him and his constant search to find the relationships which bound things together are clearly evident in his works on natural phenomena. He saw his fellow Neo-Confucianists' preoccupation with meditation and introspection in their search for Principle primarily as a product of Buddhist influence which he believed obscured the true intentions of Mencius and Confucius. Kogaku [School of Ancient Studies] scholars would also argue that much of Neo-Confucian thought was really Buddhist or Taoist in origin. To this extent Kaibara might agree, yet while they sought to uncover true meaning by returning to the original texts of the sages, Kaibara saw nature as his text for understanding the Way of Man.

Meditation was wrong, Kaibara believed, not only because its aim to search for a universal Principle within
oneself was in error, but also because it naturally encouraged a quiet, passive existence. Nature and the Way of Heaven, however, were not quiet, but always in motion.

The will of Heaven is unending. The sun and the moon do not stop. Hot and cold come and go: the flow of water, like life, continues. These are all the nature of the flow of the Way of Heaven. Thus, the true gentleman obeys this; working strenuously he does not stop. 21

Morality, the repayment of Nature's blessings, lies in activity—activity informed by the orderly process of nature.

Knowledge itself was useless, Kaibara continued, unless it was combined with activity. "One learns about the Way in order to carry it out. To study and know the Way and yet not act upon this knowledge is the same as not knowing it at all." 22 Kaibara felt that the main task of the scholar should not be confined merely to the study of texts, but must always involve practical utility of some kind.

The Way of Confucianism is the way of economics; it is the way of ruling the realm; it is the way of ruling the people; it is the great way. It is scholarship by which we first regulate ourselves and then others in order to carry out the way of human morality for the sake of the country and the myriad things of the world. 23

While these statements mirror the often cited Confucian paradigm in which self-rectification leads to the pacification of the realm, Kaibara appears much more concerned with the mundane, yet important, aspects of daily life. This is amply demonstrated in his primers on daily activity. Nor should one mistake Kaibara's concept of unifying knowledge and activity with that of the Ōyamae [Wang Yang-ming School] scholars, who saw action as an extension of intuitive knowledge. For Kaibara, correct knowledge could only come from a systematic study of the outside world. Moreover, ethical activity was not limited to those who could read and understand the classical texts. Indeed, since the text was nature itself, the peasants—
who in their daily lives were in closest contact with the natural world—would benefit most by understanding the orderliness of nature and the necessity of acting in accord with that order. By following Nature in their daily activities, such as the planting and harvesting of crops, they would be performing duties as important in a moral sense as the task of ruling the country itself. According to Kaibara, the true purpose of the scholar was in providing the peasants and other classes with the knowledge to channel their activities in directions which would not only be beneficial to themselves but moral as well.

In a sense, Kaibara's works can be seen as a reaction against social change and as an attempt to maintain the previously defined social order. The values he promoted—frugality, hard work, and moderation, etc.—are not the values of men who seek to incite radical change. And, it is true that Kaibara at no time denied the legitimacy of the social order as it existed in Tokugawa Japan. Yet, even if his sentiments were conservative, I think it has been shown that Kaibara was operating under assumptions very different from those which originally validated that social order. Although he wrote in the language of Neo-Confucian doctrine, it is clear that neither his problem orientation nor his perception of the world around him were tied to an orthodox Neo-Confucian outlook. Using traditional language, Kaibara created a new set of paradigms to mirror this different perception—one which encompassed activity, social change, and the problems of the peasant class.

These new assumptions carried implications which could lead to social change, however. Most obvious is the fact that, for Kaibara, the social hierarchy was no longer based upon a moral differentiation of the classes. Social distinctions merely reflected the different abilities (each important in their own right) bestowed by Nature. Morally, all men were equal and tied together by the bond of the life principle. In Shogakkun Kaibara stated, "Among the people of the world, we are all brothers". It is merely the different innate talents of each class which account for their distinct social functions. Later in the Tokugawa Period a similar sort of thinking would lead to renewed interest in the merchant class and their
activities which had traditionally been frowned upon. 25
But in Kaibara's works, this sense of moral equality evolved into a heightened awareness and emphasis upon the moral worth of the peasant class. Kaibara went beyond a celebration of the fortunes of the simple life led by the peasants—the ability to work, to enjoy nature, and to serve others. He saw in the peasants' proximity to the natural world a distinct advantage enabling them to observe directly the web of relations which inform men of their true origins. Thus, it is not surprising that there is in Kaibara's writings a conspicuous deemphasis of the role of government and the problems of the bureaucratic structure. It was through the observation of nature and the activities of daily life, not the intercession of government, that men could understand ethical activity. A corollary to this was the belief that when men appreciated and understood the ethical qualities of even the simplest and most mundane activities, the problems of government would take care of themselves.

Kaibara, then, attempted to explain why activity must be systematic and orderly. And in doing so, he created a perception of order in which activity itself was elevated to a central position. In part, of course, this concern with activity may have been a response to a fear of social chaos of the kind closely connected to the past reality of the Sengoku Period. But this concern also involved a growing awareness that the bureaucratic structure of the Tokugawa order and its ideology could not handle the emerging problems associated with new forms of social activity. This ideology could not explain these new forms of activity, nor could it control them. By denying the existence of a universal, unchanging ethical norm (Principle), Kaibara was able to view the Way of Heaven as an active, not static, concept in itself. Men's activity could then be seen in terms of the activity of nature; as activity was a natural principle, men too must see activity as a human principle.

Having established activity as a central tenet of life, both natural and social, activity could then be seen in a positive light and not as the destructive force presented in past ideology. Observably nature did not operate in a chaotic manner. Its activity was orderly and systematic. The turning of the seasons, the tides,
and the motion of the sun were all active processes, yet their activity was predictable and constant. And as nature was orderly, men's activity too must be orderly. Acting according to this order became the moral Way of Man. Ethics or morality were no longer tied to the universal norm but were a result of the sacred gift of Nature through the granting of life principle. Since all men received it, all were endowed with equal moral worth and were capable of comprehending the moral way of man. Moreover, it was in the activity of one's daily life that one's moral quality could be expressed. Neither social position nor scholarly achievement were necessary to lead a life exhibiting moral purpose. The farmer in the field could equally achieve this goal by reordering his own activity to conform best to that of nature.

* * *

Kaibara saw knowledge as the key to revealing the order in what appeared to be chaotic activity. Through diligent observation this order would make itself apparent. While this could be applied to all manner of activity, it became particularly fruitful in the field of agricultural study, where the close interaction of man and nature required an accurate understanding of the process of natural activity.

In this section I plan to look more closely at how Kaibara's moral and intellectual perceptions were applied to a particular field of knowledge—namely the study of natural history and the closely allied field of agronomy. Beginning in the late seventeenth century and extending throughout the eighteenth, there were an increasing number of works written on the science of agriculture which were to have great effect upon agrarian policy and technology and consequently affected the economy of the country as a whole. Despite the diversity among these works (which were often very regional and directed at specific audiences), they all shared a core of common attitudes toward the study of agriculture, in particular, and toward the life of the peasants in general. Foremost among these new attitudes was a belief that agricultural life in all its aspects had become a proper and worthy field of serious study. Secondly, and closely related to
this, they all reaffirmed the moral and economic impor-
tance of the peasant class beyond the limits set by the
traditional Confucian social order. Finally, they estab-
lished the importance of careful empirical investigation
in the improvement of agricultural knowledge and method-
ology.

I believe that these new attitudes were not merely
the result of fortuitous circumstances or a general ex-
pansion of knowledge, but in large part reflect the same
shift in problem orientation apparent in the works of
Kaibara Ekken as examined in the previous section. Kai-
bara's search for an order in the natural world, his con-
cern for direct observation, and his stress upon the
importance of diligent activity are all seen in these
works. Kaibara's own work in the field, *Yamato honzo*
(Plants of Japan, 1708), perhaps best exemplifies these
attitudes. Written six years before his death, it re-
flects his long and diligent efforts to obtain detailed
and accurate information about the external environment
in order to understand the relationships that bind the
activities of the natural world and those of man together.
*Yamato honzo* also reflects his own belief that only
through careful observation could these relationships be
uncovered. The book provides ample evidence of his be-

As Kaibara stated in the introduction to *Yamato
honzo*, he was often sickly as a child and often took
pleasure in reading traditional agricultural works.
Moreover, in his early years he was allowed to make
several trips to Nagasaki, where his interest in medicine
and medicinal plants brought him into contact with agri-
cultural works from China. One of Kaibara's students
noted in the preface to *Yamato honzo* that Kaibara was
greatly impressed by the work of Li Shih-chen, whose
encyclopedia *Honzō Komoku*, 1590, was considered a standard
work in the field of plants and medicinal herbs.27 In
fact, this work seems to have been a model in some respects
for Kaibara, and the title Kaibara chose for his own work
appears to have purposefully paralleled the title of Li's
encyclopedia.

Yet, Kaibara was particularly careful to maintain
independence from Chinese sources. For example, he stated that there were many places in the Honso komoku where he doubted the classification system utilized by the Chinese collection. And although he may have relied upon Chinese sources as models, Kaibara's own work incorporated the attitude that Japanese works must be based upon the particular situation and circumstances of Japan. This is especially evident in his effort to supply Japanese names to replace Chinese designations wherever possible. In addition to his studies and observations, Kaibara relied upon various local works on the subject, carefully selecting those materials which he felt to be most reliable. In this manner he gathered together information on approximately 1,360 varieties of plants, which he then collated into six volumes.

Yamato honso was more than merely an accurate encyclopedia, however. It was, in fact, the result of a new conception of knowledge and what knowledge should encompass. In his introduction Kaibara refers to his study of plants as an effort in the investigation of the principle of things (butsuri no gaku). Yet his use of this phrase, by incorporating the natural sciences within it, extended beyond the usual meaning intended by Neo-Confucian doctrine. While not specifically stated, generally the study of "the principle of things" had, in Neo-Confucian doctrine, referred either to the analysis of the Chinese classics or to the analysis of history. In other words, the traditional investigation of things had normally been limited to the moral-political realm. It had not extended to the study of natural phenomena. But Kaibara took a different approach. As he wrote,

The ancients say that all things of the universe are within the province of Confucians. Perhaps we use the Classics to follow the Way and the histories to record facts, yet we should also have books dealing with the collection of things.

And in Yamato sokkun he stated:

Some people say that Confucian studies should merely make known the Way of Man and should not extend to the knowledge of Heaven and Earth. I reply that the Way of Heaven and Earth is the
basis for the Way of Man. At best, such natural studies had been subsumed under the category of the "study of the names of things" (meibutsu no gaku), the proper purpose of such encyclopedias. To this Kaibara pointedly replied that Yamato honzo was not merely the study of names but was a means for uncovering the relationships between things. "We should not merely know the names of the various things. That is, in our investigations, their relationships must not be taken lightly."31

Moreover, in referring specifically to this work, Kaibara attached the term "study" (honzogaku). Again according to orthodox scholarship, this term would imply an examination of the classical texts, not a study of nature. In this case the more common term would have been "art" or "craft" (gijutsu, geijutsu), indicating a field or specialty involving mere technique and not worthy of true scholarship. Thus, it is apparent that by his use of the term gaku, Kaibara intentionally meant to convey the serious attitude he held toward natural studies as a legitimate field of inquiry.

Yamato honzo, then, was a result of his belief in the necessity of an accurate and detailed study of nature. It was an attempt to study and record in the most detailed fashion the nature of Japanese flora and thereby increase man's general knowledge of his outside world. Ultimately such an effort would serve to bring man closer to an understanding of the universe and his place within it. In his efforts to create a new type of encyclopedia, Kaibara not only widened the limits of previous scholarship to include natural studies, he also changed the premises of that scholarship. By seeking to uncover the relationships between entities, he rejected the mere naming of things to which previous natural studies had been confined. Instead of reaffirming an ultimate moral Principle by seeking to find it within individual things, as might have been the case with earlier Neo-Confucian studies, Kaibara saw that things were by their Heaven-bestowed nature different, and he sought to build through his investigations a "web of relationships that would unite them all."

Apart from this ultimate concern, Kaibara was well aware of the direct importance such knowledge gained
through careful observation would have for the people. And, as was previously stated, for Kaibara knowledge without utility was wasted. Thus, in his introduction to *Yamato honzo*, he stated, "The study of plants is a key to the daily usefulness of the people's lives", and "...it is difficult to know the good and bad features of things and their true worth. One should not disregard the people's welfare. One should select and choose [for them] the many good plants". *Yamato honzo* was offered not only as an attempt to seek knowledge for its own sake, but as importantly, it was also written to provide a useful tool in the daily lives of the people.

Kaibara's concern for improving the position of the peasants through informed agricultural knowledge was not confined to writing works of his own. Among his acquaintances were several agriculturalists, including his own elder brother Rakuken, who had turned down an official position in order to take up farming and instruct the peasants. Most notable among Kaibara's acquaintances was Miyazaki Antei, whose own work, *Nögyö Zensho* (The complete farmer, 1696), had appeared eleven years before *Yamato honzo*. Perhaps more than Kaibara's own work, it became a model of accurate and useful information for many of the treatises written in the following years because of its more direct, utilitarian approach.

As with many of the authors of such works, little is known about Miyazaki. Apparently he was originally from a samurai family of Hiroshima. For unknown reasons he became a ronin in his early years and finally was granted a stipend by the lord of Kuroda-han, where, except for frequent travels, he remained. As Miyazaki stated in his introduction to *Nögyö Zensho*, he spent forty years of his life traveling the countryside, observing, and collecting the agricultural data which he later compiled into the original ten volumes of this work. No doubt it was this experience which gave *Nögyö Zensho* a scope which encompassed the country as a whole and allowed him a perspective on agriculture and its importance on a national scale not usually found in other treatises of this kind.

Somewhat more is known about Miyazaki and his relationship with Kaibara Ekken. From Kaibara's diary it is clear that he and Miyazaki were in close contact for some fifteen years, beginning in 1664 when both were residing
in a small town on the outskirts of Fukuoka. Kaibara also met with Miyazaki in Kyoto on more than one occasion when the frequent trips of both coincided. Moreover, Miyazaki, again in the introduction to Nogyō Zensho, acknowledged the aid given by Kaibara's brother Rakuken in editing the work, while Ekken himself wrote to the publisher recommending Miyazaki's work. Despite the little hard evidence for collaboration, the relationship between the two must have been a fruitful one. It was more than likely a marriage between Kaibara's theoretical background and his knowledge of Chinese sources and Miyazaki's valuable practical experience and close contact with the Japanese agricultural world.

Yet, while both Miyazaki and Kaibara were concerned with agricultural improvement, their understanding of the problem and their approaches to it were not identical. We have already discussed at some length Kaibara's intellectual approach to the problem of redefining the limits of moral activity. As a result, farming became for him a moral activity by which the peasants could act to "return the blessings of Heaven and Earth". At the same time, he realized it was only through a close study of the natural world and of the interrelationships between man and nature that this moral activity could be properly carried out. Miyazaki, on the other hand, placed his emphasis on the economic importance of agriculture both to the individual farmer and to the country as a whole. He saw agriculture as the backbone of economic well-being, and he viewed the improvement of agriculture as a natural and necessary means of maintaining that well-being. With such an agrarian outlook in mind, he tended toward a very utilitarian view of knowledge, concerning himself only with the problem of directly effecting agricultural improvement. If we can speak of Kaibara's approach as being basically in response to an epistemological and moral problematic, then perhaps we can see Miyazaki's approach as being one utilitarian extension of Kaibara's wider understanding. Together these two approaches, I believe, formed a basis for much of the agricultural studies that went on in the following years.

In the introduction to Nogyō Zensho, we are initially presented with Miyazaki's concession to proper Confucian protocol in which he raises the distinction
between man's physical needs and his social and moral needs.

The rule of the ancient sages was limited to two main teachings. The art of farming is the basis of maintaining the people. If the art of farming is not detailed, the five grains will be few, and the livelihood of the people will not be maintained. The way of filial piety is the basis of teaching the people humaneness. If filial piety is not taught, human morality will not be achieved.  

Although he equates the teaching of agriculture with the teaching of human morality, it soon becomes clear which he considered more important for his own time.

While the wise emperors of the past may have understood this principle of education, Miyazaki continues, the art of farming has been put aside too long in favor of other less important pursuits.

As for the way of human morality, there are many who lecture on these teachings of both high and low rank. But for the art of tilling the soil, even though Chinese books on the subject have been gradually introduced in large numbers, the farmers of our country are illiterate, and it has not been possible for them to study and learn from these works. Moreover, those who study literature lecture only in their own fields and will not teach the farmers from these books.

Being respectful of the standard Confucian viewpoint, Miyazaki began by equating the teaching of the moral way with the encouragement of farming. Yet, from the beginning there has been no doubt which he saw as more important. Maintaining the people must come before teaching morality. And after all, Miyazaki comments, those fellows (yakara) who study only literature are really quite useless.

Japan has enjoyed a rule of peace and prosperity, but books written for the farmer in the field have not been forthcoming. Hence the farmers remain ignorant of advantageous agricultural techniques. While this may not
have been a problem in the past, it has become a problem now, as Miyazaki makes clear.

Although farming techniques have remained old-fashioned,

the people who consume their produce have increased ten-fold. If the people of the world do not know the art of farming and are not serious about utilizing proven methods, how will we escape the afflictions brought on by cold and starvation.37

Such a result will not be due to laziness or greed on the part of the farmers. Miyazaki notes that the peasants struggle and work diligently to produce what little they can. Yet, since they lack the proper knowledge, no amount of effort will bring about success. Nor is it a matter of poor or barren land. The land is fertile, but again too often it is improperly used.

In the first place, the land of Japan lies midway between north and south; the active and passive forces equalize each other; it conforms to the mean between hot and cold; there are no extreme natural calamities; the plains are many and the land for growing rice and wheat is broad. Moreover, the soil itself is good and fertile so that many types of plants can grow. I understand that there is no superior land outside of China and Korea.38

What is lacking is knowledge about the land—how to suit the correct crops to match the beneficial features of the land. And so, Miyazaki concludes, "In all things of this world if wisdom and effort are not combined, achievement is extremely difficult."39

For these reasons Miyazaki felt that the nation faced a great danger. By not utilizing to the fullest extent its agricultural resources, the country and its people were being steadily drained of their wealth. Yet if the people correctly gauged the nature of the land and were taught to accept better farming techniques, this perilous situation could be reversed. Indeed, self-sufficiency, in that case, would not be an unrealistic goal.

Looking well at the many types of plants in our
country, if one follows the rules for their planting and matches the good features of the land, then except for a few exotic medicines we will not seek for everything in foreign countries. Won't the people's well-being be served in this way?\(^40\)

Again, however, this has not been the case in the past. From the old times useless things in Chinese ships have come every year and have been traded. How can we allow our country's wealth to be another country's gain? It is simply because the people of our country do not know the art of planting and misunderstand the principle of the land.\(^41\)

And, Miyazaki concluded, what is true for the country holds true for the provinces as well. He exhorted each of the provinces to produce those things which were best suited to the particular natural conditions of the province for maximum return. Otherwise, he stated, "...we will spend the wealth of the province and suffer by buying the goods of other provinces".\(^42\)

Miyazaki, then, was really promoting economic self-sufficiency based upon the main economic mode of production at that time—agriculture. While he was certainly concerned about the well-being of the peasants, he managed to look beyond their individual problems and saw agriculture as the key to economic strength, provincially and nationally. Viewing the role of agriculture in a broad economic sense, he saw the betterment of the country as a whole through an enlightened agricultural policy—not merely an increase in the well-being of the peasant class. Miyazaki spent forty years traveling the countryside. When he watched the farmers often struggle in vain and saw the wealth of the country being spent on products that could well be grown in Japan, he could not help but become aware of the necessity for a sound agricultural policy. The work which he compiled became widely known for its sound practicality, its lack of moral exhortation, and its basic good sense.

Both *Yamato honzō* and *Nōgyō Zensho* were extremely important in initiating a movement which utilized
empirical studies for the improvement of agricultural knowledge and methods. Despite their differences, both Miyazaki and Kaibara realized the need for such works and were able to approach the problem with an understanding qualitatively different from that of the past. In Kaibara's case, this understanding was based upon his intellectual concern for the growth of knowledge and his moral concern for the position of the peasants and for the role of agriculture in human endeavor. In the case of Miyazaki, it was based upon a sense of national economic advancement of both the individual farmer and of the nation as a whole.

Needless to say, while these two works were extremely important in laying a foundation for the growth of agricultural studies, the arguments utilized by Kaibara and Miyazaki may have been difficult to communicate to the farmers in the fields and to those close to them. In order to appreciate the usefulness of such works, these people needed evidence which more directly applied to their individual circumstances. Thus, in the years following these two major works, several treatises appeared which narrowed their scope—either socially or geographically—to appeal to the specific needs of their audiences. Unlike the broad arguments put forth by Kaibara or Miyazaki, the arguments used in these treatises were most often designed to be readily understood by these specific groups or areas. As we shall see, several approaches were used. Some of these works appealed to a class consciousness of the peasants themselves, either in a Confucian or Nativist framework. Others appealed to even more specific elements in the social stratum (such as the goshi, country samurai) relying on the moral consciousness of these groups. Still others utilized economic arguments, as Miyazaki had done, on a limited and directly applicable scale. We shall now look more closely at a few randomly selected treatises which illustrate these points.

In Jikata ochibo shū (A collection of gleanings from the country-side, 1788) we are presented with a particularly self-centered view of society articulated in the language of Confucian doctrine. That is, there is throughout this work an emphasis on the high moral status given to the peasant class within the framework of the four-tiered social order due to their assigned task of
supporting the rest of society. Yet, at the same time, there appears to be an obvious attempt to expand the importance of the peasant's role beyond that found in this Confucian scheme of social division.

The text begins by describing the evolution of the peasant class in particular. The class system, as described here, descended from the warriors and nobles who ruled the country in earlier times. From these two groups all the future classes of society (administrator, peasant, artisan, and merchant) emerged. Moreover, states the author, "Now there are many farmers whom we call gōshi (peasant warrior). They are the true descendants of this lineage".43 This is a revealing statement which circumvents the existing class divisions by recalling a mythic time when no such divisions existed. It is clear that the author is creating a past which elevates the status of the peasants in general and of the gōshi in particular. It may also indicate that this work was intended for an audience at least partly composed of gōshi who would tend to form the leadership ranks of the peasant class. Already the author has begun to emphasize the farmers' special importance within the social system, an importance which will be reiterated throughout this document. First of all, they have a special link to the past through the gōshi.

In addition to this link to the past, the farmers are important, of course, because they are the base upon which the rest of society stands. The author continues:

The people cannot be separated from the three necessities of life--food, clothing, and shelter. Among these food is the most important, and the peasants work at farming in order to undertake the support of the other three classes.44

In the end all necessary products and even luxuries come from the hands of the farmers either directly or indirectly by freeing the labor of others. "The peasants are constant and are the basis of the world", he states, "thus the two characters meaning farmer (hyakushō) are read 'magnificent treasure' (Otakara)".45 Here again the special status of the farmer is stressed beyond the intention of original Confucian doctrine.

Having presented the reader with the importance of
the peasant class both historically and in their role as society's basis for existance, the author now turns to the present situation. Unwritten here but clearly implied are the heavy burdens, especially financial in the form of taxation, which are being placed upon the farmer. The samurai may occupy the highest position in society because they are the administrators and protectors of the realm. Yet the peasants must be respected and free from the undue burdens of heavy taxation. What follows is a very strong warning about the effects of such burdens.

If the role of taxation is increased and the peasants are fatigued, the fruit will not ripen. Or if they flee, the fields will become wild plains. At such times how can the others be maintained? The author stresses this point by referring to an old saying: "When wealth scatters, the people gather. When wealth gathers, the people scatter". That is to say, the people must share the profit of their labor if they are to remain content and on the land. When too much is taken from them in the form of taxation or rent, they have no choice but to flee. Only when the burden of taxation is fair and reasonable can the peasants carry out their assigned tasks properly and amply support the rest of society.

The title of the work itself is suggestive. Gleanings, that small amount of rice left in the fields after a harvest, can often be the slight margin necessary for the survival of the poorer farmers. This book too, the author is saying, may also be offering the techniques of survival, describing those small bits of information which when gathered together and used judiciously may determine a farmer's success.

Thus, within this relatively short introduction the author has very carefully constructed an argument couched in Confucian terminology. Yet, within this Confucian framework, the author's intention is, quite openly and above all else, to elevate the position of the peasant class to one of special importance due both to a mythical link to the past and to their occupation as the producers of society's well-being. Then by contrasting this special status of the peasants with the present situation of high

66
taxation and poor harvests, the gap between moral status and economic conditions becomes all too obvious. The author seems to be offering this book both as an appeal to the administrators to lessen the financial burdens of the peasants and as a means for the peasants themselves to improve their own positions through the use of informed agricultural knowledge.

In strong contrast to the emphatic Confucian tone of *Jikata ochibo shu* and its *kanbun*-like style, the introduction to *Hyakushō bukuro* (The farmer's treasure, 1731) presents quite a different characterization of the peasant class. In place of the Confucian framework, it offers in style and vocabulary a Nativist conception of the world and society.

The title suggests that it is a treasure chest of valuable information most important to the farmers and to be revered by them as sacred treasures. These treasures are the customs and traditions of farming passed down through the ages. As is stated in the beginning of this work:

> Where should you place your respect, oh cranes, or tortoises? Store it with the blessed traditions handed down by your forefathers and do not lose or destroy them.48

The author claims validity for the information made available in this work by this appeal to the peasants' sense of history and tradition.

Society as it is seen here, unlike the Confucian model, is divided into two divisions—the noble and the humble.

> The noble work with their minds. The humble work with their bodies... Based upon this, upper and lower mutually preserve the life which maintains the body, and bringing happiness to the world, they console the mind.49

This is a social division, yet there is also a spiritual division between the pure and the impure. The author, however, corrects the mistaken notion that these two divisions, social and moral, are the same. That is, what is noble must necessarily be pure, and what is humble must always be impure.
Can we say that one is noble and pure, and that the other is humble and impure? If so, even though the hand is ranked above, it often participates in impure acts; and even though the foot is ranked below, it rarely receives an impure role.50

Thus, the author of Hyakushō bukuro, in a very different manner than the author of Jikata ochibo shū, is also making a statement about the high moral position of the peasants by inferring that humble social status does not necessarily mean low moral status. This the author much more forcefully states in a rhetorical flourish. "Are there not two stars of defilement in the heavens, and do not the lotus and camilia bloom here on earth?"51 The peasants, like the beautiful lotus and camilia, are to be treasured despite the seemingly less than noble social position they occupy.

Now the conclusion can be stated. "Even if, with people of this world, status is decreed by heavenly edict, can one not gain exhaltedness when one reaches for it?"52 Rank, that is the division between the noble and the humble, may be a necessary social division created by the dieties. Yet each in his own rank can achieve purity and exhaltedness. The peasants should not think of themselves as low in moral worth merely because of their humble social and economic positions. Indeed, to the contrary, the author states that "the blessed peasants and the seeds of the heavenly spirits are ten thousand sacred treasures (kandakara)".53

In contrast to the heavy use of Confucian vocabulary in Jikata ochibo shū, here the vocabulary rings of Nativist imagery. The whole concept of a treasure, especially a sacred one, has kokugaku connotations. The concern with purity and pollution also stand out. Furthermore, the two stars of defilement referred to in the above quote is an image probably taken from the traditions of the Kojiki or the Nihongi where, in the Kojiki version, the god Susanoo spread filth in the divine hall after a confrontation with his sister Amaterasu. Interestingly, too, here in Hyakushō bukuro the peasants are seen as Kandakara (divine or sacred treasure) whereas in the Jikata ochibo shū they were referred to as otakara (magnificent treasure).
which lacks such religious overtones. Perhaps this as much as anything clearly illustrates the contrasting traditions underlying these two works. One is devoid of any religious overtones, concentrating on the humanistic social traditions of Confucianism. The other makes full use of the divine Japanese traditions, very carefully distinguishing between social and spiritual values.

Yet if the traditions are distinct, the message is the same. Each in his own way, one Confucian and one Nativist, share a common goal—to emphasize the high moral status of the peasant class. Reminiscent of Kaibara, they reassert the idea that social positions are merely based upon functional differences, not upon moral ones. Moreover, they both stress the existing contradictions between the high moral worth of the peasants and their painfully poor economic condition. By reinforcing the peasants of their high moral status, these works are urging them to exercise their moral rights by using the knowledge contained in these books to improve their economic well-being. Thus, these two documents seem to be appealing to the peasants by means of their strong sense of moral righteousness and a feeling approaching class consciousness.

The outlook presented in another work, Nōgeki yodan (Talks on farming opportunities, 1738) is much more limited. No effort is made to discuss either society as a whole or the peasants' position within it. Rather, this handbook focuses on one group, the great farmers (ombyaku-shō), and their role in advancing agricultural knowledge and technology. Overall, it is a rather strong attack upon the situation as it exists, yet it does not fail to offer its own solution.

The position of the great farmer appears to be one approaching that of a local official, since their relatively large landholdings allow them some measure of power on the local scene. As the author defines them, the great farmers are

those who in proportion to the size of the village hold many fields. And if the village is not so big, they are those important people of wealth who pass the time in splendor. Even if their holdings or wealth is not so great, they build

69
gates for their houses and adorn the fronts.54

One can already begin to sense the author's displeasure with the "great farmer" who seeks escape from his peasant background, adorning his house to appear above the common class. The author begins the attack in full by stating, "That type which views only the outside as a measure of the whole is not worthy of our concern".55 That is, the author here attacks those who claim high social status without understanding the true meaning of moral status--a man's ability and efforts, not the outer trappings of wealth--which must accompany it. The author expands upon this:

If those farmers who are not so wealthy really knew farming and understood the unseen principles involved, they would exert themselves to no limit at their tasks and even harvest from the forest. Yet, they simply inspect their fields casually and do not even properly profit from their tools.55

Being wealthy, they grow lazy and allow others to do their work. Satisfied with their wealth, they do not attempt to expand or improve their methods. This alone might be bad, but what the author feels is even worse is that, quite in line with human nature, these wealthy farmers begin to accept the notion that since they are wealthy, their wealth must somehow be due to their expert knowledge. "In this world if one is wealthy, he regards himself as if he naturally knew everything. Unfortunately others begin to think so too. And, as in the saying, when there is much advice to flood dry fields, unseen losses will occur in everything".56 That is, if one follows the advice of such 'experts' to make paddy land out of fertile dry fields that might be more productive in growing other crops, the land will be ruined. He concludes, "One cannot learn without being made to study and without being closely watched over".57

The proper duty of the great farmers is to teach the peasants the correct way of farming. But in order to do so, they cannot merely rest upon their wealth. They must take an active role in the study of agriculture. Even the high ranking nobleman is not lazy in
his daily tasks. And it is because the good general exerts himself with arms and still more in the techniques of the common soldier that he excels in tactics. If such a general is given freedom, he can win every war. 58

Like the general who knows the skills of the common soldier, the great farmer must immerse himself in the daily tasks of farming and become a true expert in even the smallest details of agriculture. Yet this has not been the case with many of these men. "Even though they are great farmers, without being sick or old they forget their daily tasks. If only the peasants pay their rent, this alone allows them to settle down and pass their lives in idleness." 59 To permit themselves this luxury, states the author, is the extreme of selfishness.

Hard work alone is not enough to be a truly great farmer.

One must diligently lead his children and servants and exhaust his powers in the work of farming to the extent of regretting the passing of the days. One must utilize both men and horses with the utmost kindness, compare the work of his children with that of his servants, and try to treat his servants as his children. When they are wrong, he must teach. When they do well, he must praise them. 60

The role of the great farmer is one of teacher, leader, and innovator in agriculture. If he does his job well, then his children and servants will themselves become teachers of the people. A great farmer in the end must be like "a great tree from which the dew widely nourishes the plants below." 61

Although it is unstated and biographical information on the author is lacking, it seems more than likely that the author considers himself to be one of the great farmers. If this indeed were the case, it appears that this work was probably his contribution to the peasants in his role as teacher. Moreover, here again emphasized is the idea that knowledge, study, and hard work are the true keys to agricultural improvement.
In much the same manner the final work here, Rōnō ruigo (Selected talks with old farmers, 1725), offers another close view of society without involving the religiosity of Nativism or the social moralization of Confucianism. As in Nōgeki yodan, we are presented with a particular situation, its problems, and some solutions to those problems. Perhaps it is not as strongly worded—the author may not have had the same degree of power on the local scene. Yet the logical development of the argument presented here makes it a powerful statement nonetheless.

On the surface, at least, this work is the result of the desire of an official to leave a gift to the peasants under his control when he retires. His retirement was precipitated by his failing health and the poor condition of the villages in his district. The author stresses that he has received an order from the out-going district manager to compile this collection. The order read:

Because I thought I would give up my post as district manager, last December I had the district administrators announce this to the village officials. The village officials are to choose several old farmers skilled in their profession from the villages, listen to their explanations on the way of their knowledge, and write them down in detail. My wish is that you revise these, eliminating the numerous places of speech, and making understandable those places where the meaning is unclear. Thus, you will surely enlighten the way practiced by these old farmers.62

His reason for having this done was that he felt it best that the farmers learn from the people in the village whom they know and respect. He mentioned the fact that while Miyazaki's Nōgyō zensho had a reputation for being very good, the people of this area lacked faith in it and would rely upon the experiences of the old farmers more readily.

This, then, was the commission the author received. And although he himself was old and ailing, he undertook the task of revising and compiling this collection. Moreover, in the introduction he goes on to add his own views about the situation, and he sees more important reasons
for the necessity of such a book. "It is nature's way that there be both fools and wise men. Among the people, those who are trained in farming are the wise men. Those who are unskilled are the fools." 63 However, when undertaking a careful farm policy, "even those who are foolish in farming will learn by the example of those skilled in agricultural methods, and their understanding will be satisfied". 64 Thus, a conscious farm policy administered by the officials is necessary. And, "while it is natural for fools to remain fools, so that even when carrying out such a policy there will be those who do not learn from the old farmers, won't these at least become fewer?" 65

Moreover, the author sees a direct relationship between this kind of education and crop yields.

In comparing the time when there are many who learn from the old farmers and the time when there are few, there is a great difference in the yields of grain and vegetables, and the relationship to the loss or gain of the people is very great. 66

Hence, if the people exert themselves at farming and understand these facts, the book which he has compiled will be handed down to future generations of farmers. And not only will the wish of the district manager that he be remembered be carried out, but the people will also be able to best fulfill their obligations and increase their own welfare by producing richer harvests.

A further problem remains, however, which the author does not fail to mention. This is the practice of the local government to call upon the farmers for labor. "Even if the peasants observe their duties and desire to promote farming, as long as the levies from the capital on the farmers are frequent, will it not be very difficult to encourage improvement?" 67 If the old farmers' children are called for labor or if the old farmers themselves are called, how will they be able to instruct the others in agricultural methods? This practice of levying labor from the villages is closely related to the economy of the area.

In short, it seems that when they in the capital are deeply concerned about economizing, the levies on the villages are few. And when they are not so worried, the levies are again increased. 68
While the levies themselves are a problem, it is this constant fluctuation in the officials' demands which proves so disruptive to the normal operations of village and farm life. In their attempts to economize, the author states, the officials are actually creating a greater problem. For the villagers he asks for a regularization of levy practices, if outright abolishment is not possible. And in return he asks the villagers and village officials to understand the direct relationship between the encouragement of proper farming techniques and increased production. The peasants require the support and encouragement of the officials in order to utilize these proper techniques most advantageously. If each official does his duties to the utmost and does not censure the others, the author concludes, the proper farm policy in the villages will be carried out, and all will benefit.

Throughout this document the reader has been presented with a very carefully constructed series of arguments. The author, walking the line between his officially appointed task on the one side and his sympathies for the peasants on the other, has used no sweeping statements, no rhetoric. Much like the lawyer, he has built his case on hard evidence and appeals to logic. It is not moral righteousness which he relies on to convince his audience. It is economic reality. When people learn the correct methods of farming, production is increased. And when the officials cooperate among themselves and work in harmony, production is increased. This is indeed a very different approach from those used in the previous documents, which relied upon a moral understanding of the world, or, as in the case of Nōgeki yōdan, a moral consciousness concerning the obligations of one's social position. Here it is hard economic thinking which gives the document its power.

These few examples should be sufficient to illustrate some of the various strategies by which the broad arguments of Kaibara and Miyazaki to promote agricultural studies and improvement were restructured and narrowed in focus to appeal more directly to specific audiences. Both Jikata ochibo shū and Hyakushō bukuro, as we have seen, appealed to a growing peasant consciousness through their heavy emphasis on the high moral status of the peasant class, whether in Confucian or Nativist terms. They
argued that because of this high moral status, the peasants had the right to raise their economic status through the use of informed agricultural knowledge. In quite a different fashion, the author of Nōgeki yodan appealed to the sense of moral and social obligation of a particular group, the great farmers, to assist those beneath them in social status. Because of their higher status and wealth, they had an obligation to increase the store of agricultural knowledge and to disseminate it to the peasants under their control. And finally, Ronō ruigo spoke to a local group of peasants and officials alike, informing them of the direct and mutual economic advantages open to them through the adoption of a sound agricultural policy based upon the knowledge of the farmers.

Throughout the various arguments utilized by each of these authors there is ample evidence that each conceived of empirical knowledge as the key to agricultural improvement, and each author sought to renew the appreciation of agricultural life as worthy of intellectual and moral consideration. Both of these attitudes reflect, I believe, not merely a revived interest in agriculture or a sudden awareness of its economic importance, but in fact involve a new conception of knowledge and the uses to which that knowledge should be put. It is in the type of thinking exemplified by Kaibara Ekken that we can see at least one possible origin of this change in attitude toward knowledge in early eighteenth century Japan.

One further interpretive consideration might be mentioned in concluding this paper. Michel Foucault has described the general problematic of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries human science in Europe as being the apprehension of differentness and the search for order in which the essential differentness of all things had become apparent. This apprehension led men to seek to establish the proper identity of things by means of the categories of order and measurement particularly with respect to language, natural history, and the analysis of wealth. Their search for order rested upon the

...belief that if one could uncover the system of signs by which the true nature of language, organism and wealth might be represented, one could construct an ars combinatoria that would
permit the control of each of them. 70

In other words, having apprehended the differentness of reality, they sought to find a new origin and order for things with which they hoped to better control that reality.

While cross-cultural comparisons can be dangerous, Foucault's analysis offers us interesting possibilities for our analysis of the Japanese experience. In the face of social and economic change of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the previously determined and defined social and political order began to break down. Class distinctions which had been rigidly defined no longer mirrored the social reality. The samurai class was no longer identified with their warrior background and ties of personal loyalty. Forced into castle towns, they had been separated from the people they were supposed to lead. And during the period of peace they had lost contact with their military skills and were becoming increasingly bureaucratic in style. Finally, economic changes had begun to erode their privileged positions. On the other hand, the merchant class was gaining economic power and freedom far beyond its low moral and political position. The growth of the cities brought opportunities of wealth and power to this previously defined parasitic class. Peasants, too, did not escape the problem of change. Despite their relatively high moral position, they were being forced further into poverty. Although peasant revolts would not become endemic until the following century, sporadic unrest did occur, and the growing population of the cities was in large part due to the peasants leaving the land to seek for better economic opportunities there.

It is within this context of social flux and activity that the previous strategy of similitude, exemplified by Neo-Confucianism, which saw reality as essentially the same and unchanging, began to fail and the apprehension of the differentness of things arose. This apprehension led to a renewed interest in the examination of the external world—not to prove the essential similarity of reality by means of a metaphysical universal, but to find an order which could tie the disparate elements and activities of reality together and explain a world which was
not based upon constancy. This required that things be reexamined to find their true meaning and origin. Thus, Yamaga Soko and Ito Jinsai, for example, returned to the ancient texts of the sages to understand the original meanings and intentions of the authors and through them reconstruct a language of political reality which would provide a basis for an active and changing society. Kai- bara Ekken sought through a renewed study of the natural world not a universal norm, but a logical, orderly principle by which men could act in a systematic, and thus ethical, manner. As we have seen, a practical result of Kaibara's efforts was a new interest in agricultural life and agricultural principles. Yet, despite his difference from Soko or Jinsai, all these men shared a common problem—how, in the face of social change, could one find an order to account for activity, and at the same time provide an ethical basis for men to act within that order.

NOTES


5. Ibid.


12. Shogakkun, p. 5.

13. Ibid., p. 7.

14. Kaibara attributed many of his ideas to his correct reading of Mencius, of course. His tying of benevolence to creativity seems reminiscent of Ch'eng Hao.

15. For a fuller discussion of orthodox Chu Hsi School in Japan, see Maruyama.


17. Ibid. See also Maruyama.


20. For example, Ogyū Sorai.


22. Yamato zokkun, p. 4.


25. Dazai Shundai and Kaihō Seiryō, for example.

28. This and most of the following is from Tsuji Tetsuo.
29. Ibid., p. 1542.
31. Tsuji Tetsuo, p. 1543.
32. Ibid., p. 1542.
33. This biographical information is from Inoue Tadashi.
34. Ibid.
36. Ibid., p. 68.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid., p. 69.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid., p. 70.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid., p. 2.
46. Ibid.
47. Ibid.
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid.
51. Ibid.
52. Ibid.
53. Ibid.
55. Ibid.
56. Ibid., p. 605.
57. Ibid., p. 604.
58. Ibid., p. 606.
59. Ibid.
60. Ibid., p. 607.
61. Ibid.
62. Ibid., p. 169.
63. Ibid., p. 170.
64. Ibid.
65. Ibid., p. 172.
66. Ibid.
67. Ibid.
68. Ibid.
70. White, p. 35.
There was a wealth of religious activity in the latter half of the Tokugawa period in Japan. The most often cited examples of this activity include: *okage mairi*, group pilgrimages to distant shrines and temples that were organized on a village level; *ee ja nai ka*, spontaneous outbreaks of frenzied dancing and chanting in response to purported sightings of apocalyptic signs; and the first of what have been called the new religions. These movements stand out against the background of the organized religious traditions of Shinto and Buddhism as vivid displays of new religious vitality stemming from dissatisfaction with the social order. They have as their aim the rejection of that order and, ideally, the realization of a new one.

At the same time that these new activities were taking place, there was also activity within the organized religions. Priests were kept busy at the administrative level with details of the temple registrations system imposed by the bakufu, with publication of copies of the sutras, and with their own well-being, while at the popular level there emerged a growing concern for evangelism and the transmission of the true teachings. A few priests began to preach popularized versions of their faith to the general public. Others compiled collections of sermons and stories for circulation among the reading public. Analysis of the form and content of one of these texts will provide a close view of the type of activity taking place within the organized sects. It will also suggest a broad interpretive structure through which we may better view the entire range of religious activity in the Tokugawa period.

In this paper, I will deal with a major Tokugawa document from the Jōdo Shinshū, or True Pure land, sect of Buddhism. Already a sect with wide appeal, especially at the level of the peasant, Shinshū in this period saw fresh attempts to articulate its faith for purposes of popular teaching. Although several priests contributed sermons and stories which were important, perhaps the most powerful teaching device to emerge from Shinshū during this time was the image of the ideal believer, who was known as a *myōkōnin*. He was an individual whose
total faith in the Buddha Amida and in the verbal repetition of the Buddha's name (the nembutsu) carried him unharried through the trials of life. Because of his true faith, the myōkōnin's life in this world became as fleeting as an overnight stay at an inn. Stories of the lives of these true believers told of miraculous happenings which were attributed to the sincerity and power of their faith.

The first volume of the Myōkōninden, a collection of "Stories of Wonderfully Good People", was compiled by a Jōdo Shinshū priest in the early part of the nineteenth century from stories he had heard in and around his home. It was published in 1842 by his son after the old priest's death, and was followed during the next five years by four more volumes of stories collected by other Shinshū priests. After the addition of the fifth volume, the series was published as a set, together with a sixth volume, under the original title. The entire set was in such demand that it was reprinted several times during and after the Meiji period, and modern editions are still popular today. New collections of stories about myōkōnin were also published: the Shin myōkōninden ("New Stories of Wonderfully Good People") in 1898 and the Taishō shinsen myōkōninden ("A Taishō Collection of Newly Selected Stories of Wonderfully Good People") in 1922.

An analysis of a collection of stories such as these could take many forms. Most of the Japanese studies of the Myōkōninden have focused on the myōkōnin as ideal types, comparing and contrasting their manner of belief with other modes of religious piety in Japan. In a series of articles published during the late sixties, Igarashi Meiho showed how the myōkōnin related to the mainstream of Mahayana Buddhist tradition by examining the central nature of myōkōnin faith and comparing it with the Buddhist concept of the bodhisattva. Undō Gidō, also in a series of articles from the late sixties, examined the concept as one of central importance in the Shinshū tradition. Collections of the complete works of Suzuki Daisetsu published in the early fifties show his appropriation of the concept of myōkōnin to illustrate the character of personal religious experience. These analyses deal with the content of the stories without serious reflection on their form or function.
Other Japanese scholars have treated the original Myōkōninden and its subsequent editions as an historical development illuminating various aspects of Japanese tradition. They have thereby moved closer to consideration of the stories as a text. Suzuki Sōken follows the development of the spirit of modernization in the minds of the Japanese people through a study of the collections of myōkōnin stories published in the Tokugawa, Meiji, and Taishō periods. His study reveals an understanding of the idea that a text is a construct put together with the specific intent of reaching a chosen audience, but it forcibly relates the stories to an outside theme, that of modernization. In a recently published study, Oguri Jun-ko analyzes the concept of the myōkōnin as an image of the ideal believer constructed by the Shinshū organization to aid in its proselytizing activities. She contrasts this development to the heretical kakure nembutṣu, or "hidden nembutṣu", movement which also developed from Shinshū during the Tokugawa period. Her comparison of the traditional versus the heretical elements of Shinshū during this time provides theoretical insight into the generation of new concepts and images within a religious group.

My own approach to textual analysis is based on the theoretical assumption that every human activity is informed by an intentionality—a choice or selection made by the human consciousness. This choice is based on perceptions of the world which are shared by men and women who have had common spheres of experience. Since the intentionality behind a text, and hence its content, is the result of the creator's perception of the world, then by examining a text closely we ought to gain a clue as to what was important to the creator at the time he produced his work. When we view the text in relationship to other activity of the same period, we can begin to identify the problems, and thus the perceptions, shared by his age.

This assumption does not imply that each set of data is a perfect mirror of collective consciousness, nor that the reality of an age can be reconstructed on the basis of a single set of data, in this case a text. Rather, it suggests a way of looking at each set of data as a social event—as the individual creation of someone who shares his world with the people around him. It suggests the
possibility of a framework through which the varied, seemingly discontinuous individual activities of an age can be seen to be continuous with the shared perceptions of its inhabitants. The method used to develop such a framework is not simply the expansion of the central theme of a text into a more general construct, but it is the search for a general construct which will elucidate the theme and intentionality of that text as well as of other contemporary activity.

The first step toward generating an interpretive structure is to analyze a text in terms of both its content and its intent. To accomplish this, we must approach a text as a means of communicating a given message to a chosen group of people through the use of the complex system of symbols we call language. It is by his choice of language that the author of a text defines his message and limits his audience. He chooses a style to which the intended audience can relate, and words which he thinks will carry his intended meaning to that audience. By looking at the author's words and style as purposive choices, the analyst should be able to deduce the author's intentionality and his perception of the audience he is addressing in the text.

In the first major section of this paper, I will deal with four representative stories from the Myōkōnin-den. After a general discussion of the entire collection, I will recount each of the stories, identifying some of their salient points as I do so. I will examine the significance of the style and language employed in the stories, then discuss the characteristics of the myōkōnin mode of piety and the main theme of the stories.

In the second major section, I will develop a hermeneutical framework based on the structure-communitas opposition described by Victor Turner in his book, The Ritual Process. The broad framework of this paradigm provides both greater insight into the theme of the stories and a key to the intentionality of the text. I will first discuss the basic principle of the paradigm and develop a general model to help illustrate how it operates. I will then examine the particular types of structure-communitas relationships implied by the paradigm and discuss the Myōkōnin-den stories in their light. In the conclusion, I will discuss the usefulness of the paradigm in
my analysis and suggest the importance of the structure-communitas dichotomy in dealing with the religious and intellectual activity of the late Tokugawa period.

THE MYOKONINDEN STORIES

The nearly one hundred fifty stories in the Myōkoninden tell of the lives of peasants in the Tokugawa period who were known for their extreme piety. At that time, the name "myōkōnin" was commonly associated with all adherents of the Jodo Shinshū faith since the time Shinran, the founder of the sect, had used the term in his teachings. After the publication of these stories, however, it came to mean only special believers of the type depicted in the stories. By presenting the stories without commentary, the compilers set up the myōkōnin as examples for the not-so-true believer, the ordinary person who had not yet reached true faith. The text is a primer on how to live a religious life, and its stories are an aid, in the manner of the Zen koan, to help the ordinary person reach true faith.

Although the stories vary in content, they are roughly divisible into two types: conversion stories, and riddle stories. Conversion stories, as the name implies, tell of the miraculous conversion of non-believers to believers through some contact with a myōkōnin. These stories are presented as eye-witness accounts of actual happenings that are not to be doubted. Riddle stories present episodes from the lives of believers which illustrate the wonder of their faith. I have used the term "riddle" because in these stories the differences between myōkōnin and other people is brought to the audience's attention by reference to extremely puzzling aspects of their behavior. The first two stories I will recount here are riddle stories, and the last two are conversion stories.

In all the stories it is apparent that the myōkōnin are exceptional. They have totally actualized religion in their lives and they live on a level of religious awareness different from the people around them. On their plane, everything is sacred; nothing exists except by the blessings of the Buddha Amida. Thus, they show their gratitude to Amida in everything they do. Every
action is performed with a consciousness of its meaning in relation to the Buddha.

An example of the wondrous faith of the myōkōnin is the story called "Kihei of Aki." It tells how, in the middle of the night, Kihei would sometimes roughly shake his sleeping wife or a guest in their house. Kihei expected the awakened person to respond by beginning to chant the nembutsu as a sign that he or she is continually with the Buddha. When instead that person merely asked what the matter was, using everyday, profane words, Kihei knew that the person had gone "astray". Kihei then attempted to bring him "home" again. When the person finally gave the response sought, Kihei would tell him he had "come home." The use of common Japanese phrases relating to one's home, the place one should be, identifies Kihei's (and the author's) feelings that one's place is with Amida.

Another incident in Kihei's life is related in the same story. One day when his wife was sitting with her legs stretched out toward the hearth, Kihei intentionally picked up one of her legs with the iron tongs for the fireplace. He first joked, then grew serious as he tried to ease his wife's anger. In answer to her questions, Kihei explained that one must show self-control (tsutsushimi) at all times. The Japanese word used here implies respectful control or restraint, in this case in deference to the kami, or gods, of the fireplace, and ultimately to the Buddha Amida. As it is used here, the word gives a strong indication of Kihei's expanded or heightened religious awareness. In his mind, even his wife's relaxed posture had implications for her relationship with Amida of which he wanted her to be aware.

A statement at the end of the story places Kihei in relation to the religious organization of his sect. It is said that his life "overshadowed" Nishi Honganji, the head temple and most sacred precinct for Jōdo Shinshū followers. In this way, he is labeled as an important element within the sect's tradition, an example of the full realization of faith in one's life. But the comparison also shows his life to be something apart from the Nishi Honganji tradition. The story implies that Kihei found his awareness not in the Shinshū institution, but outside of it.
The next story in the volume, "Kuhei of Iwami", gives some further examples of the special consciousness in which the myōkōnin participate. One hot summer day when Kuhei was returning home from the mountains with an armful of cut grasses, he noticed that someone had diverted irrigation water from his field to another by blocking his irrigation ditch. Recognizing that this had been done willfully by one of his neighbors, he threw down his grasses, hurried home, sat in front of the butsudan, and gave thanks to Amida. His wife and children, understandably puzzled by his behavior, asked for an explanation. Kuhei answered that he had seen a vision as he was looking at what had been done to his irrigation ditch. A priest had appeared to him to remind him that once before, in an earlier life, Kuhei himself had diverted water from someone else's field to his own; what was happening to Kuhei in this life was retribution for what he had done before. The priest's appearance had kept Kuhei from plotting and carrying out revenge against whoever was stealing his water, so Kuhei immediately ran home to give thanks.

We see in this incident an indication of the depth of the other-worldly consciousness of the myōkōnin. They perceive not only the implications their every act has in their present life, but they are also aware of the karmic implications of each act and of whatever befalls them. The priest who appeared to Kuhei of Iwami helped him sort out the past from the present. Kuhei was then able to see that his anger at the blocking of the irrigation ditch was merely an echo of the feelings which made him block someone else's ditch long ago.

Some time after the above incident, Kuhei met another Shinshū believer on the road. As they stopped to talk, several dogs ran by, fighting and tearing at one another with their teeth. Upon seeing this, Kuhei remarked that men should be thankful for the lords and governors who protect the people. The two believers then shed tears of joy for the favors—in the form of lords and governors—that Amida had given them. Thus the political leaders in Tokugawa society were put in their place: human rulers order men's public or political affairs, but Amida watches over all.

The miracle of faith is the subject of the next story, "Rokuzaemon of Tajima". Rokuzaemon was a member of the
Nichiren sect who hired a wet-nurse—a Shinshū believer, of course—to care for his infant son. The nurse's constant recitation of the *nembutsu* irritated Rokuzaemon to the point that he ordered her never again to speak the words within the walls of his property. She agreed, but could not stop herself from chanting whenever she went beyond Rokuzaemon's gate. Since she carried Rokuzaemon's young son with her wherever she went, he soon became accustomed to hearing the *nembutsu* and even began to chant along with her.

The day before the child was to turn three years old, the nurse urged him to show his faith on the following day by chanting the *nembutsu*. The next morning as the family sat down to celebrate, the child spoke to his nurse, promising that he would not tell anyone what she had told him to do. Hearing this, Rokuzaemon turned angrily to the nurse, demanding to be told what she had said to the child. When she refused to answer he asked his son. The boy replied with a *waka* poem in which he indirectly stated that the nurse had asked him to chant the *nembutsu* on his birthday. On a deeper level, the poem contrasted life in this transient world with the timeless quality of the *nembutsu*. Deeply moved and utterly bewildered as to how a mere child could utter such words, Rokuzaemon joined the Shinshū sect and became a faithful believer.

In this story, we are introduced to several important aspects of *myōkōnin* faith. Recitation of the *nembutsu* by the nurse, and later by the child, is presented as a spontaneous outpouring of faith. It can occur at any time and any place, unrestricted by the rigid separation of religious and ordinary activity. Since the *myōkōnin* see everything as religious, the *nembutsu* as an expression of faith is never out of place. As a natural expression of the believer's gratitude to Amida, spontaneous recitation of the *nembutsu* is irrepressible since it comes from the very being of the believer.

The story of Rokuzaemon also makes a point of the inscrutability of faith. Rokuzaemon and his family are converted by the 'miracle' of their three-year-old son reciting a *waka* poem. The question in their minds—and in ours—is how the child was able to accomplish such a feat. The story indicates that faith is the answer. Faith has a strength and a power which cannot be understood by man.
One must simply believe.

The last story to be discussed is called "Jiroemon of Omi". This story relates how Jiroemon, a peasant horseboy at the Bamba station and a true believer in Shinshū, converted a samurai as they were traveling to Ōtsu. Jiroemon chanted the nembutsu continuously while leading the samurai's horse along the road—until the samurai ordered him to stop. Even then he was not able to remain silent; after only a few yards, he unthinkingly began to chant again. By the time they reached the next station, Jiroemon had been scolded seven times, and each time he had begun to chant yet again.

The samurai was furious, and after conducting some business at an inn near the station, he approached Jiroemon with his sword in hand. Trying to frighten the boy, the samurai berated him for not obeying his order to stop chanting the "filthy" nembutsu and even threatened to use his sword. Jiroemon again began to chant, and the samurai grew angrier still. He brandished his sword over his head but Jiroemon still showed no sign of fear. He continued to chant the nembutsu.

At that moment, the samurai perceived the depth of Jiroemon's faith in Amida and he threw down his sword. When Jiroemon told the samurai the story of Amida's vow not to go to the Pure Land until all men had been reborn there, the samurai was converted and together they wept tears of joy. After this incident the samurai stopped at Jiroemon's house whenever he traveled to that part of the country.

This story is as dramatic in its implications as it is in its plot. In it we learn of the conversion of a samurai, a member of a higher class than that of the believer Jiroemon, to sincere belief in Amida. After the conversion, the samurai and Jiroemon relate to one another as equals, traveling and discussing their faith together. Jiroemon even hosts the samurai at his house. This is a very radical statement when seen against the background of Tokugawa social hierarchy. It identifies the collection of stories as tales of ideal types who probably never existed. It is easy to see the attraction these stories must have had for the peasants and outcastes who were members of the Shinshū sect; in the world of Amida, there were no class distinctions, and all believers were equal.
The story of Jiroemon reiterates the qualities of faith we have already seen in the other stories. The dramatic expression of the spontaneity of myōkōnin faith is evident when Jiroemon cannot keep himself from chanting the nembutsu against his superior's orders. We see evidence of the strength of faith in Jiroemon's undaunted figure chanting before the samurai's upraised sword and in the change Jiroemon's faith brings to the samurai. Finally we get an inkling of the joy of faith as the two weep together and give thanks to Amida after the miraculous conversion.

It is not simply the plots of these stories which relay their message of the wonders of true faith in Amida. The form and language in which they are recorded also convey the vitality of that faith. Despite their written form, the stories beg to be told, not read. Each is alive with the emotions of its characters and with a mystery and wonder which can never be expressed as well in print as through the living voice of a storyteller. The dramatic story lines related in simple narrative form enhance the vitality of the stories and encourage unrestrained empathy with the characters. The language is colloquial, probably not too different from the original oral versions heard by the priests who collected them. Because of this, even in written form the stories are readily accessible to anyone who can read them or who hears them read. They each begin with a formula similar to our traditional "Once upon a time, in a certain place, there lived a ---". And they each end with a statement of the hero's accomplishments or with an editorial comment by the author or teller. These familiar elements from Japanese oral tradition undoubtedly lent the stories credence and wide appeal.

The stories are aimed at those most familiar with such oral traditions: the peasants. The colloquial language contains few literary Chinese constructions other than those Buddhist formulas with which most people were probably familiar, and most of the stories make no attempt to generalize from the content for the more literate reader. Instead, they are for the most part simple and straightforward narratives of events to be believed or not as they stand. The actual content of the stories also points to a peasant audience, for in a class-conscious society, only extremely pious members of the upper classes would spend
any time on stories about the religious lives of the common people.

The most striking aspect of the language of the stories is the consistent use of the term *dogyo* to describe members of the sect. The term implies the existence of a close group or community to which these people belong. This particular community is different from the community of "friends" or neighborliness. The *myōkōnin* depicted in these stories are all members of a religious community, the Shinshū sect, but they also share more than simple membership in the same organization. They share an attitude toward the world, a certain perception of life that the ordinary people around them do not have. They are religious people—saints, if you will—who have completely actualized religion in their lives. And, like the Christian saints, they see the religious, the sacred, in everything.

The Buddha Amida, is the central focus of the *myōkōnin* community. As Shinshū members, the *myōkōnin* believe in Amida's promise that he himself will not enter the Pure Land until all men are assured of salvation. Once they have put their faith in Amida's vow, the *myōkōnin* no longer question the justice of what comes their way in this life. They are able to accept things as they are (*kono mama*) since they know that their salvation is assured through Amida's power. Their time in this world becomes a time of waiting—waiting for death, and waiting for eventual rebirth in the Pure Land.

One might be tempted to understand this waiting to be a time for enduring as interminable lifetime before death and rebirth, but these stories do not describe the *myōkōnin* as bored, lethargic people totally detached from and disinterested in life. On the contrary, they are depicted as people very much alive and at home in this world, filled with the joy of living. They are not bored but content, and because of their contentment, their time in this world is not an eternity. Rather it is "like staying overnight in an inn". Since the believer has been assured of his salvation, he has no wants in this life, and he does not suffer. Since he does not suffer, he has no need of consolation, and for that reason no consolation is offered in the stories.
The *myōkōnin* do not spend their lives trying to prove their faith by performing out-of-the-ordinary actions or services, for Amida does not require constant proof of faithfulness or sincerity. If an individual recites the *nembutsu* even once in true faith and sincerity, that is enough to insure his salvation. There is no ongoing doctrinal call to a special vocation, as in Catholicism, nor is there any personal compulsion to give proof of continual faith through performance of special acts. Instead, the lives of the *myōkōnin* reflect an overwhelming gratitude to Amida for his promise of salvation. The people we meet in these stories perform their daily activities with Amida's vow always in mind. They lead totally honest and straightforward lives in which their gratitude and thanksgiving are expressed in everything they do.18

The most noticeable expression of this gratitude is the spontaneous chanting of the *nembutsu* that we find in each story. The phrase itself functions as the binding force behind the community of believers. As the formula through which believers can share in the vitality of a religious movement, its ritual power provides the necessary link between the individual's belief and the personal experience of his faith. As a tap on the individual's emotional store, it allows an equally necessary spontaneous expression of that personal experience. The real power of the *nembutsu* as a binding force, however, lies in its performance of these two roles at the same time. The *nembutsu* chanted as an expression of gratitude serves at the same time to deepen the faith of the believer. It is both a release and a fulfillment, and as such it is self-perpetuating, ensuring the continued involvement of the individual.

Members of the community share the experience of the *nembutsu* as their link with Amida, and through that link they share certain perceptions of the world around them. The *myōkōnin* in the stories perceive government as a necessary regulatory agency provided by and ultimately governed by Amida. Thus, they accept the existent political order. In addition, they receive believers as equals, regardless of sex or social class, but they do not require all believers to be equals. As we saw in the story of Jiroemon, after his conversion, the samurai treated Jiroemon as an equal, yet continued to carry on his life as a samurai. The *myōkōnin* community is thus shown to be entirely in keeping with the social and political order of the times.
This relationship between the existing socio-political order and the myōkonin community is the central theme of the Myokoninden. Enviable ideal types belonging to a special religious community are portrayed as peasants, who are generally conceived of as being firmly planted among the things of this world. In this way the stories emphasize the possibility of having a meaningful religious experience within the framework of the established social and political structure. This relationship provides a link between the appearance of the Myokoninden in the Shinshū sect and the other religious activity of the times. As was mentioned earlier, many of the most visible religious movements which occurred during the Tokugawa period actively sought the rejection of the existing social order. In contrast to these movements, we have seen that the Myokoninden stresses the transcendence, not the rejection, of things as they are. Once a member of the Shinshū community, the believer continues to live out his life in society. Although the socio-political order is not actively supported, it is accepted as a necessary backdrop to the maintenance of the religious community and the lives of individual members.

Stated in broader terms, there is a contrast between the acceptance and the rejection of the existing socio-political order by different religious groups. The contrast might be easily dismissed as simply one of differences between distinct religious groups, but, in my view, it should be seen as more than that. The fact that religious groups make a choice between supporting, accepting, and rejecting the socio-political order in which they operate indicates that they see themselves as at least potentially separate from that order. If we are to understand the significance of the choice made by one particular group and to better comprehend the place of that choice in the entire range of activities occurring at the same time, it will be helpful to investigate the relationship between a religious group, or community, and a socio-political order, or structure, more fully at a theoretical level.

THE STRUCTURE-COMMUNITAS PARADIGM

Two general theories are especially pertinent to an understanding of the relationship between a religious community and an existing socio-political structure.19
Victor Turner's discussion of structure and communitas in *The Ritual Process* is particularly useful in its general statement of the paradigm and in its treatment of religious communitas. In this work, Turner derives the general outline of the structure-communitas paradigm from the everyday and ritual behavior of the Ndembu tribe in Africa, and begins to construct a model of history as a discontinuous process informed by movement from structure to communitas and back. Since his interest is in primitive religion and ritual, Turner approaches the paradigm through an investigation of the nature of religious communitas. The model of history used by Karl Mannheim in *Ideology and Utopia* gives another dimension to the structure-communitas paradigm: his concepts allow us to distinguish different relationships between structure and communitas.

In this section, I will describe the paradigm as it is put forth by Turner and then expand it to include the view of the historian as expressed by Mannheim. I will, whenever possible, give examples from the *myōkōnin* stories discussed in the last section in order to help explain the paradigm. And I will use the paradigm to explain more complex aspects of the stories.

Turner presents structure and communitas as two contradictory yet integrally related poles of a paradigm. He identifies the function of structure when he characterizes it as the "social structure" or the "politico-legal-economic" structure of a society. It provides continuing support (one might say life-support) with some semblance of efficiency to a group of individuals who have banded together for survival and to raise their standard of living. As such, structure is an organizational mode which differentiates between and hierarchically ranks individuals, subjecting them to various rules and norms in order to assure continuance of the structure. Since it strives for and usually achieves sustained existence through time, structure is associated with history, language, law, and custom.

As an organizational mode through which people seek greater efficiency and security in providing for themselves, structure deals not with the personal needs of each individual, but with objectifications of those needs. In the name of efficiency, it would seem that it could not be otherwise—one has only to think of the problems of a modern
society with millions of members. There results a general impersonalization in which the identity, sometimes the needs, and usually the feelings of the individual are lost, forgotten, or even ignored. Ties between individuals unless otherwise bolstered, also become impersonal as each individual seeks to further his own cause and advance in the hierarchy.

It is in contrast to this that Turner sees the experience of communitas. Communitas is a "homogeneous totality" as opposed to a "structure of segmentally or hierarchically opposed parts"; it allows "free relationships between individuals" in a relatively unstructured and egalitarian atmosphere. It is personal and immediate, existential, and aspects of it are often considered to be holy. For Turner, it represents the recognition of "...an essential and generic human bond, without which there could be no society".

It should be evident from this description that the function of communitas is very different from that of structure. Communitas is concerned with people and their relationships, not with impersonal, practical realities. People experiencing communitas strive for what could be called "quality". Communitas in this sense involves equalizing differences and returning to wholeness, renewing the individual's grasp of himself and rediscovering the reality of his ties to other people. As an experience reaching to the very ground of man's being, communitas commands an extraordinary power produced by the soaring emotional experience of being fulfilled.

The relationship between structure and communitas is what enables us to speak of a paradigm. One cannot exist without the other, for it is in contrast to structure that communitas is defined, and vice versa. Just as structure cannot provide "direct, immediate, and total confrontation of human identities", so communitas "cannot stand alone if the material and organizational needs of human beings are to be adequately met". And yet, the two do not easily exist simultaneously. The stability sought by structure is threatened by the emotional, irrational power of communitas, while the quality of communitas degenerates in time into structure in order to provide for all its members.
There is thus a constant tension between the social need for structure and the individual need for communitas. The growth in the individual of an overwhelming feeling of being structured arouses the search for an experience of communitas. If that experience is satisfying, that is, if it succeeds in reuniting the individual with himself and with his brothers, that individual will be content to live with structure for a while longer. If that experience is unfulfilling, however, he will continue to look for an experience that will satisfy him.

As Turner presents it, life for the Ndembu is continual movement between communitas and structure, a progression through the life of the individual from structure to communitas to structure that continues until his death. If we were to diagram the pattern of an individual's life, it would look like Figure 1:

```
BIRTH...S→C→S→C→S...DEATH
```

Figure 1.

The movement from structure to communitas does not occur at arbitrary points in time, but rather at predictable crises in the life of each individual: puberty, marriage, pregnancy, birth, sickness and death. Each of these is an extraordinary event, a time when the status of the individual is changing and when his relationship to the established structure is in question. At such times, the individual needs the direct emotional support of the people around him, not the impersonal support of the system. For the Ndembu, this support is given in the form of various ritual ceremonies in which tradition and religious symbolism help bind the participants into a closely knit group. Completion of the ritual allows entry into the individual's new position in the structure with a minimum amount of stress.

Turner's use of the structure and communitas opposition allows a new, essentially ahistorical interpretation of the traditional developmental model of individual lives.
By describing communitas as opposed to and thus discontinuous with structure, he points out the breaks in the progression, the discontinuities, which when seen from another level, represent continuities within the larger structure-communitas paradigm. In this way, he is similar to Eliade, who establishes a new paradigm with which to view the transition from archaic to modern religious forms. Eliade, too, identifies discontinuities in what was previously a developmental model of religion, and from these builds a new, ahistorical model.\(^{28}\)

As we saw in Figure 1, however, the familiar linear conception of historical development with which Turner begins stresses continuity of movement in time from beginning to end. In that diagram, no relationship other than the temporal one is shown between the structures and the feelings of communitas experienced by a Ndembu individual during his lifetime. Although Turner does go on to discuss particular types of communitas, their different relationships to structures are not clearly formulated in his work. But in order for the paradigm to be useful in our analysis of the Myōkō-ninden, it must help us to better understand the significance of the structure-communitas relationship implied by the stories. Let us turn to the work of Karl Mannheim for a clearer view of that relationship.

Mannheim's analysis of the evolution of political structure suggests a new scheme which could be used to illustrate Turner's concept of repeated movement from structure to communitas to structure. In *Ideology and Utopia*, Mannheim gives a description of the successive development of five ideologies which suggests a continual oscillation in the mentality of individuals and groups between two poles—rationality and irrationality. This relationship might be represented with the diagram in Figure 2.

![Figure 2](image-url)
As the figure shows, the model derived from Mannheim's analysis is radically different from Turner's historical model. It is, in fact, ahistorical, without reference to time in a progressive sense. It assumes the passing of time, since it is time which allows for the perception of change. But it looks beyond time to stress the continuity of the elements which occur at different times. Because his interest is in political systems, Mannheim uses this scheme to illustrate the relationship between political ideologies. He deals, in effect, with the side of the paradigm opposite that which Turner considers.

The oscillation scheme we derived from Mannheim suggests a new interpretation of Turner's structure-communitas paradigm. A new diagram of the relationship between structure and communitas based on the Mannheim model would look like Figure 3.

![Figure 3](image)

This oscillation model is characterized by repeated, non-progressive motion back and forth between two poles, exactly what we have described as the movement imposed by the structure-communitas paradigm. The motion is not only repetitive, but continuous. The diagram as it appears above does not differentiate between types of communitas or changes in structure. It merely identifies the two poles and depicts the general motion between them. As such, it might be said to represent the conception of time held by the Ndembu, for whom the present is seen as opposed to a past undifferentiated except in the consciousness of repetition.
What I have described so far is the operative principle of a paradigm. It is tempting to consider the framework complete and to go on to give evidence from the *Myōkōninden* to support the paradigm as it now stands, but the object of constructing a paradigm is not simply to develop an explanatory model so generalized that it is more widely applicable than the model previously used. Heaping generalization upon generalization illuminates nothing. Instead, one must conceive a paradigm in such a way that it broadens understanding of the data at the same time the paradigm itself is refined by the researcher's understanding of the data. A paradigm must be a tool, not an explanation. As such, it must be dealt with in terms of its constraints, not its explanatory powers. Its boundaries must be sketched and the limits, not the extent, of its power defined.

With this in mind, we must move on to examine the structure-communitas paradigm as a tool to be used in our analysis of the *Myōkōninden*. Since that text is concerned with the relationship between an individual structure, the Tokugawa socio-political order, and a particular communitas, the religious community of the *myōkōnin*, we must construct a model of the paradigm which differentiates between various structures and communitas so that we can examine their relationships to each other. The following model is a synthesis of the two preceding ones, a way of looking at the ahistorical oscillation model together with the historian's developmental one. This model differentiates not only between two types of occurrences, structure and communitas, but also between the different forms that those occurrences may take at different times, $S_1, S_2, \ldots, C_1, C_2, \ldots$ (see Figure 4).

As the historian begins the task of differentiating between particular communitas and particular structures, he isolates a variable and establishes criteria with which to characterize and measure difference or sameness. Traditionally, he has isolated one or the other of the vertical sets established in the above model, discussing continuities or discontinuities in relationships between its elements. In fact, the bulk of the work produced by historians has defined and compared elements in the structure column, specifically political structures. Historians of religion have dealt in the same way with the communitas column.
Figure 4.
Turner's work, however, concentrates on the movement from one column to the other, as pictured by the horizontal sets in the diagram. Each of these sets is essentially ahistorical because it collapses the time axis of the diagram and considers the non-progressive swing from structure to communitas and back. This should preclude any discussion of various types of communitas or structure which occur at different times but it does not. Indeed, Turner detects several types of communitas and so opens for consideration the possible types of relationships between different structures and different forms of communitas. Mannheim, as an historian, considers the structure column in his analysis of ideologies, yet he, too, detects the presence of elements outside of that framework, most notably in his discussion of utopias.

Let us examine the implications of the scope of the paradigm as it is pictured in Figure 4. This model represents an attempt to view history not as successive, discontinuous or continuous stages along a narrow path (whether the horizontal or the vertical in our diagram) but as an organic whole characterized by fluid movement between opposite poles. Because the model deals with the interplay of multiple variables, it demands examination not only of different structures and differing forms of communitas, but more importantly, of different types of relationships between structure and communitas. Since historians continue to examine the structure variable, and those involved in the study of religion have endlessly examined the nature of communitas, there is no need for us to pursue these types of study here. Rather, since the data with which we are concerned, the Myōkōninden stories, deal with the establishment of communitas in a certain relationship to the existing political structure, we will look at the types of structure-communitas relationships. For purposes of discussion, I will posit the existence of an archetypal relationship between structure and communitas and designate it spontaneous communitas in order to distinguish it from other types which we will introduce later. Examination of this archetypal relationship will help us identify the general characteristic of the structure-communitas relationship.

Spontaneous communitas is a timeless potential, something which can take place at any time as a spontaneous
'happening'. It is the feeling of belonging, of wholeness and humanity, that the individual experiences at certain times. Since, as an archetype, it is a statement of the potential of occurrence, its specific relationship to the structure that generates it is undefined before its occurrence except in one important aspect: the experience of communitas is different from that of structure. Indeed, it is that perceived discontinuity which forms the horizontal axis in figure 4.

When experiencing communitas, the individual is outside the constraints, and thus the control, of structure. Communitas can thus be seen, still at the definitional or archetypal level, as destructive of structure, or, at the very least, as tremendously threatening to it. In other words, communitas is anti-structure. As we saw in the previous section, the communitas described in the Myōkō-ninden stories provides believers with a shelter from the existing Tokugawa order in several ways which are potentially threatening to that structure. It allows members to accept each other as equals without regard to sex or position in the social hierarchy, thereby reaffirming the individual's conception of himself as a man akin to all other men.

On a spiritual level, the believer gains release from the profane level of life through his preoccupation with his gratitude to Amida and his belief in his own eventual rebirth in the Pure Land. The myōkōnin lives in constant awareness, mediated by his chanting of the nembutsu, of the religious consequences of his actions. The social or political consequences of those actions are always secondary. Because he participates in a different, if not higher reality, the myōkōnin does not feel himself bound by the political level. He enters into society not because society requires his participation, but because he chooses to involve himself. He feels himself responsible to the religious community to which he belongs, not the social structure in which he lives. Thus, although the myōkōnin are not disruptive of society, they have the potential to be.

The threat to structure that is imposed by the occurrence of communitas can proceed in one of several ways. If uncontrolled or incompatible with the structure, it can
become what might be called a revolutionary impulse which at the very least, will temporarily pull participants in the communitas further away from the structure. At its most dangerous and potent level, this type of communitas can lead to revolution and the actual destruction of the existing structure. If the emergent communitas is controlled by and compatible with the existent structure, and if it can be kept vital, it can become a welcome complement to that structure. The vitality of the communitas serves as a release for anti-structure feelings and thus acts as the stabilizer for the structure. If either of these types of communitas loses its vitality, and thereby its appeal, it ceases to satisfy the need for the experience of communitas and the way is open for the emergence of a new communitas.

In the following discussion, I will refer to the complementary communitas as ideological communitas and the revolutionary communitas as utopian communitas following Mannheim's use of the terms. I will first describe the utopian relationship and its implications and then the ideological relationship and its implications in order to provide the complete paradigm and afford a better understanding of the place of the Myōkōninden within it. I feel that it is the ideological type which best describes the relationship between the community and structure found in the Myōkōninden. A utopian relationship between structure and communitas is a strong threat to the established structure because the two spheres are completely separate, and the participants in that communitas are beyond control of the structure. The relationship between the spheres is shown in Figure 5.

![Figure 5](image-url)
In Turner's words, this relationship shows "... an attempt to describe the external and visible effects—the outward form, it might be said, of an inward experience of... communitas, and to spell out the optimal social conditions under which such experiences might be expected to flourish and multiply". This type of communitas is informed by a world view different from that of the structure from which it came. It is a world view which envisions the continuous existence of communitas without structure. Yet, in the search for continued existence through time, communitas must have a structure of its own. This new structure is shown as the dotted circle $S_2$.

Since all utopian communitas actively reject the existing structure, the emergence of a communitas of this type is contingent upon two things: the articulation of a perception of reality different from that proffered by the existing structure, and the existence, within that articulation, of an element prescribing the active pursuit of the new world-view and the rejection of the existing structure. Although they are all active in their pursuit of a new, ideal structure, utopian communitas are not all alike in the value they place on the structure they have rejected. Revolutionary utopian movements seek to destroy the old structure in order to erect their own new one in its place. If they are successful, the new structure will not be separated from their communitas and the relationship will be ideological, since their world-views are compatible. If they are not successful, they are probably at their end, because society does not think well of fallen revolutionaries.

Utopian communitas that are non-destructive of society seek merely to maintain their separation from the existing structure. Thus they take a more tolerant attitude toward the continued existence of the structure they reject. Their success in maintaining this separation is based on the continued relevance of their world-view to their participants over time and on the continuous vitality of the experience of communitas they offer. If the world-view loses its relevance, or if the experience of communitas loses its vitality and is unable to satisfy its participants, those participants will begin to look elsewhere for a better experience.
Practical matters dictate that a utopian communitas have contact with the existing structure in some way unless that community is completely self-sufficient. As this contact continues over time, it brings the danger that the views of the structure and the communitas will begin to coincide, and they will slip into an ideological relationship.

If we were to diagram an ideological relationship between a communitas and a structure, it would look something like Figure 6. I do not mean to imply by this drawing that structure and communitas must exist simultaneously; it is the nature of a two-dimensional drawing which dictates a flat design such as this. What I mean to imply is that when this kind of communitas emerges, it does so in the following relationship to the structure from which it came:

![Figure 6](image)

There are two main implications of this model which distinguish an ideological communitas from one that is utopian. As the drawing shows, the ideological relationship is characterized by the shaded area, those elements which are members of both circles. Because this particular structure and communitas share common elements, they enter into a normative, supportive relationship with one another. The communitas instills in its participants a sense of well-being and an acceptance of the existing structure, while those involved in the structure encourage the use of this particular communitas as a release for anti-structural feelings. Indeed, given both the need for structure and communitas which is the basis of our paradigm and the volatile anti-structure sentiments aroused by the need for communitas, it is in the interest of the leaders of the existing structure to support a communitas they know to be compatible—the next one might not be.
As we saw in the stories, an individual is not called upon to change his relationship to society in any way when he becomes a Shinshū believer. Once he believes, he lives out his life with a new religious awareness and a new sense of community while playing a basically unchanged role in society. In fact, the stories encourage the believer to show his gratitude to Amida not by quitting society to enter the priesthood or to perform ascetic practices, but by remaining in society to fulfill his role in the best way he can. The social order is seen as the gift of Amida, and for that reason it is accepted.

An ideological relationship also implies free movement back and forth between the structure and communitas spheres. If a newly experienced communitas is satisfying to its participants, there develops a structuring, or organization, to ensure that it can be attained whenever it is needed. And if the principles held by those sharing in the communitas are compatible with the existing social and political order, that organization gains a place in the structure. There is then an ideological relationship between the structure and the communitas.

In order to remain in this relationship, the structured segment of the communitas sphere must have the ability to produce and reproduce vital experiences of communitas that support the existing structure, thus allowing free movement between the spheres. This is accomplished through the use of mediators which have the power to produce the experience of communitas and, to the extent possible, to direct the strong anti-structure impulses of the communitas so that they are not destructive. These mediators can be of any form—the person or words of the founder, written texts, priests, ritual ceremonies and incantations, or even bounded spatial areas such as temples and graves—so long as they have the vitality necessary to produce an appropriate experience of communitas when it is desired. Thus, to be successful in an ideological relationship with structure, the structured segment of a communitas must wield its mediating devices in such a way as to control the powerful impulses generated in communitas. The structured segment must also maintain its supportive function while retaining the vitality of the mediating devices so they continue to be able to produce a particular communitas which will satisfy the general need for the experience of
The structured segment must control without devitalizing and revitalize without losing control. The Myōkōniniden is an attempt to revitalize the Shinshū communitas among the Tokugawa peasants. It combines vital new elements and creative reemphasis of old elements in such a way as to cause the emergence of a new and satisfying experience of religious communitas from the existent Shinshū tradition. In order to create this new sense of communitas, the collection presents material which is relevant to its audience in a manner which appeals to that audience; without relevance and appeal, it would, after all, have no audience. In order to direct and control the power of the emergent communitas, it grounds that communitas in tradition.

Both implicitly through form and style and explicitly in an introductory statement by the editors, the stories purport to share in a familiar and trusted oral tradition. This tradition is used to advantage in the stories as confirmation of the truth of their content and as the source of stylistic strategies with which to appropriate some of the very special vitality and appeal of oral forms of narrative. The stories would be interesting even without this tie to tradition, but with it, their credibility and appeal are greatly enhanced.

The content of the Myōkōniniden also reflects the dual concern for the new and vital linked with the traditional and familiar. One of the most prominent elements of the stories which would have great appeal for the peasant is the idea of individual sainthood attainable even by the lowliest servant. The Myōkōnin are pictured as everyday people who have gained their great faith on their own, that is outside of the Shinshū institution, and whose lives remain their own even after their spiritual awakening.

They are not required to, nor do they, enter the priesthood immediately upon their conversion to devote the rest of their lives to their sect or to Amida. Rather, they live out their lives in the midst of the "real" world among family and friends, and they are considered no less holy for doing so.

The Myōkōnin do remain tied, albeit loosely, to the established Shinshū tradition. They visit temples and make offerings, celebrate the birth and death days of Shinran, and generally revere the Nishi Honganji as the center of their sect. After long, full lives, some even take the
tonsure as one more way to express their gratitude to Amida. But their appeal to the text's audience is through their independence from the institution; mention of their ties to the tradition serves as a point of familiarity and a means of controlling or directing the power of the communitas created and mediated by the text.

To the peasant in Tokugawa society, the *myōkōnín* must have presented a particularly potent and compelling image. The *Myōkōninden* offered him, at the spiritual level, the real possibility of attaining his own salvation, while allowing him, on a more practical level, to retain his involvement in life and with the people around him. It offered him proof of the existence of a powerful community of believers united as equals in their faith and in their gratitude to Amida, and it gave him, particularly through its form, proof of the vitality of that community. It offered him, in other words, a viable opportunity to participate in a community which could satisfy his need for communitas without requiring him to reject his ties to the existing society.

We have now identified the intentionality of the *Myōkōninden* as a text. It gives its audience proof of the possibility of experiencing satisfying communitas while remaining in the existing social and political order. To restate this in the terms we used to describe the paradigm, the text gives proof that Shinshū offers a vital communitas experience and that the community it offers is an ideological one. Indeed, as a Shinshū text created by Shinshū priests in order to proselytize for their sect, it can only provide its audience with the opportunity of a Shinshū community, one which traditionally is supportive of the status quo. The text combines standard Shinshū elements such as repetition of the *nembutsu*, acceptance of one's place in the world, and the Shinshū emphasis on repaying Amida's compassion with hard work, with vital elements of form and style which give it an immediacy that belies its conventional content. In the framework of the structure-communitas paradigm, the *Myōkōninden* is thus a uniquely Shinshū solution to the problem of establishing a vital experience of communitas.

Although the *Myōkōninden* is unique in the solution it offers, it is not at all unique in attempting to offer a solution to the problem of communitas. The popularity of the text indicates, of itself, general interest in
obtaining a communitas experience among the people of Tokugawa Japan. Those who achieved such an experience through the mediation of that particular text continued to live their lives in basic harmony with the Tokugawa order. In other words, they lived in what we have called an ideological relationship with that structure. But the use of the paradigm in our analysis of the text has allowed us to see that that was not the only choice available. According to the paradigm, a particular structure and communitas can lie in any one of several different relationships to each other at any given time. Individuals who were not interested in supporting the Tokugawa social order, but rather in escaping from it or changing it, would not have been satisfied by the community of myōkōnin offered in the text. They would have turned instead toward the articulations of a utopian community, one which sought to remain outside the existing structure.

This is the link between the Myōkōninden and other forms of religious activity in the Tokugawa period. If the intentionality of the text is to give proof of the possibility of experiencing satisfying communitas while remaining in the existing social and political order, it does so in response to the author's perception of the need for a vital communitas experience among the people of his time. The text, then, is important not only as evidence of the need for the particular type of communitas it describes, but also as evidence of the need for a general experience of communitas as explained in the paradigm. It represents one choice among the many which were available to people looking for the experience of communitas. Each religious movement had its own articulation of the experience it could provide, and each individual had to choose one to satisfy himself. Since the individual's choice was governed by the vitality and appeal of the articulation presented by a community, both the form and the content of that articulation were extremely important, as we have seen in our analysis of the Myōkōninden.

CONCLUSION

The use of the structure-communitas paradigm in analyzing the Myōkōninden has enriched our study in several ways. At the level of the document itself, it has helped
describe the intentionality of the text in general terms and categories which will allow its ready comparison with other articulations of its time. While our treatment of the myōkōnin experience as an ideological communitas distinguishes it at a theoretical level from other types of communitas, it stresses the uniquely Shinshū quality of that community as well as its general character, and it offers a framework within which to view all aspects of the text. In this framework we have found it necessary to discuss the form and the content of a work such as the Myōkōninden as conscious choices by the author, since both inform the intentionality of the text. Indeed, we have discussed them in such a way as to suggest that we dismiss the form-content dichotomy. Form, since it contributes to the reception of the work by an audience, is part of content, and content is the form in which it is expressed.

The paradigm has also allowed us to look at the Myōkōninden as a single consistent part of the complex range of religious activity which took place in Tokugawa Japan. By first identifying a central problem in the text, that of the establishment of community, and by then examining a paradigm to help us deal with it, we have been able to treat the uniqueness of this particular document and its place in the contemporary scene as interrelated aspects of the text itself rather than as separate visions in the analyst's mind. In this way, a text becomes recognizable as one event within a continuing dialogue among the people of its time.

Although we have spoken of communitas in this paper as religious communitas, the structure-communitas paradigm has implications for a much wider range of Tokugawa experience; the latter part of the Tokugawa period saw great activity not only in the religious sphere, but in the political and intellectual spheres as well. We have dealt with the paradigm largely from the side of communitas, since the document treated here is concerned primarily with that experience, and we have left the question of an existing structure's relationship with communitas largely untouched. If we are to carry our assumption of the shared nature of man's perceptions of the world to its logical end, however, the suggestion in this paper of the existence in Tokugawa Japan of a strong perception among religious groups and individuals of a need for communitas would indicate the
same perception, or at least a consciousness of that perception, among political thinkers and intellectuals as well. And since our paradigm indicates an extremely close, almost organic, relationship between structure and communitas, we would expect to find that those concerned with elements of structure also dealt with communitas.

NOTES


6. Ibid., p. 147.


11. See Suzuki Sōken, *Nihon no kindaika to on no shisō*. 

111


19. In this paper, I will consider the term communitas to refer to religious communitas. I will leave the question of whether there are other types of communitas to another time.


21. Ibid., p. 113.
22. Ibid., p.100.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid., pp. 82, 120.
26. Ibid., p. 83. Turner's emphasis.
27. Ibid., pp. 114-6.


31. Mannheim, pp. 192-263.

32. For Mannheim, an ideology is essentially a world-view, while a utopia denotes a system or group which actively
seeks to achieve a world-view. Both types of communitas-structure relationships that we will describe involve world-view, but with one important difference. What I have called utopian communitas (Turner calls it ideological) moves away from the existing structure in order to actively pursue its world view, whereas what I call ideological communitas (Turner's normative communitas) remains closely linked to the existing structure and its ideology. I feel that Mannheim's terms point out the difference between the two relationships more clearly, so I have used his scheme rather than Turner's.

33. Turner, p. 120.
35. The question of whether the communitas recreated after the original experience are merely reproductions of the "true" experience or are "true" communitas themselves is interesting but tangential to the focus of this paper. It is my feeling that in order to be satisfying, and fulfill the need for the communitas experience, a communitas must be a "real" experience, not a reproduction. The fact that it seeks to reproduce something experienced before is unimportant so long as it succeeds in producing, not mimicking, the actual experience of communitas. This is perhaps the thrust of Eliade's myth of the eternal return analysis: for the participant in an archaic religious tradition, the mediators of the original communitas are still vital enough to procure anew the experience of communitas, while the participant in a modern tradition has had to create new mediators.

36. This suggests a new definition of the sacred as that which has, or had, the power to produce the experience of communitas.
Kusaka Genzui: His Action and Thought, 1859-1864

by Thomas Huber

Kusaka Genzui was the anointed leader of Chōshū han's activist samurai after Yoshida Shōin's death in 1859 and until his own in 1864. This treatment of him will seek to examine the modes of political action to which he had recourse, and the ideological framework in which he saw himself operating. The ultimate purpose of this examination shall be to shed some new light on the nature of Kusaka's contribution to the Meiji Restoration.

A preliminary working image of Kusaka, which is not at variance with most of the current American scholarship on the activist, is furnished by the well-known Restoration historian Matsumoto Sannosuke. Matsumoto sees Kusaka as representing a first step in the anti-foreign sonnō jōi movement's political maturation. In his view, Kusaka is an advocate of "moral optimism" in the form of reliance on the emperor. A bit beyond Kusaka on the road to political realism is Takasugi Shinsaku, in that Takasugi recognizes the need to build a power base in the han as a means of serving the emperor. Okubō Toshimichi is introduced finally as the culmination of the process in that he adds to the emperor symbol and the han base concept a vision of national unification.

Matsumoto begins his analysis of Kusaka's "moral optimism" by citing an essay of 1858 in which Kusaka accuses the Bakufu of conspiring with the foreigners out of "ignorance" and "malice". From this Matsumoto concludes that Kusaka's views and conduct subsequently are rooted in sonnō moralism, as handed down by the Mito school, Sakuma Shōzan, and Yoshida Shōin. This moral emphasis is then characterized by Matsumoto as optimistic on the strength of an assertion of Kusaka's to the effect that if the "imperial banner is waved one cannot doubt that the loyal samurai will arise and overwhelm the traitors". Matsumoto sees Kusaka as believing that loyalist zeal alone should be sufficient to the sonnō jōi cause, a belief to which Matsumoto assigns the term "optimistic". The author also points out in passing that
already in 1858 Kusaka was condemning the middle strata of society, meaning Bakufu and han elites, on the one hand, while affirming on the other the lofty imperial will and the energetic purity of lower level samurai.

Kusaka is then contrasted with his successor Takasugi Shinsaku, the latter being portrayed as a political realist because he advocates the necessity of a han power base and disdains such loyalist action as running back and forth to Kyoto. Besides this, Takasugi studies astronomy and economics, which suggests that he is empirically oriented. Matsumoto's view of Kusaka as a "moral optimist" rather than a pragmatist is compatible with the vision of Kusaka which appears in the writings of many prominent Western scholars who deal with the Restoration, including George Beasley and Albert Craig. It is thus not inappropriate that Matsumoto's appraisal serve as a point of departure for an investigation of Kusaka's brief but brilliant role in Bakumatsu politics.

Was Kusaka really motivated in the first instance by an abstract commitment to Confucian and nativist morality, or was he motivated by something else? Were his tactics really confined to, and defined by, his inherently futile attempts to mobilize samurai drifters in the name of the emperor? These questions may be of pivotal importance for debates over the nature of the Meiji Restoration. Kusaka was the recognized leader of many samurai activists from Chōshū and elsewhere in the critical period of the early 1860s, and his motives and perceptions were not improbably shared by many. If the reasons for his acting were other than has been supposed, then certain interpretations of the Restoration experience which address the role of activist samurai in general may also have to be reexamined.

The only reliable way of achieving a feel for Kusaka's motives and methods must lie in a careful scrutiny of his words and actions. With this purpose in mind, we shall explore Kusaka's letters, travels, and political stratagems chronologically, but pause in August, 1862, to examine Kusaka's worldview in greater depth. In that month Kusaka produced his two most important essays, the "Turning Back the Waves" (Kairan jōgi) and the "Foolish Words on Severing an Arm" (Kaiwan chigen).
In the last instance, we shall deal with the skirmish at the Forbidden Gate (Kinmon no hen) in which Kusaka lost his life.

* * *

Genzui was born in 1840, the son of a humble han physician in Chōshū. The family stipend was 25 hyō, or probably about 16 koku. He studied in the han medical school, the Kōseikan, and entered Yoshida Shōin's private academy, the Shōka Sonjuku, in 1857. He became known for his eagerness as a student and his mastery of Western languages. Then in 1858 he was sent to Edo for further study. From there he initiated a revealing exchange of letters with his former mentor.

Shortly before Yoshida's terminal imprisonment on November 29, 1858, Kusaka wrote him a long missive. Kusaka asserted that he had no desire to follow the imminent han order to return to Chōshū, and that he, Takasugi, Otera, and their comrades would much rather head for Kyōto and set up modest housekeeping. His letter home to Yoshida then flowed into a financial complaint. Kusaka asked of Yoshida that he persuade the Choshu government to subsidize him to the extent of one ryō per month, making his total monthly income about two ryō. He believed the government would be willing to do this. He complained that his condition was involuntarily monastic because he did not have the small margin of funds necessary for recreation. "I never visit courtesans or spend a cent on women", he observed. Kusaka's epistle closed with a lengthy and sharp admonition to Yoshida, whose plots against the government were being copied and circulated before they reached the hands of the core of students for whom they were meant. It was the student who advised the teacher that this was indiscreet.4

There emerges from this early letter a Kusaka who was politically interested, had a number of contacts, had some political sense, and lived in a stringently frugal way.

A month or so after this letter was written, on December 11, 1858, another was posted to Yoshida, by then in prison. The text was signed by Takasugi Shinsaku and three other Edo students as well as by Genzui, and it
marked the celebrated break between Yoshida and his disciples. The teacher had written them on November 24, 1858, telling them of the plan whereby they would assassinate Manabe Akikatsu, the Bakufu representative in Kyoto. He had already enlisted seventeen of his local students in this enterprise. The students in Edo, however, pointing out recent Bakufu severity, rejected his scheme on the grounds that it was hazardous and would bring down an irresistible wave of repression on their heads.

On January 11, 1859, Yoshida responded that repression was a function of opposition to the government, and that the reverse approach would not work. "What divides us is that I intend to realize the truth while (Kusaka and Takasugi) intend to accomplish glorious deeds", he says. His feelings at this time came through in a letter to the student Okabe Tomitarō:

The men of (righteous) intent wait for the time. If they do not die there are various rationalizations but no explanations. In times of trial they are not loyal and principled men but men who perform glorious deeds.... One suffers in the understanding (of it). Do they all have the desire to grab millet with a wet hand (that is, are they all petty opportunists)?

Yoshida felt that his students were guilty of cowardice, while the students felt that their mentor was throwing their lives away from his relatively safe vantage point of house arrest.

On December 15, 1858, Genzui was ordered home from Edo and complied, entering the han Western studies school in February, 1859. He did not visit Yoshida on his arrival and the teacher formally broke off relations with him soon after.

By the fifth month, however, they were reconciled and even Yoshida seems to have come around to his students' view. In a letter to Takasugi shortly before his execution in October, 1859, he wrote these lines.

Thus, having dialogue with like-minded companions, retreating from the goal and correcting (oneself) by regular pursuit
of knowledge, one could become a sincere man. Then one could put the truth into practice.... I think my trying to sway people while in prison was a great error.8

This suggests that Yoshida was at the last in favor of discretion in the sphere of metropolitan activism. This letter is interesting in light of a slightly earlier one which Yoshida sent to the student Nomura Wasaku. In the Nomura letter Yoshida still believed he would eventually be released from the han prison.9 This would mean that he had been urging a bold stroke only while being himself safe at home. When faced a few months later with extra¬
dition to Edo and the immediate reality of Bakufu violence, as Kusaka and his friends in Edo had been faced with it late in 1858, Yoshida seems to have embraced his students' more circumspect attitudes toward political action. If so, then, under the press of events, even Yoshida had been on his way toward what Matsumoto calls "political realism" before his death.

The activities surrounding Yoshida's death are of some interest beyond the question of conversion, however. Yoshida left a will for his erstwhile students, received by them a few days after he died on October 27, 1859:

You all know my intentions. Therefore I wish that you not grieve over my execution. Grieving over me is not as important as your knowing of my affairs. Knowing me is not as important as inheriting my intentions and greatly extending them.10

This kind of thing was no doubt calculated by Yoshida to have a certain effect on his followers. Consider Takasugi Shinsaku's reaction, in a letter of November 16, 1859, to the han bureaucrat Sufu Masanosuke:

Our teacher Shoin's head falling at the hands of the Bakufu is not a thing to regret. As for me as a disciple, my heart can never rest until I fell this antagonist.... (All my activities and motives) merge into an effort to destroy the enemy of our master.11

This seems just the customary flood of emotion on the
occasion of bereavement. The statement takes on historical importance, however, when one realizes that Takasugi in later years would substantially carry out this bitter vow.

The sentiments which showed through in Takasugi's letter dominated the atmosphere in which Kusaka acceded to leadership of the Sonjuku students. Because he had been recognized by all to be the most promising of the Sonjuku students, and because Yoshida himself had entrusted to him the task of carrying on the instruction of some of the younger people, Kusaka emerged as the Sonjuku's leader soon after the teacher's death. Kusaka wrote immediately to his recently-acquired protege Irie Sugizō in the same defiant chords that the departed master himself had struck.

To lament the teacher's sad life is profitless. The important thing is not to let the teacher's intentions falter.

Shinsaku is growing more and more and advances greatly in his insights and studies... I will also send letters to Terajima, Yukichi, Maebara, Shinagawa, and the others to encourage them.12

Under Kusaka's leadership, the students gathered together the letters their teacher had written to each separately so that each member could have access to the whole corpus. For the purpose of strengthening group solidarity, Kusaka convened the students regularly to read the works of the departed teacher and to lecture. 13

These gestures surrounding the master's death were not without a certain method. They amounted to a systematic transference of political leadership, and then a kind of martyrdom and canonization process serving to invigorate the movement. A kind of political scripture emerged in the form of Yoshida's assembled letters. In short, Yoshida's execution was remarkable for the continuity it revealed in the Choshu activist movement. There was no collapse or swift transformation, but rather an evolving political sophistication which was not checked by death.

While honoring the martyrdom of the departed teacher, the Sonjuku academy also managed to sustain its intellectual pursuits. Kusaka had been specifically
instructed by Yoshida to tend to the spiritual growth of the Irie brothers, Irie Sugizō and Nomura Wasaku, Nomura being Wasaku's family name by adoption. Although Kusaka was several years younger than these two men, he was, nevertheless, more advanced in his studies, and was regarded by many as Sonjuku's most capable student.

An instructive exchange took place between Kusaka and Irie Sugizō late in 1859. The discussion revolved around the question of what Sugizō should be reading. Kusaka advised his ward to read Ōshio Heihachiro, Wang Yang-ming, some of Yoshida's correspondence, works of Nakae Tōju and Kumazawa Banzan, navigation maps, and Wei Yuān's Gazateer of Maritime Nations. Of course these choices point up Kusaka's interest in an ethic of action on the one hand, and in the nature of Western nations on the other.14

Sugizō was prepared to read this material, but a dispute arose over a selection he himself favored, this being the collection of official Chinese chronicles called the Twenty-One Histories. Kusaka opposed this and suggested instead two briefer histories. His advice was straightforward:

[After reading these shorter works] if you do not grasp the main currents in Chinese history, further reading is futile... The Twenty-One Histories usually take three or four years of study. This is all right for men of leisure, but men like you should not do that kind of thing. How pointless it is in these days to read a lot of books like a useless scholar... As for you, I want you somehow to clarify the route human beings must traverse.15

The disciple in reply modestly disqualified himself from this last expectation and went on to say that he still wished to read the Twenty-One Histories in order to extend his intellectual powers. Kusaka had an intractable young aesthete on his hands. He responded pointedly.

I do not want you to read the Twenty-One Histories. It will only exhaust your spiritual energies. You are twenty-three. Even without reading numerous books your
intelligence is adequate... I believe I want you to stop frolicking away your time.  

Cultural adornment was not high on Kusaka's list of priorities. Irie Sugizo would die with him at the Forbidden Gate, the Twenty-One Histories still unread.

In February of 1860, a month before the assassination of Ik Naosuke and a little more than a year after his return to Choshū, Kusaka was ordered back to Edo for study. He did not actually arrive there until May, however, and he then drifted away from academic pursuits. He came gradually to move in a circle of young samurai from Mito, Satsuma, and Tosa, who were then trying to engineer an alliance of the four han.

Kusaka opposed the conciliatory policy of Nagai Uta, who in the latter half of 1861 was Choshū's representative to the Bakufu. Nagai's program provided for opening the country to trade and marriage of an imperial princess into the Tokugawa house. Kusaka tried often and unsuccessfully to argue face to face with Nagai. He also plotted to obstruct the marriage by main force but gave it up on the grounds that he had too few men to succeed. Revising his plan, he slipped off to Kyoto on September 7, 1861, hoping there to intercept the daimyō and persuade him of the undesirability of the mesalliance. While he was still dwelling in Kyoto, the order came down on October 5, 1861, from the han government still in sympathy with Nagai, that he was to return to Chōshū. Both Kusaka's political pragmatism and his persistence were revealed in his efforts of 1861 to thwart Nagai.

After returning to Hagi late in 1861, Kusaka immediately moved to establish the practice of "the one-lamp cent" among the Sonjuku students there. He explained this arrangement to his comrades in this way:

When there are unusual incidents and unforeseen exigencies, we are hindered in various ways by not having a cent in our pockets. Thus more and more the men of high purpose who go to prison or are pressed by starvation grow more numerous. I believe I would like to create the power to help such men and to recognize samurai of principle and women of virtue, but there is no one with money to
spare among the men of like mind.

Therefore I want everyone to save a little money every month by copying manuscripts. If one builds for a year piling dust it is reasonable that this will become a mountain...

We are different from rich notables. Because we are men so poor as to own only a single lamp, we shall call this (practice) "the one-lamp cent". I believe each man will want to exert himself to the limit of his energies for this purpose.18

The significance of the "one-lamp cent" is that it indicates that Kusaka and his followers were, in material terms, very poor, despite their assiduousness and their now almost legendary abilities. Some fifteen of the students eventually took part in the arrangement. Each was expected to copy six pages of manuscript per month. Among the participants, besides Kusaka himself, were Kido Koin, Itō Hirobumi, Yamagata Aritomo, and Takasugi Shin-saku, an impressive group of scriveners.18

After getting his money-making scheme underway late in 1861, Kusaka seems to have turned energetically again to the search for effective political action on the national level, even though han orders kept him at home. In the third week of January, 1862, Sakamoto Ryoma, the Tosa activist, arrived in Hagi bearing some confidential papers from Takechi Zuizan. On January 23, 1862, after conferring with Kusaka and the Sonjuku students for several days, Sakamoto set out for Tosa, this time bearing a letter from his host for Takechi:

I have met with Sakamoto and have talked with him freely. The several lords still cannot be relied on and the same is true of the kuge. We of like mind believe that there is nothing for it but that the common "men of high purpose" (shishi) band together. It is rude to say so, but if both your han and my han were destroyed achieving justice, this would be of no consequence.

Please discuss this with Sakamoto and reflect on it carefully. Of course this does not go so far that we exalt pessimism. Because
the news comes in a letter from Kobayama that his han (Satsuma) is wavering, we intend to send friends there in a day or two. I believe he will send the news of conditions gradually to your hand. I pray that you read this letter hurriedly and gather information from Sakamoto.19

On the same day, Kusaka wrote to Kobayama Sanen of Satsuma:

In the present situation I think an alliance of han with han cannot be carried out. Therefore I think that the shishi of each han must unite to achieve sonnō jōi outside the sphere of han governments.20

Kusaka's pragmatism is evident in these two messages. He had been agitating with the shishi in Edo the preceding year to achieve an alliance between Mito, Choshu, Satsuma, and Tosa. Here he has obviously given up on such a plan—not because it never occurred to him, but because he had been working on it for a long time with no success. "In the present situation I think an alliance of han with han cannot be carried out", he says. Kusaka may have been more interested in effective political tactics, and less reliant on traditional moral "optimism", than Matsumoto Sannosuke and most American scholars have been prepared to believe.

Noteworthy here also was Kusaka's maintaining a far-flung network of contacts, an activity which suggests not so much moral optimism as political expediency. Kusaka was in working touch with two other great han and striving to see that each of these was in touch with the other. The final restorative solution on the military side—Choshu allying with Satsuma through Tosa activists' mediation—was perhaps made possible to an important degree by contacts like those being developed and sustained in these two letters of January 23, 1862.

Meanwhile, since the Choshu activists were growing increasingly anxious for some kind of positive action, Kusaka resolved to fell Nagai Uta, Choshū's conservative mediator with the Bakufu. On February 27, 1862, Genzui and six men of his group signed a blood pact for this purpose. Then on March 23, 1862, he was ordered up to Kyoto.21
There his stance on the assassination of Nagai was reversed. The reason for this was that Shimazu Hisamitsu was then traveling toward Kyōto, and many believed that he would affect the expulsionist policies which the loyalist community had been hoping for. Kusaka felt that the elimination of Nagai had become unnecessary and that all sympathetic Chōshū manpower might soon be needed for greater things, namely, an expulsionist campaign under the auspices of Satsuma.

The activists' optimism with regard to Hisamitsu's intentions were dashed on April 13, 1862. On this day, "men of high purpose" from Satsuma and elsewhere under the leadership of Arima Shinshichi had gathered at the Teradaya Inn outside Kyōto to make plans for jōi. A group of samurai under Hisamitsu's orders attacked them and killed six, including Arima. The bloodbath stopped only when the radical Shinto priest Maki Izumi announced that the men present would be reconciled to Hisamitsu's views. The stroke by Hisamitsu served swiftly to persuade activists in Kyōto that his compromise program of Kōbugattai included suppression of jōi radicals and their goals.

Consequently, Kusaka and friends were by June seeking again to ambush Nagai Uta as he passed through Kyōto. Nagai had represented Chōshū's moderate policy of mediating between Court and Bakufu in 1861, but because Nagai's policies were not sufficiently favorable to the Court, Chōshū had been ingloriously superceded on the national scene by Satsuma's Hisamitsu in 1862. Therefore, many members of the Chōshū government were unofficially sympathetic to any trouble Kusaka could cause and to Hisamitsu's regime in Kyōto and also eager to see Nagai's influence in the han's affairs diminished. Kusaka was not insensitive to this tacit support. Still, when on August 4, 1862, he revealed his plan to slay Nagai to the official Ura Yukie, perhaps in an attempt to pressure the authorities to move against Nagai, Kusaka was returned to Hagi and put under house arrest, as was Nagai shortly after.

The wide vacillation in Kusaka's approach to the question of assassinating Nagai from February to June, 1862, clearly seems to have been a function of his pragmatic monitoring of political conditions in Kyōto.

In spite of this political conscientiousness, however, the Chōshū government confined Kusaka to his home in
the seventh and eighth months of 1862. This was not a barren time for him, however, in that he produced in these months two provocative treatises on policy, both for presentation to the Choshu daimyo.

Both of these writings dealt with the problem of the Western presence and the steps which should be taken to cope with the foreigners. In elaborating this issue, Kusaka found it necessary also to comment on the internal situation and those active in it. The young author often availed himself of the opportunity to assign some transcendent meaning to his observations through traditional associations. He did this to stiffen the impact of what he said.

The first of these two essays, entitled "Turning Back the Waves", was completed on August 1, 1862. It was divided into five sections and an epilogue. These treated respectively the rectification of names within the han, the illumination of Bakufu crimes, the importance of the imperial order of 1858, the diplomatic stance which should be taken toward the Westerners, and reforms needed within Japan. To this was added a brief epilogue expressing Kusaka's humility and sincerity. 24

Kusaka's second essay, "Foolish Words on Severing an Arm", was handed up on August 28, 1862. This work was also divided into several sections, the first of which sought to create a fear of foreign intrusion. The second enumerated some six reasons for expelling the foreigner, while the third specified the internal reforms this would require. The fourth emphasized the need for decisive action. 25

Since these two writings in many ways duplicated each other, their themes might best be dealt with together. At the core of each lay Kusaka's understanding of the foreign presence. His treatment of this subject deserves close scrutiny.

In the second part of "Turning Back the Waves", Kusaka brought up the subject of the foreigners in order to condemn the Bakufu for the foreigners' entry into Japanese affairs. He enumerated Western incursions which had taken place from the early 1800s, when the Russians had already landed on Hokkaido and the English Phaeton had clashed with the Japanese at Nagasaki. He therefore was able to call Perry's landing one instance among many. Heaping
The Westerners had abolished crucifix-trampling, and were establishing schools. They would soon be founding almshouses, orphanages, and hospitals.

With novel devices like the camera and telegraph they will dazzle students of Western learning and that mob who parade the exotic...

Thereby the Japanese "will inevitably be danced along (into colonial subjugation) like...the Philippines and Java."27

In "Foolish Words", Kusaka also touched on these themes, and at greater length. He again cited the Bunka years (1804-17) as the beginning of current Western intrusions, and rightly traced the more frequent appearance of Western vessels to whaling practices. Of the present he stated that:

foreigners are permitted to build heathen temples, construct offices of commerce, place consuls in suburban districts, lease the land, and exploit our land and people...

As for the emperor,...he is given cause to resent the arrogance of the foreigners, and grows anxious over the suffering of the people.28

Several pages later, after deploring the end of crucifix-trampling, the building of churches and the establishment of alien schools, Kusaka observed that:

The cunning purpose of the barbarians is to usurp the nation and beguile the people. No one will escape this stratagem.

He pointed out the erosion by the Westerners of Buddhism in India and of Confucianism in China, and he explained one of the techniques by which this was accomplished:

If you ask one who has been to Shanghai recently, (it is true that) the medical doctors and missionaries in the hospitals which the barbarians have built take advantage of the deathly ill patients. They
urge them toward the seductive sect (Christianity) with kindnesses.29

This was not casual hearsay.

Kusaka's comrade Takasugi Shinsaku had been in Shanghai in May and June of 1862 as an attendant to a Bakufu mission. He returned to Choshū on July 14, 1862, some six weeks before the "Foolish Words" piece was offered up to the daimyō. In the May 23 entry of his Shanghai diary, under the subheading "sidewinding foreigners", Takasugi described his conversations with the English missionary Muirhead, who confided to him the use of medicine for religious leverage. In the entry of May 21 Takasugi asked himself whether China was not really an English and French colony. He pointed out that the Chinese were put to work and exploited by the Westerners.30 These two entries suggest that much of Kusaka's wisdom regarding Western institutional subversion may have been enriched by Takasugi's news of Shanghai. Shanghai appears not to have been the only source of his wisdom, however, in that he next invoked against the Westerners the massive death toll of the Christian Shimabara Rebellion of 1637, after which Western missionaries and creeds were excluded from Japan because of their subversive potential.31

Kusaka spoke pointedly of the Westerners' economic impact, as well as of their ideological impact. Japan was losing essential materials such as grains, iron, copper, silk, and tea, and receiving in return useless goods such as printed cottons, crepe, and woolens. This was aggravated by Western currency manipulation, and resulted in inflation and the destruction of small producers and landholders.32

Kusaka attributed territorial designs to the barbarians as well as economic ones. The Russians had been busy grasping Sakhalin and Hokkaidō, and the French were "drooling" over the Ryūkyūs. Kusaka referred his reader to a gazetteer compiled from Western sources and published by the Bakufu for a detailed account of Western aggressions. The Americans are power hungry, like the English and French, asserted Kusaka, citing no less an authority than the printed record of Perry's expedition for this assessment. Moreover, the French and English had been held at bay only by the Taiping's strength. It was the diminution of the latter that accounted for increased English and French
pressure for more open ports in Japan.

Seeming kind and even using clever words, they must open a base from which they may insinuate themselves gradually into all of Asia. It is the barbarians' intention to advance south.\textsuperscript{33}

Consider the catastrophes of the Indian and Chinese cases, Kusaka advised.\textsuperscript{34}

The memorialist offered a plan to deal with the Western threat. He suggested a diplomatic initiative—that the Powers be asked to rescind the Harris Treaty of 1858 and restrict contact to three ports, on the grounds that the Bakufu officials who signed were not representative, and that the poor were starving as a result of it. A certain mythic dimension is skillfully woven into this treaty issue, in that the emperor had officially opposed it in a communication to the Bakufu in 1858. In effect, Kusaka gently leads the reader to the view that "it is justly suitable to the holy intent of Amaterasu Ômikami" that the Westerners have three ports instead of six.

Kusaka is confident that the strangers, motivated by rapacity, would reject a diplomatic overture and uphold the Harris Treaty by force of arms. Therefore the Japanese must "boldly resolve on a decisive war to the death".

From the present forward, resolved on attacking the aliens, we must promote a military spirit and look to our weapons.\textsuperscript{35}

This sounds like gratuitous bravado, but was it? Takasugi reflected in his Shanghai diary, shortly before his return to Choshu, on the reasons for China's decline. The Chinese had not studied ways to ward off the Western Powers' attacks outside the borders of the country. They had not erected great coastal batteries to thwart Western ships before those ships could land. Works like Wei Yuân's "Gazetteer of Maritime Nations" were out of print, and Chinese scholars were rural in origin, narrow in their intellectual background, and pedantic in their approach to China's dismemberment.\textsuperscript{36} In short, the Chinese had not made the considerable positive efforts to reconnoiter and arm which the Japanese scholars advised, and rather had been passive. Yet the Bakufu was following appeasement policies similar to the Ch'ing's which could be expected
to lead to a similar tragic result. Given this perception, which was not unreasonable, a policy of resistance rather than appeasement would have appeared advantageous. That Kusaka outlined such a policy meant that he probably talked with his friends, but it does not necessarily mean that he was a naive romantic who lacked a realistic commitment to an anti-colonial strategy.

Kusaka understood resistance to the West and "re-establishment of the imperial majesty" as going far beyond the control of outsiders within Japan. The Japanese should become able to "come and go freely" as far away as Europe and America, beginning with Korea, Manchuria, Canton, the Philippines, Java, and India. Japan must establish defense forces and a navy, and keep track of conditions in all nations.  

In some respects, the world view which emerges from Kusaka's treatment of the Western presence is striking, even though in retrospect some of it appears quaint and oversimplified. Kusaka saw that ideology is institutionally influenced, and that terms of peripheral trade could affect the economic balances of a whole country. He saw that both of these kinds of inroads by Westerners were militarily enforced and must be militarily broken. He saw that Japan was an element in a global strategic power pattern. Many of the insights painfully achieved by young Chinese in the 1920s seem to have been painfully achieved by young Japanese sixty years before.

However this may be, immediate military resistance was not seen by Kusaka as sufficient in itself to meet the Western threat. In both "Turning Back the Waves" and "Foolish Words", he dwelled at some length on institutional reforms needed within Japan if the country were to withstand Western pressure. Esprit was not enough. Major institutional changes were needed at the heart of the Bakuhan system.

Kusaka equated reform implicitly with the return of real authority to the Court. In "Turning Back the Waves", after tracing the history of Court-Bakufu relations, he enumerated the developments which would be necessary to a strengthened Court-centered government. First, he claimed, the creation of an office of political affairs within the imperial residence would be essential. This office must be in contact with a council made up of members of "the
many kuge bureaus". Moreover, schools must be revived in Kyoto, and an imperial guard stationed in the Home Provinces. The several daimyō should contribute goods for the maintenance of the Court and reside in attendance on the emperor in the spring and fall. However, Kusaka added that

things like these are in the discussions of the ancient Confucian sages. Therefore I will not treat them in detail... 38

Later in the month, impatient of the sages or in his capacity as one, Kusaka did describe his recommendations in greater detail. The term Kusaka used for his imperial "office of political affairs" in his second memorial was chi-dajōkan, the same term that would be applied to the Meiji government six years later. Kusaka tells us what this institution ought to be by sketching out what it had been, presumably, in more august times, that is, prior to 850 A.D. and during the brief Kemmu Restoration of the fourteenth century. Two features were emphasized in Kusaka's historical account, one being that the emperor through his dajōkan retained both civil and military authority, or in the case of Kemmu, retook it. Osakabe, "emperor of arms and letters", is said to have originated the term chi-dajōkan. But the institution declined after Montoku (d. 858) because "the real authority of government was moving to the warrior class."

The other characteristic of the historical dajōkan underlined by Kusaka was its being staffed by men of ability rather than by men of birth.

Appointments were only by the prince and especially men with titles were not appointed. He did not entrust great authority to persons deep in the palace because (his purpose) was great accomplishments. 39

Kusaka quoted Emperor Montoku of the ninth century as saying of the dajōkan that:

There being no precedent, it was not necessary to appoint great retainers. Even Fujiwara Fuhito had to resign. 39

Godaigo was said to have restored the dajōkan when he
abolished the regency in the 1330s.

Being august, he established the chi-dajōkan (and other offices) in the shrine of the Lion Palace...39

Kusaka understood the establishment of a dajōkan as being an intimate concomitant of the restoration of real authority to the emperor. Moreover, the dajōkan represented rule by the able in the emperor's name. The two components of this, the emperor and the able, would be dominant elements in the Meiji settlement after 1868.

Besides counseling that a dajōkan be revived in the Court, Kusaka recommended that a records office (kirokujo) be established. This institution also had a venerable pedigree associated with real power in the Court, with the Kemmu attempt in the 1330s to disestablish military authority. The kirokujo would pass judgment on important matters. It would "locate imperial territory, resolve ambiguities, and pacify troubled situations."40

Kusaka urged the immediate formation of an imperial army so that the Kinki region would be protected should war with the Westerners begin. The soldiers were to be supplied especially by interior han who are not burdened with defense of their own coasts. Kusaka compared these imperial soldiers to the uchi no toneri, an elite guard under the old Ritsuryō Code system, who were chosen for having demonstrated special bravery.41

To maintain this imperial force and for other defense purposes, military matériel ought to be supplied to the Court by the various regional authorities. There was precedent for this dating back to the eighth century, when the provinces provided the Court with helmets, spears, bows, and grains, all transported at provincial expense. The bows and spears, however, must now be supplemented with modern warships to guard the strategic interior straits of Kii and Awaji.42

To increase the strength of a new Court government, the dajōkan, kirokujo, imperial army, and supply of matériel must be accompanied by the "rectification of names". In practice this meant restoring to the ornamental offices of the Court the real bureaucratic functions for which they were named, and settling jurisdictional questions between the new or newly empowered offices. Kusaka
admonished his reader:

One must keep in mind that even Confucius said that 'one should (practice) the rectification of names'.

The significance of Kusaka's reformist advocacy is considerable. That he did not hesitate to plunge into issues of institutional reform is noteworthy in itself. Overall, Kusaka envisioned a new imperial version of the Bakufu, and he assumed the continued existence of the han and the attendance of daimyō at Kyoto instead of at Edo. Yet there were distinctly novel elements of bureaucratic rationality in Kusaka's blueprint as well. Several of his suggestions were directed toward a drastic increase in the recognition of ability. Central bureaus were to be staffed by capable men whatever their origin, and all han were to contribute matériel and men systematically for use by the center.

Kusaka's vision of internal reform lay somewhere between the traditional institutions and the mature institutions of late Meiji. It should be remembered in this regard that the Meiji government after 1868 and in the early 1870s also lay in between these two institutional realms for some time. The Meiji leaders were constantly tinkering with the government in the first years, but they relied on a dajōkan as the central governmental organ, and on an "imperial army" made up of Satsuma, Chōshū, and Tosa contingents for their defense needs. It took the leadership five years to escape complete reliance on its military units and twenty-one to arrive at the stable political forms of the Meiji Constitution.

Before leaving the "Turning Back the Waves" and "Foolish Words" memorials entirely, it may be appropriate to point out that parts of both are well written. Naramoto Tatsuya, in an editorial preface to the latter, claims that it may be one of the two or three finest treatises to come out of Bakumatsu. Kusaka begins the essay with an old Chinese proverb to the effect that if one is bitten in the arm by a viper one must boldly sever the limb before the venom spreads through the body. The venom, of course, represented foreign interference. This viper metaphor was introduced throughout the text with poignant effect wherever it could be applied, whether to
indicate that trade at open ports could "poison" the whole body politic, or to discredit the Fabian attitude of the Bakufu.

On September 15, 1862, an ungrateful daimyo terminated Genzui's career as a political essayist by releasing him from house arrest. He responded to this new opportunity by traveling to Edo and resuming contact with Satsuma and Tosa activists. At the same time he began exploring the possibility of carrying out anti-foreign violence in such a way as to encourage national policy makers to take a firmer stand against growing Western influence. In November a group of Choshū activists under Kusaka's guidance organized themselves into a group which they called the "Shield Association" (otategumi) for this purpose. The following month the Shield Association burned down the English legation at Shinagawa. This was a politically sterile act, however, since neither the authorities at the time nor historians later have made much of the incident.45

On the day following this action, December 14, 1862, Kusaka set off toward Matsushiro han with Nakaoka Shintarō, the Tosa loyalist. Kusaka's purpose, besides escaping detention, was to conduct Sakuma Shōzan to Chōshū as an advisor. Sakuma had been under arrest in Matsushiro for nine years. The two tarried for a few days in Mito and arrived in Matsushiro on the twenty-seventh. Sakuma declined Kusaka's offer, but the two spoke at length about international conditions. Kusaka, who had advocated a swift strike against the foreigners in his "Foolish Words" a few months earlier, seems to have come away from these interviews somewhat chastened and more cautious in his jōi policy. He wrote on December 31, 1862, to Kijima Matabei:

I think that, concerning military systems, batteries, and warships, this teacher and expert is indispensable. It is extremely regrettable that he declines employment.

From now on...in choosing men of will, it is necessary that we have them learn about Shōzan.46

On January 9, 1863, Kusaka arrived back in Kyōto to agitate for an imperial edict setting a date for the
implementation of jōi. The great kōbugattai daimyō, Shimazu Hisamitsu, Yamauchi Yodō, and Matsudaira Shungaku, withdrew from Kyoto late in March, 1863, leaving Choshū in the ascendant there. The pressure the shishi brought to bear was such that the Bakufu had set May 10, 1863, as a deadline for the expulsion of foreigners, which was favored by both Choshū han and activist elements.

Shortly before this, in April, Kusaka had returned to Choshū to report conditions at the capital to the han authorities. He was at this time raised to the same samurai category, shi, as Takasugi Shinsaku and Kido Kōin. By July, 1863, Kusaka's comrades, the Irie brothers, Ito Hirobumi, Yamagata Aritomo, and Shinagawa Yajirō, these men being of humbler samurai origins even then Kusaka, had all been promoted to full samurai rank. The han authorities announced in June, 1863, that:

Now in extending our affairs we shall appoint as trustworthy officials men of talent and desire from among the people.

In May and June, Kusaka with his new rank was hurrying back and forth between Yamaguchi and Kyoto trying to cultivate support among other han for Choshū's policy of physical resistance to the foreign presence. He had little success. Choshū was alone in its attack on Western ships in May and in bearing the counter-bombardment soon after.

In June and July the shishi activists in Kyoto were growing ever more energetic and ambitious under the cover of Choshū forward policies. Demands for substantial increases in imperial power and for an expulsionist campaign led by the emperor in person were being put forward by Maki Izumi, among others. Emperor Komei, uncomfortable with the heroic implications of this, turned to the conservative nobles and to samurai of Satsuma and Aizu to rescue him from an awkward situation. An accord was secretly reached between the two han and the Court, and on August 18, 1863, troops from Aizu and Satsuma successfully blocked Choshū samurai from entering the imperial residence. This effectively terminated Choshū's political access to, and so power in, the Court.

Immediately subsequent to the coup of August 18, 1863, the seven radical nobles who had been supporting
Choshu's policies in the Court, Sanjo Sanetomi among them, had fled for sanctuary to Choshu. Their presence there represented the failure of Court politics as an adequate means to loyalist ends. The political game in the Court had been to move han governments and even the Bakufu to sponsor increased prerogatives for the Court. This effort seemed to be succeeding in 1863 when opponents of sonnō jōi rudely halted that success on August 18, 1863, by resorting to force. It was Kusaka Genzui who had been the forward practitioner of "Court politics" in Choshu just as Takasugi Shinsaku would be of "han militarism". Kusaka, too, would embrace a military solution before his death, however. It is easy to see why he would have slipped smoothly into this new tactic. "Sonnō jōi in one han" must have been unanticipated and a little embarrassing, but the situation impelled responsible participants toward it as other alternatives were shown to be unfeasible.

Soon after a display of force had successfully been used as an instrument of policy by conservatives in Kyoto, a similar pattern appeared within Choshu itself. Late in August of 1863, following news of the Satsuma coup, the conservative Tsuboi clique backed by the Senpōtaí, an elitist han military unit, demanded the removal of three reformist officials, threatening their lives. The three were removed, but promptly replaced when Takasugi Shin¬saku's loyalist paramilitary group, the Kiheitai, marched into Yamaguchi, the capital, and demanded their reinstatement. Moreover, both Takasugi and Kusaka were then given official appointments at the heart of the government for the first time.49 That is, even within Choshu, the political conflict had escalated to a point where the explicit threat of physical violence was now being used both by activists and conservatives as an instrument of policy.

After the conservatives' coup of August 18 in Kyoto, the Choshu government still remained actively sympathetic to sonnō jōi activists, and shishi from all parts of Japan journeyed to Choshu to join the loyalist militia units there, the shotai. The first of these, the Kiheitai, had been raised in the summer of 1863 by Takasugi as a measure of anti-foreign defense. By January of 1864 there were a half-dozen major units, ranging in size from fifty to five hundred men. Their leaders were former Sonjuku students or persons close to them. The rank and
file were comprised both of Chōshū peasants and of displaced samurai from other domains. These corps were on the whole highly motivated. Their captains saw to it that they were instructed both in Chōshū's brand of sonnō jōi doctrine and in Western infantry technique.50

The issue which faced the Chōshū leadership at this time was that of whether to bring the shotai and other forces to bear on the capital, so as to recapture Chōshū's favored position. Kusaka Genzui had returned to Kyōto in November of 1863 to keep watch on political conditions there. At this time Kusaka, like Takasugi and Kido Kōin, was in favor of negotiating peacefully for advantage and waiting until a favorable situation present itself before acting.

Kijima Matabei, a forty-eight-year-old Chōshū samurai of middle grade, and commander of the largest shotai, was the outstanding proponent of an immediate attack. His position was more formidable than it appeared in that the shotai were autonomous with respect to the han government and to each other. In January, 1864, Takasugi Shinsaku talked Kijima into letting the decision to attack depend on the judgment of Kusaka and Kido in the capital, who were in a better position to say whether the time was opportune. Takasugi and Kijima then both proceeded to Kyōto where Kusaka, Kido, and others were able to talk Kijima out of precipitous action. Though his mission was a success, Takasugi, on returning home, was ordered to submit to confinement at Chōshū's Noyama prison for having left the han without permission. This order, and Takasugi's complying with it, probably lengthened his life by several years.51

Kusaka, too, returned to Chōshū on March 11, 1864. His purpose was to instruct the government and also to dampen further the desire of shotai leaders for too hasty a strike. In a letter sent ahead of him to the han authorities he explained that there was discord in the Sanyo council, the policy-making body set up by Satsuma and Aizu after their coup. In this situation Kusaka felt that Chōshū, if it waited, would soon have a political opening in Kyōto as the moderate alliance broke down.

After communicating with the government and the shotai, Kusaka hastened back to the capital to resume his duties as a political observer. The Sanyo council,
which was made up of all the great daimyō (except Chōshū) plus Hitotsubashi Keiki of the Bakufu, disintegrated obligingly in April, as Kusaka had predicted. The active daimyō, including the lords of Satsuma, Aizu, Tosa, and Hizen, withdrew to their respective han, disillusioned with the Sanyo council and the Bakufu's resistance to change. Keiki, left thus with a free hand, had no reason to remain in Kyoto and returned to Edo on April 20, 1864. Three days later, Kusaka reported to the han authorities that the time for immediate action had come.

The question of whether or not to move combat troops to Kyoto split every powerful group in Chōshū—the ruling Sufu clique, the shotai commanders, and even the Sonjuku leaders. Kusaka was in favor, Takasugi and Kido against. Still, in May, continuing pressure from some of the shotai and an irritating edict from the conservatively dominated Court tipped the balance in favor of invasion.

On June 1, 1864, the troops began to move out, Kijima's Yugekitai going ahead as an advance party. This Chōshū force consisted of han regulars and shotai, all being nominally under the command of three han elders, each of whom was in charge of a separate contingent. Behind these, on July 13, 1864, the Chōshū heir himself set out for Kyoto with the main force of the Chōshū army.

The forces of the three elders took up positions at the capital early in July, having first petitioned the Court for forgiveness and sent letters to various han requesting mediation. Hitotsubashi Keiki had procured an order from the Court, however, demanding removal of Chōshū troops from the vicinity of the capital as a precondition for discussion, setting the deadline on July 17, 1864.

As the deadline approached, leaders of the Chōshū forces had to decide whether to fight or withdraw. The elders were willing to retreat to Osaka, but it was the shotai commanders who were in actual control of many of the troops.

On July 17, 1864, a war council was held among the shotai leaders. Kijima Matabei, the forty-eight-year-old commander of the Yugekitai, faced Kusaka Genzui in public deliberation. Kusaka at twenty-four was exactly half his age. The younger man spoke, urging withdrawal for two reasons. One of these was that attacking in violation of
the imperial order would call in question their loyalty to the emperor. The other was that the heir had not yet arrived with forces for support and relief. The Choshu troops were in fact outnumbered ten to one by kobugattai forces garrisoning the capital.

It is reckless to attack without a strategy of necessary victory.\textsuperscript{55}

Kijima replied in tears. He said that if the heir arrived he would prevent any attack at all, and that he himself was prepared for bold action.

My friend Genzui the doctor (Genzui was a physician by training) does not understand struggle against scoundrels. I, Matabei, shall scale the tower of the Eastern Temple and crush the rebel forces. Facing this hour, what do you (Genzui) have to propose?\textsuperscript{55}

Maki Izumi then came forward. Maki was a highly-regarded loyalist in his own right, and chief of the Chuyutai. At fifty-two, Maki was Kusaka's senior in the national movement as well as in years. He spoke on the side of Kijima. Kusaka was left little choice but to answer with silence.\textsuperscript{56}

On the morning of July 18, the activist army assaulted the capital. This thrust fared badly from the beginning. Only a small detachment of men under Kijima managed to reach the imperial palace. In a desperate rush at the Hamagura Gate they overwhelmed the Aizu defenders, but they were soon routed by Satsuma's counterattack. Kijima, valiant and imprudent, made an easy mark on horseback, and was shot down. This conflict gave the day its name: \textit{Kinmon no hen}, the Incident of the Forbidden Gate. Most of the Choshu force never penetrated the outskirts of the town, however, and when defeat was clear had little choice but to retire.\textsuperscript{57}

Kusaka Genzui himself was wounded by rifle fire at the Forbidden Gate and committed suicide with Terajima Tadamiro. Maki Izumi and seventeen loyal survivors fled to Yamazaki and on July 22, 1864, killed themselves at Mt. Tenno.\textsuperscript{58}

Insofar as Genzui was opposed to the attack and was aware of its futile and deadly character, yet participated, as did the personal following he was in a position
to advise, one must ask on what grounds he did so. The young activist was obviously not committed to the venture on immediate tactical grounds, and so must have been bound to it by some other commitment. One can only hazard a guess as to what this may have been. The young leader may have been reluctant to make a precedent of the rupturing of group loyalties in circumstances of crisis. At the same time, he may have felt an interest in the principle of bold action and in enthusiastic belief in that principle. In other words, there may have been a certain psychological momentum or revolutionary esprit in the sonjō movement which Kusaka sensed must be conserved more or less independently of other considerations. Such an attitude might represent the ultimate in political rationality in that it would cultivate even irrational currents for rational purposes.

*     *     *

Matsumoto Sannosuke views Kusaka as a man guided by "moral optimism", a man who represented only a step along the way toward the political rationality which would later be achieved by his more pragmatic successors, Takasugi Shinsaku and Okubo Toshimichi. Notwithstanding this vision, Kusaka shows himself in the above pages to have manifested a well-developed sense of political pragmatism throughout his career. He was not optimistic, and he was not impractical. Kusaka's political pragmatism had many facets, and there were many occasions on which he demonstrated a reliable feel for public conditions. In the early months of 1859, for example, he rejected Yoshida Shoin's plea for action because repression was temporarily severe. Three years later he plotted to kill Nagai Uta only when jōi programs turned out to be held in low esteem by the dominant Shimazu Hisamitsu, and when the Chōshū government was also likely to disapprove of Nagai. In 1864, Kusaka prevented his zealous friends from attacking Kyoto until after the opposition front was definitively ruptured in mid-April.

A certain ideological aptitude is also easily detected in the young samurai. That is, his political pragmatism also touched the world of ideas. It is with a practiced touch that Kusaka yoked rejection of the
Shimoda Treaty to Amaterasu Ōmikami, or the revival of nominally existant Court institutions to Confucius. Similarly, his simultaneous exhaltation of the emperor and vilification of the Westerners represented an efficient use of conceptual structures to coerce public attitudes.

Kusaka proved as well to be capable of mobilizing those about him for the purpose at hand. He used Yoshida's martyrdom to strengthen the group solidarity of the Sonjuku, and somewhat later organized the "One-Lamp Cent", the blood pact against Nagai, and the "Shield Association".

Kusaka may have had an acute personal motive for cultivating these political skills, a motive which was quite different from the traditional moral commitment Matsumoto imputes to him. Both the young activist's letter to Yoshida late in 1858 and the charter he wrote for the "One-Lamp Cent" suggest that he was extremely impecunious, much as the meagerness of his family's stipend would lead one to expect. At the same time, Choshu han's regularly sponsoring his specialized studies in Edo and at home suggests that he was quite able professionally, as does Yoshida's singling him out for highest praise even within the talented Sonjuku circle.

Kusaka was a person of exceptional ability as a professional servant to his society, yet one who lived in austere circumstances and obscurity. That Kusaka himself may have been moved by an awareness of this discrepancy between capability and recognition is not at all incompatible with his earnest advocacy of multiple proposals for institutional reform on the national level, the founding of a dajōkan for example, which would bring recruitment on a basis of ability only. Indeed, vocationally related discontent might go far to explain the otherwise improbable circumstance that Kusaka, who had previously distinguished himself by the study of medicine and Western languages, should emerge on the national stage in his twenties with a life-and-death commitment to institutional reform.

While the above account of Kusaka indicates that both his methods and motives were probably more substantial than Matsumoto thinks, there are also aspects of it which evoke the possibility that Kusaka may be more important to a thorough understanding of the political dynamics of Bakumatsu than has been thought. It is almost
certainly meaningful that the government constructed by
the reformers after 1868 resembled that sketched out by
Kusaka in 1862. It was centered on the Court, assumed the
existence and support of the han, and drew in "men of
ability". It featured a dajōkan and an "imperial army"
made up of han contingents. Moreover, this government was
laid out by Kusaka's followers and personal associates--
Kido, Itō, Yamagata--and by men of other domains whose
backgrounds were not dissimilar to theirs. These were men
who would have been familiar with Kusaka's proposals, both
through personal contact and otherwise.

This brief investigation of Kusaka Genzui's politi-
cal career indicates that some aspects of Chōshū activism
in the 1860s are not yet fully understood or have been
misunderstood. The influence of Chōshū activists on the
Restoration result may have been far more direct and
decisive than has previously been thought, which may mean
in turn that other factors such as "nationalism" or "han
nationalism" may have been less significant than has pre-
viously been believed. More studies are needed on the
Chōshū activists, studies which probe further into their
program, their methods, their motives, their ideological
standpoint, and the extent of their political impact.
Such studies can be expected to greatly enhance our under-
standing of the complex events which culminated in the
Meiji Restoration.

* * *

The Forbidden Gate brought death to Kusaka, as it
did to some of the ablest of his associates—Terajima
Tadamirō, Irie Sugizō, and Maki Izumi. As Yoshida Shōin's
experience and inspiration had been passed on to Kusaka
five years earlier, Kusaka's experience and inspiration
were now passed on to Takasugi Shinsaku, though this time
Kusaka was not in a position to transfer the mantle per-
sonally. One of the men with Maki, Futoda Tamiyoshi,
wrote a posthumous letter to Takasugi in Chōshū reporting
to him the death of Kusaka and the others. Futoda implored
him to accede to their dying wish, and strengthen within
Chōshū forces for the final destruction of the Tokugawa
Bakufu. Homage was also paid to Kusaka's commitment to
rational political behavior. Included in the letter was a
cogent critique of shotai performance under fire.59
NOTES


2. Ibid., p. 163.

3. Ibid., pp. 165-66.


6. Fukimoto, p. 475; Craig, p. 162.

7. Ikeda, pp. 67-68.

8. Ibid., p. 78.

9. Ibid., p. 76-77.

10. Ibid., p. 85

11. Ibid., p. 86-87.

12. Ibid., p. 87.

13. Ibid., pp. 90, 94.


15. Ibid., p. 92.

16. Ibid., p. 93.

17. Ibid., pp. 100-01, 103, 105-06.

18. Ibid., pp. 106-07.


22. Ibid., pp. 111-12; Ogimachi Suetada, Tenchūgumi no shushi Nakayama Tadamitsu (Tokyo: 1931), pp. 94-95.


26. The *fumie*, or Crucifix Trampling Test, was a device used regularly after the Shimabara Rebellion in 1637 to detect Christians and so enforce suppression of the sect.

27. Kano, pp. 262, 266.


29. Ibid., p. 126.


32. Ibid., p. 128.

33. Ibid., p. 127.

34. Ibid.

35. Kano, pp. 274-76.

36. Ibid., p. 280.

37. Kano, pp. 274-76.

38. Ibid., p. 280.


40. Ibid.

41. Ibid., pp. 131-33.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid., p. 124.

45. Ikeda, p. 134.
46. Ibid., p. 136.
47. Ibid., p. 138.
48. Ibid., p. 140.
49. Craig, pp. 210-11.
51. Ibid.
52. See Craig, p. 223.
53. Craig, p. 223.
54. Ibid., 228-30; and Ikeda, pp. 175-76.
56. Ibid.
57. Meiji ishin, p. 280.
59. Meiji ishin, p. 278.
Politicians and Reform in Taishō-Shōwa Japan

by John Vandenbrink

Japan in the 1920s and early 1930s might logically have been a nation filled with a sense of achievement and confidence. The new political order which followed the Meiji Restoration had by then carried the nation through crucial tests of national survival. Military and industrial advances had brought victory in two wars, had accomplished elimination of the unequal treaties with the European powers, and had enabled the nation to establish a secure and prominent if not uncontested place in Asia. These developments strengthened the legitimacies of the Restoration and the Meiji Constitution to the point where only a small, radical minority questioned their central- ity in the political order. This period might, therefore, have been marked by expressions of national achievement and self-assured consolidation of the gains that had been made, but it was not. Strong leadership had died with the genrō, economic difficulties proved intractable, and the manifold problems of modern industrial society were becoming ever more apparent to all. Rather than a time of confidence, pride, and certitude, it was a time of un- easy questioning and searching. It was, moreover, a time of pessimism, when Japanese spoke of their society as stifled and misdirected. Many believed events were mov- ing along a dangerous, perhaps dead-end course. What marked this late Taishō-early Shōwa period was not con- solidation or certainty, but a disturbing awareness that somehow the system was not working.¹

The existence of this uneasy sense of stagnation and failure can be seen in virtually all areas of Japanese society. In literature, for example, it is evident as one of the factors which moved writers toward retreat into an autonomous cultural sphere within the self, as in the I-novel. In other areas of Japanese life, the same concern over the state of society led some, like Yanagida Kunio, to reject the Westernism of modern Japan and to seek a new moral basis for society through re- discovery of the cultural, spiritual core of the Japanese
It appears among still others, particularly soldiers and certain politicians, as a force which supported revival of the Oyomei ideal of the solitary, action-oriented individual as the only hope for turning the nation around.

Responses to the perception of a troubled Japan ranged over a wide spectrum, but almost all were based on attempts to reform society by revitalizing moral behavior within existing structures. At this time the most fundamental, most essential values and norms of Japanese society were widely reasserted. Yet, taken as a whole, this was not a conservative response—it did not simply reaffirm the validity of old authority or existing authorities. Rather, it was an attempt on the part of the members of the socio-political system to elicit moral behavior by reinterpreting certain known, valued concepts into ones that could accommodate the many changes which were so evident in the late Taisho-early Showa period. To this end, the language of traditional values was used in an effort to reintegrate society and to anchor it to that which was believed to be eternal in Japanese culture. This language helped shape the boundaries for ethical action, and its expressive, emotive aspects helped attach people to the new social order. Overall, society responded to the unsettling sense of social stagnation and failure, first, by attempting to understand and legitimate existing institutions in terms of preexisting conceptions of Japanese society, and, second, by urgently calling for moral, ethical behavior within those institutions as the only means of reestablishing the correct order of things. Stated another way, the general response of the system was to attempt to put itself back on course by creating and promoting an ideology of reform which would awaken men to the need to direct their behavior along socially constructive channels.

This type of response is readily apparent in the language which was used by leaders of Japan's political parties during this period. Because these men were members of an elite still seeking to establish its place in an evolving order, the speeches they gave and the essays they wrote are replete with examples of how they portrayed a correctly ordered society and their own
legitimate role in such a society. And because their positions as party leaders constantly compelled them to confront the problems of the day, their words show also what they conceived to be the faults of society and how they believed those faults could be overcome. The documents they left therefore provide valuable evidence of the kind of thinking behind the broad social phenomenon of reform in this period. These works show that political leaders were moved by essentially the same pessimism and weakening of confidence in society as were Japan's novelists, as were those who turned to pure Japanese culture, and as were those who looked to Ōyomei idealism. In addition, these works show that many politicians, like nearly all articulate Japanese of the period, placed their greatest hope for society in the inward, moral renewal of the Japanese people. Thus, in a fundamental sense, politicians reacted to the shared pessimism in much the same way other segments of society reacted. Of course, it is apparent that the differences between the politicians and other groups were many and significant, but nonetheless party politicians do provide a suggestive, well-documented example of how one important part of society attempted to come to grips with the vague but widely held perception of an ailing social system. They can be studied, then, not only as men who were significant for the impact they had on society and politics, but also as men whose ideas and ways of conceptualizing problems indicate something of the wider field of social and political thought in the Taishō-Showa period.

When seeking to discover how these men understood their society, it becomes evident that the answer lies not so much in their formal policy proposals and party documents as in those particular works in which they tried to educate Japanese to their responsibilities and rights as citizens within Japan's constitutional order. This type of document shows them with their partisanship largely stripped away and with the fundamental features of their understandings of society and correct social behavior more clearly visible. The documents examined for this paper have been selected from the works of four prominent Taishō-Showa politicians. Each man was an active and influential party leader, each aided in one way or another the cause of political reform, and each
made significant contributions to the literature of political education of the period.

One of these men was Takahashi Korekiyo (1854-1936), who was first a bureaucrat and later a banker. Takahashi became a politician in 1913 when he joined the Seiyukai to become finance minister in the First Yamamoto Cabinet. In 1921 he succeeded the assassinated Hara Kei as president of this major political party and as prime minister of the nation. Takahashi's cabinet lasted only seven months, but he later held portfolios in the important Three-Party Cabinet to Protect Constitutional Government (1924-25) and in several Seiyukai cabinets. In 1936 he died at the hands of right-wing army rebels in the famous February 26th Incident.

As has been common among prominent men in Japan, Takahashi produced in the course of his career a number of speeches, essays, and occasional notes on general problems of society and morality. After his death, many of these short pieces were collected and printed in a volume entitled Zuisoroku (Occasional essays). Few selections are dated, but contexts indicate that almost all were written in the 1920s and 1930s. These speeches and treatises of various lengths provide valuable glimpses into Takahashi's views on education, character, constitutional politics, achievement, economic life, and other varied concerns.

Hamaguchi Osachi (1870-1931) was a leading figure in Japan's other major political party of the period, the Kenseikai (renamed Minseito in 1927). He was born in Kochi Prefecture on Shikoku, an area of considerable political activity during his youth. He graduated from Tokyo University, pursued a successful career in the Finance Ministry, and in 1915 was elected to the Diet. Nicknamed "The Lion," Hamaguchi was a candid, strong-willed leader and a powerful political orator. He was finance minister and home minister in several cabinets in the mid 1920s, beginning with the Three-Party Cabinet. In 1929 he became prime minister himself.

Hamaguchi, like Takahashi, recorded his thoughts on various problems of character and conduct. According to his daughter Fujiko, as prime minister he was in the habit of writing brief commentaries during weekends in Kamakura. In November, 1930, sixteen months after
forming his cabinet, Hamaguchi was attacked and gravely wounded by a rightist assailant. Nine months later he died without ever regaining his health, but in the interval he continued to write as his condition permitted, often dictating to Fujiko at his bedside. Referring to these labors, Hamaguchi said he hoped to suggest to school-age youth something of the nature of moral self-cultivation, and perhaps to offer some guidance for conduct in life to others, particularly to politicians. He said he also hoped to provide insights into the man Hamaguchi and the origins of his thinking. After he died, portions of this work were selected by his daughter and published as Zuikanroku (Occasional impressions). In addition, drafts of some of Hamaguchi's speeches have been published, and a few of these contain exceptionally frank and revealing expressions of his beliefs.

Ozaki Yukio (1859-1954), the third figure in this study, was known along with Inukai Tsuyoshi as one of the two "Patron Saints of Constitutional Government" in Japan. Born in what is today Kanagawa Prefecture, Ozaki studied under Fukuzawa Yukichi at Keio, became a journalist, and was elected to the Diet from Mie Prefecture in the first general election in 1890. He was reelected twenty-four times in succession and finally defeated only in 1953. Though affiliated with a number of parties during his career, Ozaki always maintained a considerable degree of independence. He was a critic of the policies of those who (like Hara, Takahashi, and Hamaguchi) sanctioned alliances between political parties and forces in the bureaucracy. Though never very influential in the inner circles of government, Ozaki had a national reputation as a moving orator and a vigorous crusader for constitutional government and political reform.

A considerable part of Ozaki's career was given to writing articles and books on politics. Almost always, his central concern in these works was the political education of the people. His primary message was his hope that each Japanese would become aware of his own heavy responsibility to participate constructively in the process of self-government. Seiji tokihon (Primer on politics), published in 1924, was typical of Ozaki's efforts. In it, he identified what he believed to be the fundamental principles of political and social life.
He treated certain institutions and processes, but the major portion of the book was devoted to explaining the kinds of political awareness, moral consciousness, and independent spirit which must inform all public and private behavior. In this book Ozaki left not only an outline of his political thought, but also an excellent example of the rationale behind the many Taisho–Showa efforts toward "purification of politics."\(^1\)

Muto Sanji (1867-1934), the fourth figure, was a Keio graduate and president of a highly successful Osaka textile company. In 1923 he founded and then headed a political party composed mostly of businessmen, the Jitsugyo Doshikai (renamed Kokumin Doshikai in 1929). Both independently and through this organization Muto encouraged owners and managers of small and middle-sized businesses throughout Japan to become involved in political reform activities. He and his small party supported constitutional government and opposed the established political parties; they promoted the cause of economic liberalism and constantly criticized Japan's great financial combines. Muto spent the last two years of his life writing for and advising the financially troubled *Jiji shinpo*, an important national newspaper known for its liberalism. In January 1934, he published a story about stock manipulation involving Teikoku Rayon Company, the Bank of Taiwan, and members of the Saito Cabinet. The story created a major scandal which eventually brought down the cabinet. But before this political drama could play itself out, Muto was shot and killed by a fanatic who subsequently turned his gun on himself.

Muto, like Ozaki, was deeply concerned with what he believed to be a serious lack of political education in Japan. The lectures he, as president, delivered to workers in his company often went beyond the standard topics of duty, cooperation, and sacrifice to matters of political rights and civic responsibilities. During the twenties and early thirties, Muto published a number of books on government and business, and he wrote extensively for a variety of newspapers and periodicals. In these writings, he regularly promoted classical liberal theories of limited government and free economic activity. In addition, Muto encouraged translation of Western ethical and political works. He wrote simple political readers...
for school children, and he even wrote several educational plays replete with weighty speeches on the spirit of constitutional government and the grave responsibility of the vote.\textsuperscript{11}

The documents left by these four men reveal deep concern over the failures and weaknesses they saw in their society. Words which reflect both a sense of something gone wrong and a mood of apprehension recur frequently in their language. Muto saw his society "on the verge of crisis"; he "feared for the future order of the nation."\textsuperscript{12} Ozaki described social conditions with phrases like "truly a myriad of dangers", "walled in by extraordinary difficulties on all fronts", and even "dancing in the mouth of a volcano".\textsuperscript{13} Hamaguchi spoke of an atmosphere "pregnant with social and ideological crisis".\textsuperscript{14} Takahashi saw the "existing state of the empire at a standstill".\textsuperscript{15} The word Takahashi used in this phrase was the single word all four men applied most often to describe their society: \textit{ikizumatta}. It meant "at a standstill", "deadlocked", or "with backs to the wall". It best captured their feelings, because each man believed that social processes had become dulled and clogged and that the present spelled danger for the future.

To some extent, such sentiments grew out of the discouraging intractability of Japan's continuing post-World War I economic recession. But in the minds of these politicians the economic situation was only a symptom and not itself the cause of the grave national difficulties they saw. All indicated repeatedly that they believed the crisis their society faced extended beyond economics to politics, ideology, and the very moral fiber of the people. They said society lacked direction, that it had come loose from its moorings. All four men appealed to the Japanese people to regain their sense of moral purpose and to resume the tasks of improving themselves and elevating their nation.

It is not difficult to understand why these politicians had reason for deep concern. In the Meiji period, thoughts had rarely strayed far from the question of national survival, but in the twenties and thirties the very success of the Meiji modernization process had not only undermined the organizing, motivating force of survival as social goal, it had brought in its wake a whole
range of pressing problems. Faced with new class antagonisms, with widespread demands for a greater portion of society's goods, and with an increasingly ambiguous sense of social purpose, these four politicians could not help but be cognizant of the magnitude of the tasks confronting them and their nation. It is not surprising to find that an awareness of impending division and danger was never far from their thoughts.

How did these men propose to overcome the difficulties which faced them? Fundamentally, their solutions were rooted in their belief that for society to function and progress, individuals must always struggle and compete to achieve great things. For its part, the political order had to guarantee that opportunity existed for personal advancement and gain, because it was the drive and desire for these things that motivated social life. This conception of society was among the most important lessons of the Meiji period, and these politicians had assimilated it thoroughly. But as they called for the stimulus of more competition, they were at the same time fearful of its destructive potential. If not directed toward positive social ends, it threatened to break society apart. Selfishly motivated competition would conflict with authority and devotion to values of public service, so only positive, constructive competition could be allowed. This meant that Japanese must always be aware of their roles in the social division of labor. If every individual were conscious of his place and function as part of a larger social organism, then the self-directed efforts of all Japanese would contribute to a society that was both dynamic and harmonious.

The relationship between individual aspirations and societal harmony was closely linked to the interpretations of history which these four men held. In all cases their understandings of the present were crucially affected by the ways in which they merged two distinct approaches to the past. The first of these, which might be labeled the "culturalist" approach, affirmed a non-competitive communal Japanese essence with origins in an ancient past. Regularly associated with the authority manifest in Japan's unbroken imperial line, this set of ideas was bound up in the concept of kokutai, or national polity. It implied cultural continuity, the particulari-
ty of an ingrown tradition, and the belief that all Japanese stood as brothers before a father-figure emperor. Words and phrases such as chōwa (harmony), chūkun aikoku (loyalty to lord and love of country), kokumin dotoku (morality of the people), seishin seii (sincerity and wholehearted devotion), and seishin shūyō (moral cultivation) were all part of the culturalist vocabulary. Like kokutai, they were emotion-laden terms closely associated with what was good and enduring in the history of Japanese society.

Beginning in the Meiji period, the culturalist vocabulary had been used extensively to legitimize the authoritarian, family-state conception of society put forth in the Imperial Rescript on Education and other official proclamations. By the late 1920s, government-sponsored patriotic education had elevated culturalist terms to the status of key symbols in the political ideology of the nation. Reform-minded politicians were therefore compelled to reconcile their visions of social life based on competition with culturalist conceptions of history and society. This was necessary not simply because the terms of political discourse had already been established, but also because right-wing elements stood ready to cry lese majesty if discussion deviated from accepted grounds.

These conditions limited the ways in which reformist ideas could be expressed, but they did not shackle all thought to rigidly nationalistic or rigidly authoritarian visions of social order. All four politicians were able to employ the culturalist vocabulary without furthering the strict, illiberal view of society with which it had become associated. Just as more authoritarian-minded Japanese had used the predominantly horizontal, communal overtones of a unique cultural history to buttress "peculiarly Japanese" values of loyalty and duty, the reform-minded politicians used the concept and its associated symbols to buttress their own ideas of correct behavior. But, whichever the uses to which culturalist concepts were put, this approach to the past was linked to the accepted understanding of what was genuine and true in Japanese society. It was not questioned because it was part of the identity of all Japanese. It therefore had to be included in the creation of any new conception of Japanese society, and it was. Elements from this culturalist understanding of the past were reinterpreted and put to
use by each of the four party leaders. They drew words connoting traditional ideas of community, obligation, and personal cultivation from the culturalist vocabulary and employed these terms to legitimate visions of a dynamic, organically structured society.

The second predominant mode of historical understanding was the Western "universalist" interpretation which had entered Japan during the Meiji enlightenment. This approach saw history in competitive, evolutionary terms. It asserted that struggle within society was natural, desirable, and necessary if society and civilization were to advance through even higher stages of development. Using the laissez-faire model of economic activity as an analogue for social behavior, the universalist understanding of history presumed that competition among individuals for private gain was the primary stimulus for human progress. A corollary to this idea was the belief that disparities in wealth and status were the inevitable (if not wholly desirable) outcomes of ability and initiative.

Potentially, the social implications of universalist ideas were highly divisive. However, because it was believed that societies as well as individuals were subject to the imperatives of competition, of struggle, and of natural selection, the requirement of cohesion was placed on society. All four political leaders constantly reminded their readers and listeners that nations either prospered or withered away—to fail to advance was to fall prey to peoples who were competing and moving ahead. The Japanese risked being left along the path of advancing civilization if they did not overcome internal divisions and attain the overall cohesion necessary for their society to compete with other societies of the world. To do this—to create harmony out of conflict and dissension—they must appropriately structure and direct all struggle and competition. Only in this way could they secure social solidarity and still maintain the essential dynamic foundation for social life which struggle and competition alone could provide.

What this meant to the four political leaders can be seen in their conception of risshin shusse, the Meiji imperative to strive to make one's way in the world. These men believed that the competitive spirit of self-
advancement embodied in this universalist value was a cornerstone of collective human existence, and they all promoted it accordingly. But when they did so, they required that *risshin shusse* be contained within a framework of social harmony. Men must not only strive for position and success; they must also simultaneously act in full awareness of their proper roles within the social structure. When men were conscious of the duties incumbent upon them, and when they devoted themselves to the tasks required of them, then they became part of a viable social collective that advanced through history on the energies of constructive individual effort. This was the dynamic harmony the politicians labeled *chōwa*. The cultural term they applied here supposedly referred to an unmediated, non-competitive social harmony, and it carried associations with a communal accord found in Japan's past. But they used it to affirm a form of non-divisive, non-destructive struggle. This connection between *chōwa* and *risshin shusse* is typical of the way in which the emotional appeal of the traditional, culturalist vocabulary was used to legitimate universalist conceptions of society.

The fusion of the two strands in this manner already held within itself a convincing theory for explaining Japanese society. Yet, the power of this theory was intensified by the presence of an intuitive, non-rational dimension of historical understanding which had carried over from the historicism of the Tokugawa period. This other element—neither culturalist nor universalist—was the idea of a pervasive momentum of history, or universal direction of events (*taisei, ikioi, jisei*, etc.). Though too vague and subjective to shape thinking in any meaningful way by itself, this idea nonetheless encouraged the search for evidence of trends in history, and, more importantly, it encouraged behavior in conformity with those trends once they had been uncovered.

The four politicians shared the belief that the primary momentum in history in the twentieth century was a universal trend toward representative, constitutional forms of government. Sometimes they pointed to events within Japanese society, such as the expansion of suffrage, to indicate that fuller forms of popular participation in government were the inevitable (and desirable)
wave of the future. At other times they referred to developments in the West to support claims that such a trend toward constitutional government was active and that Japan could ignore it only at her peril. Ozaki, for example, explained that in the Meiji period Japan was able to secure her independence because she had been attuned to the trend of militarism which had been dominant in world history at that time. But, he argued, conditions had changed and now, at this new stage of historical development, oppressive and militaristic modes of organization were insufficient to hold societies together. As the recent great war had demonstrated, the new momentum in history required societies be based on the collective recognition that voluntary commitment and service to one's society was to one's own advantage. A society organized along such lines was, by Ozaki's definition, a society embodying constitutional government. The other three politicians agreed with him that to be in accord with the spirit of the time, Japan must seek to advance the cause of constitutional government.

Another perceived momentum of history grew out of the spectre of European regeneration after the widespread devastation of World War I. When the political leaders of Taisho-Showa Japan looked abroad, they saw a movement in the world toward national reconstruction, national consolidation, and economic development. Japan, with her persistent economic troubles and rumblings of social discontent, seemed to these leaders to be dangerously out of step with the times. This led them to believe that events were moving toward some cataclysmic phase of history which would test the viability of Japanese civilization.

Such a fear—not uncommon in the period—was the logical extension of the Social Darwinist elements in the universalist theory of history to which these politicians and many other Japanese subscribed. "The weak are food for the strong", "life or death of the nation", and other frequently used phrases reflected concepts and concerns which were firmly imbedded in their patterns of thinking. These notions, applied to the developments the politicians saw in the world, left them to speculate only about the form of the coming test. The four did not rule out international war, but most often they indicated that they expected the test would appear in the form of
radically heightened international economic competition—an event for which they believed Japan was dangerously unprepared. 19

Uniformly, the four politicians stated that, while the times required tapping all possible energies of the people in order to meet the impending threat, the Japanese were at present morally, physically, and productively weak. To Takahashi, old social practices and evil customs were preventing the nation from displaying the efficiency necessary to be the equal of Europe and America. 20 Ozaki said that Japanese clothing, Japanese food, and Japanese houses were all debilitating, and that Japanese workers were weak—their frames were like those of women in the West. 21 Hamaguchi and Ozaki together expressed fears that Japanese, already handicapped by the shortest life-spans of any developed peoples, were failing to make full use of the productive years of their lives. 22 Hamaguchi said Japanese spent too much time in school and not enough time in the working world. He, Takahashi, and especially Muto called for effective forms of business and technical education which would give students skills they could apply immediately and directly on the job. 23

Hamaguchi explained the nation's grave situation by saying that the Japanese had fallen into habits of luxury during the boom years of the world war and that they had lost the virtues of thrift, diligence, and strenuous effort. 24 Muto explained that popular morality, which had been preserved and promoted by samurai in the Tokugawa period, had declined with the demise of that class after the Restoration. Now the Japanese people were unable to sustain the high standards of social conduct necessary for the health of the nation. This failure of popular morality led to unholy money contracts between the business and political worlds. Politics were corrupt, and this corruption exerted a further evil influence on the people. Economic practices favored the few, discouraged self-initiative, and harmed the livelihood of the people. The policies of bureaucrats and "professional politicians" encouraged speculation when logic, morality, and the good of the nation required that the money men earn be the product of their own labors. 25

For these and other reasons, the four political
leaders saw the productive capacities of the Japanese people eroding at a time when the rest of the world was moving ahead. The trends they perceived strengthened their conviction that effective constitutional government would have to be part of an immediate revitalization of Japanese society. It cannot be said that the concept of universal flows of events exhibited in the thinking of these men specifically defined any of their beliefs or actions in this regard. But it did lead them to see trends which reinforced beliefs they in any case held, and it thereby made actions which would normally have followed from those beliefs even more pressing and more imperative than they would otherwise have been.

Because of the trends they saw in history, they were deeply concerned about what constituted an efficient and correct social order, and they went to considerable effort to define and relate society and politics. They did not isolate political structures from society; they did not follow the lead of those men of the day who would have subordinated society to a transcendental political state. Rather, they conceived politics to be a subset of social activity, and they sought to integrate all social life into one coherent whole. Indeed, restructuring social and political life was never their chief objective. They did not attempt, as did Kita Ikki, Nakano Seigō, and others, to formulate plans for the wholesale reorganization of the social order. With the liberal view of each autonomous individual seeking his own greatest good on one hand, and the vision of a harmonious, communal society of all Japanese on the other, they chose to bridge the gap with moral, ethical action, not with structures. Though Japanese were engaged in constant struggle among themselves, harmony could be achieved if all Japanese believed in and acted according to such fundamental values as filial piety and chūkan aikoku (loyalty to lord and love of country). If behavior were correct, the sentiments of the people would be summed up in the will of the benevolent emperor and an integrating harmony would by achieved. According to the four political leaders, this was the essence of constitutional government, and it was also the essence of kokutai, which had always been at the heart of Japanese society. Parties, parliaments, and politicians could be fit into this system and were, but
its correct operation depended ultimately on the ability of individuals to achieve harmony by transcending through moral behavior the world of narrow, selfish interests.

Among the four politicians, Ozaki set out the most specific formulation of society and politics. It is useful, therefore, to examine his ideas in some detail. They illustrate both the ways in which these men merged universalist and culturalist concepts and the ways in which they fused together the political life of the society.

In his writings Ozaki says that at the founding of the Japanese nation in the reign of Emperor Jinmu, Japan had a very nearly modern national organization. In this respect, the history of Japan is unique, he contends, because she alone among the nations of the world did not originate out of barbarism. However, rule by a sovereign emperor regrettably disintegrated into rule by usurpers like the Soga, the Fujiwara, and the Tokugawa, and Japan entered a long, dark age of feudalism similar to that of other nations. But the Meiji Restoration reinstated rule by the emperor, and the Promulgation of the Constitution—a grand and beneficent act of the Emperor Meiji joyously received by the people—inaugurated a new era in which Japan's government was again consistent with the essence of the nation as it had been conceived at its founding. In one stroke, the Japanese people were granted the precious rights that had required years of struggle and bloodshed in other nations. Once again government could function according to the kokutai that formed the true foundation of the nation.

The brilliance of kokutai, according to Ozaki, is the fact that it transmits through all eternity the union of kun' i (will of the monarch) and minshin (sentiment of the people). Ozaki tells of an emperor who climbed to the top of a hill, saw smoke from the kitchen fires of many houses rising before him, and was content because he knew his people were content. The heart of the Japanese emperor is like that of a sovereign who sheds his imperial robes on a cold winter night so that he may experience the suffering of the people. Ozaki quotes a poem of the then reigning Emperor Taishō in which it is explained that on a formal level the relationship between the emperor and the people is like that between a lord
and a vassal, but at the level of emotion it is like the relationship between a father and a child. Japan has a single and unbroken line of emperors because this process of minshin according with kun'i, which is the principle of kokutai, is the basis for the rule of the nation.

According to Ozaki, in modern Japan minshin is transmitted to the emperor through the Diet, specifically, through the lower house. Laws and budgets passed by the Diet are humbly offered to the emperor for adoption. They receive his imperial sanction and they become the law of the land. If elections are fair, the laws of the Diet will faithfully reflect the will of the people, and the emperor, following in the traditions of the sacred imperial line and of kokutai, will as a matter of course approve and legitimate the sentiment of the people as his own and as that of the nation. Through this process, kun'i and minshin are put in accord with each other and the spiritual solidarity of the nation is assured. If, however, elections are corrupted by money or influence, or if self-interested groups like han cliques, military cliques, genro, bureaucrats, or capitalists interpose themselves between the people and the emperor, the system will not function and discord will occur. The goal of a true patriot is, then, to guard against violations of the spirit of the constitution and to seek always to avoid the estrangement of high and low.

At one level, the process Ozaki outlines is simply a mechanical mode of decision making in which the members of the Diet act to produce the greatest good for the greatest number in society. Ozaki does explicitly state that a purpose of the Diet is to obtain policy outcomes of this type. However, the heart of Ozaki's process is not decision making based on the simple interests of private individuals and groups. Rather, it is the attempt to secure social solidarity by the assimilation of each individual will into a single national will. This goal parallels in some ways the purely metaphysical union of emperor and people sought by the right-wing Japanists of the period. Certainly, Ozaki employs language quite similar to theirs. However, Ozaki's stress on the vital role of the Diet irrevocably separates his ideas of government from the ideas of the right. According to Ozaki, private individual interests are not to be expunged for
the sake of unity—they are to be informed by a sense of social conscience and then expressed as enlightened interests through the self-governing mechanism of the society. Nowhere does Ozaki wholly deny the role of interests, yet nowhere does he argue for brokerage politics. What is essential is the moral principle that enables men to sacrifice for society. This is what transforms narrow self-interest into enlightened self-interest; this is what makes social harmony possible. At the foundation of Ozaki's system is the requirement of individual morality. Self-interest is a crucial element in his scheme, but it alone is not the ultimate referent for correct social decisions.

The process Ozaki outlines rests on the assumption that each man shall willingly sacrifice his personal interest for the greater social good. Only correct-thinking, autonomous, ethical individuals will be able to perceive that it is in their greater interest to sacrifice some personal interests to society. This means, above all, that men may not be simply obedient. Those with slave mentalities (dorei kannen) cannot understand true personal sacrifice because they have given over control of their lives to others—they have no way of comprehending any but narrow, selfish interests.  

The source of true patriotism is, says Ozaki, love of oneself. Apart from the extreme case of laying down one's life for one's country, the most essential obligation of every individual is to make the most of himself while meeting his responsibilities and fostering the best that is in him. The individual and his capacities come first; the prosperity of the nation rests solely on the growth and development of strong individuals who are capable of enlightened devotion and service to their society. According to Ozaki, chūkan aikoku is not the one-sided doctrine of obligation found in contemporary patriotic training; firm loyalty and patriotism grow out of the self-realization by ardently independent individuals that they possess the right to control their own lives and property. This is true chūkan aikoku; this is true respect for kokutai, emperor, and nation.

The other three men accepted most of what Ozaki considered important about society and politics. The union of minshin and kun'i as the paradigm for constitutional
government and the ultimate reliance on individual morality rather than simple representation of interests were features of their thinking also. Takahashi and Hamaguchi did, however, part company with Ozaki on questions of social obligation and patriotism. Neither of the two leaders from the established parties was willing to grant the wide latitude to individual interests and rights which Ozaki and Muto envisioned. But this was more a difference of degree than of basic beliefs, because it was fundamental to the thinking of all four men that there must be sufficient freedom for the potential of every individual to develop. Takahashi and Hamaguchi were more cautious about assuring that the energies of individuals be channeled to proper social ends. Ozaki and Muto were more concerned that these energies be generated in the first place.

In Ozaki's society, Japanese merge to form an organic whole through a process of moral self-sacrifice. They do so within a framework—the Meiji constitutional framework—which is validated by culturalist ideas about the true, original character of Japanese society. This is precisely the same basic formulation found in the conceptions of society and politics of the other three politicians. They too identify the central integrating element of the society with the native Japanese tradition, and they too carefully tie their visions of an organic society to this tradition. Muto offers a typical example of this in his essay on "The Spirit of Society." There he says:

The quintessence of our nation is to have possessed, for over 2,500 years under a continuous imperial line, a beautiful kokutai in which sovereign and subject are like father and son. The beautiful spirit of chukun aikoku, of deep love between parent and child, and of human duty and compassion makes the flowers in the society of our nation bloom fragrantly...

After locating the core of Japanese society in kokutai, chukun aikoku, and other culturalist values, Muto goes on
to say that the people in this society are like the cells of a plant: each individual must strive diligently to perform his regular tasks in order to advance cooperatively the welfare of all. Without exception, the four politicians go to great length to associate their organically conceived society with values they believe occupy the innermost part of Japanese culture.

In Takahashi's writings on politics, there is ample evidence of a need to see newer universalist conceptions of society as somehow equivalent to and in accord with traditional Japanese culturalist values. Takahashi says that the essential Japanese political tradition, which is embodied in kokutai, is in no way contradictory to constitutional government found in the West. In fact, the two are fundamentally identical. Both are based on rule through the will of the people; both are means by which this will reaches a moral synthesis. In one commentary Takahashi states that rule in which the people come first (minpon hon'i) was already being carried out three thousand years ago in Japan. He continues,

Upon investigation of the benevolent imperial rule of our nation from its roots in kokutai, [it is apparent that] always the emperor graciously makes the spirit of the people his own spirit, that [he] considers the pleasures and hardships, [and that this] is government which establishes the people as its foundation.

In other words, this is government which we today would say is truly government based on the people (shin no minponshugi). 38

According to Takahashi, Japan's own constitutional monarchy is in essence equivalent to any other true constitutional system, whether a republic, like America, or a foreign constitutional monarchy like England. But Japanese need not feel they have borrowed a foreign concept, because what is fundamental to any constitutional system has long been fundamental to Japan.

This concern for distinguishing things Japanese from things foreign is a central theme in the essays and
speeches of all four politicians. With Takahashi, it appears not only in relation to constitutional politics, but also as a specific problem important in and of itself. Although Japanese have a long tradition of borrowing from abroad, he says, they have always preserved and must continue to preserve that which is at the heart of Japanese culture. He identifies this as "harmony" (chōwa). Confucianism was brought to Japan, where it became a different kind of Confucianism unique to Japan. Buddhism was imported and it became a peculiarly Japanese Buddhism. In both cases harmony was maintained. The demands of advancing civilization require that Japanese adapt useful foreign ideas and practices to Japanese life, but they can do so only with full consideration for the distinctive nobility of character which the Japanese people have purposefully advanced. If the people indiscriminately pick up and consume things, they will not be able to digest them and the health of the nation will soon suffer. Reckless importation of ideas will produce debilitating contradictions within society. Japanese can borrow from abroad, but harmony must always be preserved.  

Hamaguchi also devotes attention to identifying an element in Japanese society which will set it apart from other societies. He thinks along lines similar to Takahashi, but instead of speaking of harmony, Hamaguchi identifies a unique shiso (consciousness) as the heart of Japanese society. He believes in a deep, common spiritual heritage of the Japanese people. Two thousand years of shared living experience created naturally a shiso which no words can express. Japanese gain identity and place by attaching themselves to this tradition. A manifestation of kokutai, shiso is a self-sufficient entity. There is no need to bring foreign ideologies such as communism or socialism to Japan, he says, because the Japanese, born of one another, have produced a sublime and noble thought which is unsurpassed in the world.  

In two speeches which were presented before middle school and high school students in his native Kochi in 1925, Hamaguchi relates in reverent, religious language the deep emotional experiences he had on visits to the Great Ise Shrine and to Emperor Meiji's tomb. He says that at these places he understood for the first time how distant was the founding of the Japanese nation and how
great were the achievements of the Emperor Meiji. The feeling which welled up inside him on these occasions was, he says, the very same shiso of the people that is inherent in the Yamato race. This devoted and noble feeling is a manifestation of the kokutai which the sixty million people of Japan must possess.\textsuperscript{41}

Hamaguchi identifies shiso not only with kokutai, but also with chūkun aikoku. This other culturalist concept is, he says, the concrete expression of shiso and kokutai in society. It is the source of education; it is the source of all things (in Japanese society). Hamaguchi tells the Kōchi students that it is all right to study religion as religion, or philosophy as philosophy, but the concept of chūkun aikoku transcends all of these. The new foreign ideologies may be interesting as purely academic problems, but it would be profitless, even dangerous, to study them as things for the people of Imperial Japan.\textsuperscript{42}

In this way, Hamaguchi locates the spiritual and ethical core of Japanese society in the native Japanese socio-political tradition. This tradition (or, kokutai) is both the common denominator of Japanese society and its source of cohesion. It is to this tradition that Hamaguchi ascribes complete legitimacy. Simultaneously, he denies that concepts apart from it can contribute in any fundamental way to Japanese society. This does not mean, however, that Japan is never to borrow from abroad. Like the others, Hamaguchi believes that the pressures of advancing civilization mandate judicious borrowing. But, he warns, if importation is aimless, Japanese civilization will become a mere copy which has lost its original essence. Inwardly, Japanese must advance their own unique civilization; outwardly, they must adopt the strong features of other countries. This is the way to build the nation and advance its destiny.\textsuperscript{43}

Muto shares the overall viewpoint of Hamaguchi and Takahashi on borrowing from abroad, but the balance he strikes gives more weight to the value of foreign models. More than any of the other men, he looks to the West, particularly to Great Britain, for examples of proper thought and behavior. In one of his columns, he says that many Japanese who hear his speeches become visibly uneasy when he mentions aspects of foreign nations in a
positive light. He reminds his readers that the present level of Japanese civilization is the result of massive importation during the Meiji period, and he states that unthinking scorn for the West threatens the future development of the nation. Japanese can and should be proud of their country, but they must remember that old doctrines are not to be recklessly praised. They are to be polished and refined so the nation may progress and prosper under them. It is wrong to hold self-conceited, chauvinistic attitudes, but it is just as wrong, he says, to prize new, imported ideologies for no reason. Those who do the former are addicted to national pride; those who do the latter have lost their sense of national pride.

It is Muto's belief that Japanese must learn from abroad, because their very survival depends upon it. But they must still preserve and protect those values which both set them apart as one people and hold them together as one nation.

Ozaki says that the Japanese have often been a conceited, self-superior thinking people who acknowledge the value of adopting certain foreign practices only when absolutely forced to do so, as at the time of the Meiji Restoration. He calls the Japanese conservative and temporizing; he says that their disease of praising the past has obstructed progress and is making them stragglers in the world. He pleads for them to become flexible, capable masters of their environment, always able to adapt what is foreign and good to Japanese society. But despite these strong opinions, Ozaki still believes there are facets of Japanese social life which must never be placed in jeopardy. His very conception of constitutional government is predicated on his belief that values and institutions peculiar to the Japanese people are essential to the correct functioning of political processes in Japan. Changes must come, but they must be changes which incorporate that which is new into the legitimate, valid, preexisting values and norms of Japanese society.

Ozaki, like the other three men, emphasized the following point: foreign influences must always complement and never simply displace the native culture. All four felt compelled to treat the problem of borrowing from abroad. They felt they had to distinguish between what was Japanese and what was foreign. This was so because
these men needed to identify an area of commonality for all Japanese. A society strained by internal division may seek to provide appropriate, stable ground rules for political conciliation and political decision making, or it may seek to minimize differences and blend groups directly.\textsuperscript{47} The four politicians believed their society was divided. The thrust of their efforts, and of the efforts of many other Japanese in the late Taishō-early Shōwa period, was to minimize differences. Emphasizing the existence of a native tradition served to establish a basis for merging disparate groups into one cohesive Japanese society. Because the four politicians were members of a nation whose modern strength was obviously derived from the West, they felt a particular need to define their unique common ground against the foreign civilization which loomed so large. If, instead of seeking to merge groups directly, they had chosen to acknowledge differences and to enhance institutions and procedures for negotiation and reconciliation, then the need to assert the primacy of a shared body of cultural values would not have been as great as it was.

However, consciously or unconsciously, they moved toward the direct assimilation of all in society. Adopting that alternative, they were willing to accept existing structures, but to do this did not require that they accept existing practices. Each of these four men believed that the established institutions and formalized procedures already in place could serve society if and only if certain principles of behavior were faithfully observed. Ozaki, for example, argued particularly strongly for clean election practices, because to him the existing electoral system provided the mechanism on which society depended for synthesis of individual wills into the general will of the people. Mutō, while in full agreement, was especially concerned that men in society be freed from arbitrary authority and unfair, unequal treatment, particularly in economic matters. He could accept the right of the bureaucracy to exist, but he could not accept the way bureaucrats systematically favored certain interests. For Takahashi and Hamaguchi, the continuing obstructive influence of the han cliques was a target, but the Meiji political order—the great work of the men from Satsuma and Chōshū han—was not attacked. The four party leaders attempted
to resolve the shortcomings of the system not by calling for new institutions, but instead by working for the enlightened reform of existing social practices.

But how was this enlightened reform to be carried out? What was required to make men change their behavior? The answer all four proposed was the moral self-cultivation of the individual. Mutō expressed a conviction often repeated by each of them when he said: "The history of the rise and fall of every nation of the world is nothing more than an illustration of the strength or weakness of the moral conscience of its people." These men firmly believed that the fate of their nation depended on the awakening of each individual Japanese to a sense of his right and proper role in society. They believed that self-cultivation could bring about such an awakening of conscience, and that it could strengthen and prepare the Japanese for the life struggles in which they must each engage. These men thus looked inward for the sources of renewal. They sought the key to social regeneration in the introspective, disciplined improvement by each individual of his own character, conscience, and spirit.

In following such a course they were seeking their solutions by the same methods being attempted in other areas of society, where many were calling for various forms of introspection and self-discipline. However, among the politicians it was the utilitarian potentials of this general movement inward to the self—not the religious or philosophical potentials—which were most prominent. According to their conception, self-cultivation did not produce a drive for the selfless, righteous action of the lone individual, as did Oyomei idealism. It did not lead to a burst of self-perception, nor to some philosophical realization of truth. Instead, the end product of self-cultivation was to become aware of one's proper role, whether in business, politics, one's job, or any other legitimate field of social endeavor. In their language, words like *kakusei suru* (to be awakened) and *jikaku suru* (to realize) almost always appeared in the context of positive, concrete, socially valuable behavioral outcomes. Men "awakened" to public service, responsible use of the vote, achievement, cooperation, and proper performance of their duties. These four political leaders believed that self-cultivation could spur renewal by making each indi-
individual aware of his place and function in a progressive and harmonious social order.

But self-cultivation was also something more. The politicians believed that, besides bringing forth a moral awakening, self-cultivation could produce a hardened, practical readiness for interest-oriented competition. It was a means of steeling oneself against the hardships of struggle in the real world. To develop one's character through self-cultivation was to prepare, to polish, and to temper. Self-cultivation inculcated resolution and diligence. It promoted education which focused always on the practical application of knowledge. It taught men to be aware of their responsibilities to society as a whole and to ready themselves for the struggles which they would have to undertake for themselves and for their society.

This aspect of self-cultivation is readily evident in the writings of Takahashi Korekiyo, a man constantly concerned that individuals follow patterns of behavior which would secure the productivity of those individuals for society. In one of his essays on risshin shusse, he concludes with a long series of prescriptions for behavior: apply learning, be conscientious, be sincere, be satisfied with your situation, exhibit integrity, earn the respect and affection of others, never be conceited, never borrow money without firm purpose, possess strong conviction, and possess an indomitable power of endurance. These virtues are all to be inculcated through the efforts of each individual to reflect on himself and to seek always to refine and polish his own character. Sincerity (seishin sei) which flows forth from the bottom of one's heart must show itself, then the value of assimilating oneself into the corpus of function, duties, and job will become apparent.

According to Takahashi, learning, just like the individual, must find actual application in society to be of value. An individual apart from society and duty serves no purpose; learning apart from society and practical application serves no purpose. The cardinal points of education, says Takahashi, are to provide the individual with a sense of his natural talents, to increase his self-esteem, and to further his powers of investigation. Education must not only provide knowledge, it must create a spirit within the individual that will encourage commit-
ment to society and, hence, produce the motivation for applying learning in concrete social situations. It must not wear down the spirit of an individual before he is ready to enter society. If education discourages or destroys those contemplative, reflective, and creative powers of the individual which lead him to social commitment and enable him to contribute to society, then he will become nothing more than a slave to learning and technology. Practical application—involving function, utility, and purpose—is the key to the proper use of learning. This is the path to social progress and social prosperity.52

Hamaguchi also calls for practical application, but his major emphasis is the need for struggle and strenuous effort in life. Human existence is test after test, night and day. It is mountain followed by mountain. In order to avoid falling behind, one must never stop working. Resolution, determination, and diligence are all essential in life. The strength required to exhibit these virtues must be increased gradually through personal cultivation. One "sharpens" it through training and it grows in magnitude.53 One learns to value order and respect discipline. In this way one creates the spirit of strenuous effort that the tasks of society and nation demand. There will always be the temptation to indulge in pleasure, but only by avoiding hedonism can true satisfaction be found. It is something gained by climbing the steep mountains of life, by swimming across the swollen streams, by surmounting hardship and adversity. One must ask what would be good for the nation, for society, for humanity, for the village, and then act to carry it out. Achievement in these kinds of endeavors gives true happiness and pleasure. This is the sort of behavior Hamaguchi calls for from his audience. Like the other three politicians, he wants men to look inside themselves and cultivate their internal sources of strength, will, and ethical social behavior.54

The four political leaders believed that self-cultivation prepared the mind by imparting the spirit and skills for competitive existence. Self-cultivation also identified transcendent social harmony as the ultimate goal of the competitive efforts it promoted. It was essential if there were to be any hope for reestablishing
the right order of things. Because of this, self-cultivation was a regular feature in the language of renewal and restoration which became so prominent a part of the rhetoric of these four men. Moral renewal through self-cultivation would return Japan to the correct, secure, and progressive path from which she had strayed.

For Ozaki Yukio, renewal was to take the form of a Second Restoration. Great and meritorious an effort as the Meiji Restoration had been, it had not wholly succeeded. All Japanese had not understood its meaning. Modern Japan was a deformed child born of the contradiction between its magnificent constitutional structure and the feudal consciousness of its people. The slave mentality of the Tokugawa period continued to prevent men from being free, and, not being free, they were incapable of generating the great energies demanded for success in the modern world. All Japanese must therefore strive to complete the work of the Meiji Restoration. Writing in 1925, Ozaki said he expected the awakening of the people in a Second Restoration to occur within four to ten years. At that time, individual Japanese would become independent, self-reliant, and aware of their social rights and obligations. They would fulfill the potential of their nation's constitutional form of government. They would build up within themselves the courage and resolution to undertake the long-term tasks of increasing their physical strength, expanding their spiritual and intellectual capacities, and equipping their nation with the technological tools for successful international competition. This awakening was a necessity, Ozaki claimed, if the Japanese people were to catch up with the pace of development of world civilization.

To Muto, reform meant that men act according to dictates of conscience. If they reflected on themselves and sought to improve their character, they would find themselves furnished with a sense of right and wrong which transcended selfishness, divisive class consciousness, and all other obstacles to social harmony. Moreover, they would then know they must achieve and succeed. In all their actions they would strive to be loyal servants of the emperor, but they would also be supporters of right. When the Japanese people awakened in this way, they would rise up and overthrow with their votes the bureaucratic
politicians and the established political parties. Then true constitutional government based on the best interests of all would be realized.\(^{58}\)

Takahashi and Hamaguchi also spoke of renewal. The transformations they envisioned would likely have been less extensive than those of either Ozaki or Mutō, but the methods and goals underlying their views were much the same. All four men depended on self-cultivation and the free expression of individual personalities to carry out reform, and all four aimed to achieve a vigorous, cohesive society which would be secure in the world. They agreed it would take a tremendous effort of the human spirit to regenerate a society that had come to a standstill on many fronts. The Japanese must, in the words of Hamaguchi, "break out of their crisis situation."\(^{59}\)

Using an inelegant but appropriate analogy, Takahashi voiced the need for renewal by saying that human spirit was climate, learning was fertilizer, and practical techniques were husbandry. Social and economic changes of immediate importance depended on the establishment of a proper climate of honesty, cooperation, devotion to the job, and responsibility. Men had to reform the human spirit, Takahashi said, if there were to be sufficient scope for creation and progress in Japan.\(^{60}\)

The efforts of these four politicians to reform society depended on the development of a new sense of self-awareness, self-discipline, application, and devotion. But further, reform required that all change be linked to the core of preexisting social values of the culture. Chōwa, chūkun aikoku, the sacred goals of the Restoration, the concept of moral cultivation, the fusion of the people and the emperor, and the unbroken reign as symbol of the uniqueness of Japanese culture were among the central ethical ideals of the society. They were also at the center of the reformist ideology the four politicians promoted. These culturalist values—associated with or embodied in the concept of kokutai—had been invested by society with a special sanctity. Much like "liberty," "human rights," "equality," and "The Constitution" in the United States, they were also being challenged. They were the cultural values which marked the boundaries within which reform could take place. If a vision of society could not be explained in terms of these values, it could not be
legitimated. The appeal of culturalist values was the force which linked Japanese to the competitive but harmonious society these four men envisioned.

The Meiji constitutional order, secured both by its obvious successes and by the kokutai with which it accorded, was an accepted part of that society. The Meiji Constitution itself was seen by these four men as the great gift of a great emperor and the sole authentic blueprint for Japanese society. But, while the overall pattern of institutions and procedures was not called into question, the actual men and groups of men who occupied the positions of authority within the system were challenged by the reformist ideology. The genrō, the military, and other cliques and special groups were criticized for advancing their own arbitrary authority beyond what the values of the society allowed. In this manner, the reformist ideology did seek definite changes within the system—not solely changes in moral behavior. But in this effort, reform remained inside the preestablished boundaries of the society. To seek changes in personnel was not to seek changes in the system itself.

Altogether, this was the common answer of these four selected political leaders to the stagnation which they saw in their society: reform within existing structures through moral self-cultivation. Every individual must look inward to tap his own sources of moral and psychological strength. In so doing he would realize that his own good and the good of his society could never be contradictory. He would know his place in the social order. He would equip himself with the practical tools necessary to carry out his functions. He would follow behavior appropriate to his position. And he would develop the will and the strength to devote himself wholly to the complementary tasks of fulfilling his own ambitions and serving his society. In this way, self-cultivation would create an environment of proper, enlightened competition in which society moved forward on the energies of individuals striving to make their way in the world.

Reform would lead, moreover, to a society that was truly and legitimately Japanese, because the values of the dynamic, advancing society which the politicians envisioned were identical to the genuine and enduring values of the Japanese people. The constitutional order of this
society was an expression of kokutai; the society's need for the loyalty of its members was perfectly met by true chūkun aikoku; the solidarity and accord the society exhibited were a continuation of the harmony of chōwa which had always been fundamental in Japanese life.

Thus, the vision of society which Japan's party politicians sought to realize was not a radical reformulation. It said relatively little about existing institutions. It accepted a great deal of society as it was. Yet, it was a vision which called for something new. It was the response of men who believed their society was beset with stagnation and failure; it was their effort to regenerate that society through reform based on the ethical awakening of each individual. These men believed that moral self-cultivation could bridge the gap between interest-oriented competition and social harmony. They believed that it could channel the energies required to advance Japanese society again along its correct and secure path in world history.

2. The Three-Party Cabinet, also known as the First Katō Komei Cabinet, was a product of the Second Movement to Protect Constitutional Government. For an appraisal of this movement and its accomplishments, see Nakamura Kikuo, *Kindai Nihon seijishi no tenkai* (The unfolding of modern Japanese political history) (Tokyo: Keiō Gijuku Daigaku hōgaku kenkyūkai, 1970), pp. 182-201.


4. Hamaguchi Osachi describes how this political activity influenced him in "Yo no oitachi to seiji ni kokoroza-shitaru soin" (My childhood and the reasons I set my mind on politics), in Hamaguchi Osachi, *Zuikanroku* (Occasional impressions), with an Introduction by Hamaguchi Fujiko (Tokyo: Sanseidō, 1931), pp. 2-5.


6. Ibid., pp. 3-4

7. Ibid., pp. 1-4


10. *Seiji tokuhon*, a common phrase in the period.


12. Muto Sanji, "Kokumin no jikaku o nozomu" (I hope for an awakening of the people), in *MSZ* 5:105; Muto Sanji, "Kobe Kōtō Shōgyō Gakkō sotsugyōshiki enzetsu soan" (Draft of the Kobe Commercial High School graduation speech), in *MSZ*, supplement, p. 159.


14. Hamaguchi Osachi, "Kokumin seikatsu to wa nanika" (What is "the livelihood of the people"?), in Zuikanroku, p. 42.

15. Takahashi Korekiyo, "Jitsugyō kyoiki no mezashubeki tokoro" (What to aim for in business education), in Zuisōroku, p. 478

16. These words are not always used to indicate a momentum of history. Frequently they mean simply "circumstances" or "conditions." For some brief comments on the "historical" meanings of these words, see Kenneth Pyle, *The New Generation in Meiji Japan: Problems of Cultural Identity, 1885-1895* (Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 1969), pp. 40, 50, 186-87.

18. *Jakuniku kyōshoku* and *kokka no kōdō seisui*. 

19. See, for example, Ozaki's discussion of war and economic competition in "Daini ishin e no hiyaku," pp. 378-84.


24. Hamaguchi Osachi, "Teki wa Honnōji ni ari" (The enemy is not where you think), in *Zuikanroku* pp. 56-57.


28. Ibid., p. 17. The reference is to Nintoku, a legendary fourth-century emperor.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid., pp. 17-18.

31. Ibid., p. 20, *saidai tasū no kōfuku zōshin o garneroku to shite*.

32. Ibid., pp. 3-4.

33. Ibid., pp. 4-5.

34. Ibid., p. 20, *yūkiteki ni ketsugō serareta ikko no seikatsutai*.


36. Ibid., pp. 489-90.

37. Takahashi Korekiyo, "Waga kokutai to minponshugi" (Our kokutai and minponshugi), in *Zuisōroku* p. 221.

38. Ibid.


40. Hamaguchi Osachi, "Funtō doryoku no seishin o yashinae" (Cultivate a spirit of strenuous effort), in
41. Ibid.; Hamaguchi Osachi, "Subekaraku jiko o shinzeyo" (You must believe in yourself), in *Yūkō yūben*, pp. 482-85.


43. Hamaguchi Osachi, "Kyōiku chokugo kanpatsu kinen shukujii enzettsu" (Congratulatory address in commemoration of the proclamation of the Imperial Rescript on Education), in *Zuikanroku*, pp. 132-33.

44. Mutō Sanji, "Fukashigi naru kinji no kokumin shisō" (The strange thinking of people today), in *MSZ* 6:220-21.


49. Takahashi Korekiyo, "Yo ga taiken seru risshin shusse no michi" (My experience carving out a career), in *Zuisōroku*, p. 145.

50. Ibid., pp. 138-39.

51. Ibid., p. 137.


55. Ozaki, Seiji tokuhon, p. 45.


57. Ibid., pp. 377-90; Ozaki, Seiji tokuhon, pp. 76-80.


THE CENTER FOR FAR EASTERN STUDIES

TETSUO NAJITA, Director, Professor of Japanese History
TANG TSOU, Chrm., Committee on Chinese Studies, Professor of Political Science
HARRY D. HAROOTUNIAN, Chrm., Committee on Japanese Studies, Max Palevsky Professor of History and Civilizations
ROBERT Z. ALIBER, Professor, Grad. School of Business
CHENG-YANG BORCHERT, Lecturer in Chinese
CHIH-CH'AO CHAO, Associate Professor of Chinese and Director of the Chinese Language Program
EDWARD CH'IEN, Assistant Professor of Chinese Thought
ANNE MELLER CH'IEN, Center for Far Eastern Studies Fellow
HERRLEE G. CREEL, Martin A. Ryerson Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus of Chinese History
LIZA CRIHFIELD, Lecturer in Research, Associate in Human Development, Associated Faculty Member in Anthropology
WILLIAM K. CUMMINGS, Assistant Professor of Sociology
MICHAEL T. DALBY, Assistant Professor of Chinese History
LOIS Fusek, Assistant Professor of Chinese
NORTON S. GINSBURG, Professor of Geography
PING-T'I HO, James Westfall Thompson Professor of History
AKIRA IRIYE, Professor of Diplomatic History and Chairman, Dept. of Far Eastern Languages and Civilizations
SUSAN MANN JONES, International Harvester Teaching Fellow
JOSEPH M. KITAGAWA, Professor of the History of Religions and Dean of the Divinity School
AKIRA KOMAI, Professor of Japanese and Director of the Japanese Language Program
LUC KWANTEN, Associate Professor of Chinese and Central Asian History, Philology and Curator of Far Eastern Library
DONALD F. LACH, Bernadotte E. Schmitt Professor of Modern History
JAMES D. McCawley, Professor of Linguistics
NORIKO A. McCawley, Assistant Professor of Linguistics
WILLIAM L. PARISH, JR., Assistant Professor of Sociology
THE CENTER FOR FAR EASTERN STUDIES  Cont.

DAVID T. ROY, Professor of Chinese Literature
CLIFTON ROYSTON, Assistant Professor of Japanese
BERNARD SILBERMAN, Professor of Political Science
KENNETH TANAKA, Japanese Librarian and Lecturer in Japanese
TSUEN-HSUIN TSIEN, Professor of Chinese Literature and
  Curator of the Far Eastern Library
HARRIE A. VANDERSTAPPEN, Professor of Art
PAUL WHEATLEY, Professor of Geography
HARUO YAMAMOTO, Lecturer in Japanese
ANTHONY C. YU, Associate Professor of Religion and Literature